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This update covers Monday, June 22, 2009 to Friday, June 26, 2009

### **VEGETABLES AND MELONS OUTLOOK**

Provides current intelligence and forecasts the effects of changing conditions in the U.S. vegetables and melons sector (including potatoes, pulses, and mushrooms). Topics include production, consumption, shipments, prices received, trade, and more.

Released by 4 p.m. ET. [Subscribe](#) to receive notification of report release.  
Released Thursday, June 25, 2009  
See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/VGS/>

### **MONTHLY MILK COST OF PRODUCTION**

Monthly milk cost of production estimates are available by State from January 2003 to the previous month.

Released Thursday, June 25, 2009  
See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/CostsAndReturns/TestPick.htm#milkproduction>

### **ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD—MEASURING AND UNDERSTANDING FOOD DESERTS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES: REPORT TO CONGRESS**

This report fills a request for a study of food deserts—areas with limited access to affordable and nutritious food—from the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. The report summarizes findings of a national-level assessment of the extent and characteristics of food deserts, analysis of the consequences of food deserts, lessons learned from related Federal programs, and a discussion of policy options for alleviating the effects of food deserts. Overall, findings show that a small percentage of consumers are constrained in their ability to access affordable nutritious food because they live far from a supermarket or large grocery store and do not have easy access to transportation.

Released Thursday, June 25, 2009  
See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/AP/AP036/>

### **MANURE USE FOR FERTILIZER AND FOR ENERGY: REPORT TO CONGRESS**

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 directed the U.S. Department of Agriculture to evaluate the role of animal manure as a source of fertilizer, and its other uses. About 5 percent of all U.S. cropland is currently fertilized with livestock manure, and corn accounts for over half of the acreage to which manure is applied. Expanded environmental regulation through nutrient management plans will likely lead to wider use of manure on cropland, at higher production

costs, but with only modest impacts on production costs, commodity demand, or farm structure. There is widespread interest in using manure as a feedstock for energy production. While current use is quite limited, expanded government support, either direct or indirectly, could lead to a substantial increase in manure use as a feedstock. However, current energy processes are unlikely to compete with fertilizer uses of manure, because they leave fertilizer nutrients as residues, in more marketable form, and because manure-to-energy projects will be most profitable in regions where raw manure is in excess supply, with the least value as fertilizer.

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See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/AP/AP037/>

### **TRENDS IN U.S. COTTON BASIS SINCE 2001**

Price volatility in 2008 generated interest in underlying cotton cash and futures markets and highlighted the importance of market participants' expectations about basis changes over time in production, marketing, and hedging decisions. This analysis examines trends in average U.S. cotton basis and changes in the convergence of cash and futures prices as cotton futures contract expiration dates near between 2001 and 2009 to provide perspective for the average basis movements experienced in 2008. Though this analysis does not identify the factors leading to differences in average convergence paths since 2001, it finds that, while average cotton cash and futures prices converged in all years, the pattern in 2008 was significantly different from the other sample years.

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See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/CWS/2009/06Jun/CWS09D01/>

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