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Export Sales Highlights

This summary is based on reports from exporters for the period June 19-25, 2015.

Soybeans: Net sales reductions of 10,300 MT for 2014/2015 were down noticeably from the previous week and from the prior 4-week average. Increases reported for Taiwan (66,500 MT, including 25,000 MT switched from unknown destinations), Indonesia (61,100 MT, Including 100,000 MT switched from unknown destinations and decreases of 57,800 MT), Japan (30,400 MT, including 27,000 MT switched from unknown destinations), Canada (22,200 MT), Mexico (21,900 MT), and Colombia (6,200 MT), were more than offset by decreases for unknown destinations (155,700 MT), China (65,500 MT), and Thailand (2,000 MT). Net sales of 127,500 MT for 2015/2016 were reported for unknown destinations (148,000 MT), Mexico (28,000 MT), Taiwan (5,000 MT), Indonesia (1,000 MT), and Canada (500 MT). Decreases were reported for China (55,000 MT). Exports of 287,600 MT were up 92 percent from the previous week and 18 percent from the prior 4-week average. The primary destinations were Indonesia (116,100 MT), Mexico (98,000 MT), Japan (34,900 MT), Taiwan (25,600 MT), Colombia (6,300 MT), and Canada (2,500 MT).

Optional Origin Sales: For 2014/2015, outstanding optional origin sales total 475,000 MT, all China. For 2015/2016, outstanding optional origin sales total 385,000 MT, all China.

Exports for Own Account: The current exports for own account balance is 1,900 MT, all Canada.
Soybean Cake and Meal: Net sales of 87,100 MT for 2014/2015 were down 18 percent from the previous week and 10 percent from the prior 4-week average. Increases were reported for the Philippines (31,000 MT), Mexico (26,900 MT), Guatemala (11,300 MT, including 10,000 MT switched from unknown destinations and decreases of 200 MT), Colombia (7,300 MT), Canada (6,900 MT), and the Dominican Republic (2,800 MT). Decreases were reported for Saudi Arabia (5,700 MT). Net sales of 176,600 MT for 2015/2016 were reported primarily for unknown destinations (116,400 MT) and the Philippines (60,000 MT). Exports of 162,900 MT were down 12 percent from the previous week and 17 percent from the prior 4-week average. The primary destinations were Mexico (61,600 MT), the Dominican Republic (16,100 MT), Canada (15,200 MT), Honduras (11,000 MT), Morocco (10,000 MT), and Guatemala (9,800 MT).

Soybean Oil: Net sales of 5,300 MT for 2014/2015 were down 44 percent from the previous week and 53 percent from the prior 4-week average. Increases were reported for Mexico (3,800 MT), Canada (1,100 MT), Trinidad (200 MT), and Belgium (200 MT). Exports of 7,500 MT were down 51 percent from the previous week and 52 percent from the prior 4-week average. The primary destinations were Mexico (6,300 MT), Canada (1,100 MT), and Trinidad (100 MT).

Experts Call for Dropping of Total Fat Intake Limits

Published: Thursday 25 June 2015

Ahead of the publication of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, researchers have called for the US government to drop recommended restrictions on total fat consumption.

The paper, published in *JAMA* is written by Dr. Dariush Mozaffarian from the Friedman School of Nutritional Science & Policy at Tufts University and Dr. David Ludwig from the Boston Children's Hospital.

In the paper, the researchers discuss one of the new recommendations made by the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans Committee (GDAC), an independent group of scientists tasked with reviewing existing scientific and medical research on nutrition.

A lot of recent debate has centered around the GDAC’s recommendations that a diet higher in plant-based foods is better for the environment than one based more on meat and that taxing sugary snacks and drinks could improve diets. In their paper, however, the researchers focus on a recommendation that may be receiving less attention.

For the first time since 1980, the technical report of the GDAC did not include a recommendation for the restriction of total fat consumption.
"We wanted the emphasis to be on fat quality rather than total fat, because the evidence really emphasizes that saturated fat is the driver of risk rather than total fat intake," says Barbara Millen, chair of the DGAC.

Dr. Mozaffarian supports this, stating that placing limits on total fat intake has no basis and leads to poor decisions from both industry and consumers:

"Modern evidence clearly shows that eating more foods rich in healthful fats like nuts, vegetable oils, and fish have protective effects, particularly for cardiovascular disease. Other fat-rich foods, like whole milk and cheese, appear pretty neutral; while many low-fat foods, like low-fat deli meats, fat-free salad dressing, and baked potato chips, are no better and often even worse than full-fat alternatives. It's the food that matters, not its fat content."

When the dietary guidelines began to recommend low-fat diets, the consumption of low-fat and non-fat products increased. These foods often contain refined grains and added sugars that are associated with increased metabolic dysfunction and obesity.

"Lifting the restriction on total fat would clear the way for restaurants and industry to reformulate products containing more healthful fats and fewer refined grains and added sugars," says Dr. Ludwig.

2015 Dietary Guidelines For Americans: 'a critical opportunity'

Alongside dropping restrictions on total fat consumption from the dietary guidelines, Dr. Mozaffarian and Dr. Ludwig call for the limit on fat intake to be lifted by numerous government agencies and food programs.

One such program is the National School Lunch program that recently banned whole milk from its menus while retaining sugar-sweetened non-fat milk. Other targets include the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) who regulate food package labeling and issue diet advice to families and children respectively.

"From agriculture to food producers to school cafeterias to restaurants, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans serve as a beacon for countless dietary choices in the public and private sector," states Dr. Mozaffarian. "With obesity and chronic disease impacting public health so deeply, we can't miss this critical opportunity to improve the food supply."

Not everyone agrees with this viewpoint, however. Lisa Moskovitz, a registered dietitian, told Yahoo Health removing restrictions on total fat consumption might not automatically lead consumers to follow balanced, healthy diets.

"If there are no guidelines on how much fat they should be eating, there is a chance that they will eat more fat and, as a result, consume less high-fiber, whole-grain carbohydrates and muscle-preserving lean proteins," she warns.
The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will refer to the DGAC report when drawing up the final 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The guidelines are due to be published toward the end of the year.

"The USDA and HHS must use the 2015 guidelines to send the message that limiting total fat provides no benefits and actually leads to confusion and bad dietary choices," Dr. Mozaffarian concludes.

A research letter published in JAMA recently revealed that more than two-thirds of Americans are estimated to be either overweight or obese.

**U.S. Biodiesel Output Rises to 108 Million Gallons in April -EIA**

CHICAGO, June 30 (Reuters) - U.S. biodiesel production rose to 108 million gallons in April from 98 million gallons a month earlier, the U.S. Energy Information Administration said in a report on Tuesday.

Soybean oil remained the largest biodiesel feedstock, with 385 million lbs used in April, or about 48 percent of the total. In March, soyoil used in biodiesel production was 381 million lbs.

**Meat and Dairy to Eclipse Biofuel in Agriculture Demand - FAO/OECD**

By Gus Trompiz

PARIS, July 1 (Reuters) - Changing diets in emerging countries will boost global demand for meat and dairy products in the next 10 years, shifting grain supply towards livestock feed as use of crop-based biofuel is curbed by lower oil prices, the FAO and OECD said.

In their annual Agricultural Outlook report released on Wednesday, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development confirmed a broad trend set out last year of moderate food prices due to production gains and less vigorous demand.

Prices of all major agricultural products are set to decline in real terms over 2015-2024, although they will remain above levels seen before a surge in 2007-2008 that heralded a period of high volatility, the institutions said. Within the overall picture of more restrained markets, partly due to tepid economic growth, a dietary shift towards animal protein would be a major feature.

"We see consumption of staples reaching saturation in many countries including many emerging economies," Jonathan Brooks, an economist at the OECD's trade and agriculture directorate and one of the report's authors, told a news conference.

"At the same time we see meat and dairy demand increasing relative to demand for crops, and that will push up meat and dairy prices relative to crop prices."
MORE MERCOSUR SUPPLY
Animal protein consumption would in turn boost use of grains and oilseeds for livestock feed.

Animal feed demand would account for 70 percent of growth in world consumption of coarse grains – mainly corn (maize) – in the next 10 years, double its share in the previous decade when it lagged the near 40 percent contribution of biofuels, the report said.

Biofuel demand would be capped by lower oil prices, which have made it unprofitable, and ceilings in government blending targets, with the notable exception of Brazil which is supporting further use of ethanol made with sugar cane.

The FAO and OECD, among critics of subsidised biofuel schemes blamed for contributing to tensions in food supply and prices, said technology was now available to use various plants, which could offer a more sustainable outlet for farmers.

South America and Brazil in particular would benefit from rising demand for protein products, given their potential to raise output of meat and soybeans for livestock meal.

Brazil, already the world's second-largest agricultural exporter after the United States, was expected to be the biggest supplier of additional global demand, the FAO and OECD said.

Overall exports will remain dominated by a small group of countries, the report said, noting that a Russian embargo on Western food products had altered some flows by generating more South American shipments to Russia and more EU and U.S. exports to Asia.

False Food Fears

By Maarten Chrispeels 5 p.m. June 27, 2015

The San Diego Union-Tribune

Consumer fears over genetically modified foods have prompted restaurants and foodmakers to tout their new non-GMO products. But many wonder about all the fuss. Most Americans have likely eaten GMO (genetically modified organisms) food. From apples that won't brown when you slice them to soybean and corn crops used as animal feed, GMO foods are used worldwide. The World Health Organization and the National Academy of Sciences have concluded that GMOs are safe to eat. Here, a UCSD plant biologist explains his perspective on the issue.

Chipotle Mexican Grill recently announced that all genetically modified (GMO) corn and soy-derived ingredients in its food will be removed or replaced with non-GMO versions. Many scientists like myself were puzzled by the announcement. What is going on here? Has new information surfaced showing that GMO foods are bad for us?
In fact, no credible scientific evidence has been published to support such a claim. The fast-food business is extremely competitive and Chipotle sees an opportunity to increase its market share by capitalizing on the uneasiness, even fears, that many people have about GMO foods.

So, what are the sources of these food fears?

All of us tend to accept as truth statements made by people who share our worldview and who we trust, without taking the time to examine facts for ourselves. What are the facts about GMO foods?

People have been genetically modifying their food plants since the dawn of agriculture 10,000 years ago. In the past 100 years, crop breeders have relied on mutants that occasionally arise in nature. Newer breeding methods are much more precise. We can now insert a few genes into a crop genome or edit one of the existing genes, giving the plants a new important property, such as insect resistance or a higher level of omega-3 fatty acids. This breakthrough in plant breeding occurred some 30 years ago, and farmers began planting GMO crops in 1996.

Geneticists in California led this important plant-breeding effort. Here at UC San Diego and at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies, plant scientists helped develop the new technologies that assure a safe food supply for the world’s growing population. In 2013, GMO crops were grown worldwide on 433 million acres (10 times all the agricultural land in California) in 37 countries. The GMO foods derived from them are being consumed worldwide. Before seeds are released to farmers for planting, they are much more extensively tested than traditionally bred crops to ensure that they will not harm human health or the environment.

Recommendations by government organizations to allow planting of GMO crops are based on the enormous production benefits and the lack of evidence of harmful effects. It is true that for strictly political reasons rather than scientific doubts, some countries in Europe, India and China, have not allowed some GMO plantings. However, every scientific, medical and health organization in the world has come to the same conclusion: GMO foods are just as healthy as equivalent foods made from traditional crops.

In some studies animals eating GMO grains were followed over seven generations with no ill effects detected. None of these studies has found evidence that GMO foods are harmful. A few studies done with animals claiming to show negative effects have either been retracted or dismissed because the data could not be duplicated in other labs. Of course, regulatory agencies will continue to carefully study the safety of any new GMO crops before approving them for use. In the first generation of GMO crops, a new crop characteristic was created by inserting into the crop genome an entire gene from a different organism. New technologies allow genes to be edited – changed in a minor way – or substituted by a gene from a wild relative. Using a gene from a wild potato, English breeders have created cultivated potatoes protected against blight, the fungal disease that caused the Irish potato famine. These GMO potatoes will not require spraying twice weekly with fungicides, a financial and environmental benefit.
So then, why are people so uneasy about GMO crops and foods? Why do they ignore the real benefits and focus on the unproven assertions about their safety? The reality is that some individuals and some “green” organizations have sown distrust and fear about GMO foods based on their own worldview and unsubstantiated fears.

No one taking the time to hold up the assertions on their websites to the factual evidence available could be convinced of the dangers they claim to warn us against. In fact, these fears are not based on science but on a belief system about agriculture and food. GMO crops benefit consumers, the environment and especially farm workers who now have lower exposure to pesticides; they also benefit the companies that produce GMO seeds and farmers everywhere who obtain higher yields and higher incomes because of these advances in crop biotechnology. Substituting non-GMO ingredients for GMO ingredients makes no scientific sense.

What I am asking of you is that you become careful examiners of the evidence, not that you become true believers or champions of GMOs. Let’s use all the genetic tools we have for the betterment of humanity.

Chrispeels is an emeritus distinguished professor in the division of biological sciences at UC San Diego and former director of the San Diego Center for Molecular Agriculture.

By Feeding Bogus GMO Fears, Chipotle Treats Customers Like Idiots

Ronald Bailey | May 8, 2015

Chipotle says it sells “food with integrity.” The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines integrity as "the quality of being honest and fair." The company, alas, is being neither honest nor fair about the safety and environmental benefits provided by modern biotech crops.

The company offers three "key" reasons for rejecting genetically-modified ingredients. The first: "We don’t believe the scientific community has reached a consensus on the long-term implications of widespread GMO cultivation and consumption." As evidence for this statement, the company notes that "in October 2013 a group of about 300 scientists from around the world signed a statement rejecting the claim that there is a scientific consensus on the safety of GMOs for human consumption." Three hundred whole scientists!

So who are these GMO rejecters? The cited statement was issued by a notorious anti-biotech claque, the European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility. Among the signers are such anti-biotech luminaries as Charles Benbrook, Vandana Shiva, and Gilles-Éric Séralini. Benbrook regularly (and incorrectly) claims that planting biotech crops has boosted pesticide applications; Vandana Shiva lies about biotech crop failures causing farmer suicides in India; Seralini produced a bogus study in 2013 that claimed that mice fed biotech corn developed breast cancer. (The study was later retracted.)
The plain fact is that every independent scientific body that has ever evaluated the safety of modern biotech crops has deemed them safe for human beings to eat. This includes the Food and Drug Administration, the American Medical Association, the European Commission, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and many more.

Chipotle's second "key reason" for rejecting modern biotech ingredients is that "the cultivation of GMOs can damage the environment." As evidence, the company cites a Washington State University study "that estimated that between 1996 and 2011, pesticide and herbicide use increased by more than 400 million pounds as a result of GMO cultivation." The principal researcher was none other than the aforementioned activist Charles Benbrook, and the funding for Benbrook's study was supplied by leading anti-biotech groups, including the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Consumers Union, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and the Organic Center. But as it happens, you don't have to depend on estimates by activists for this data; there are actual figures available, and they show that farmers who plant biotech crops use less pesticides overall.

In May 2014, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service issued its comprehensive report Pesticide Use in U.S. Agriculture, updating national herbicide and insecticide usage trends. The agency found that herbicide usage peaked at 478 million pounds in 1981—a decade and half prior to the introduction of the first biotech crop varieties—and fell to 394 million pounds in 2008. So instead of a massive increase in herbicide spraying, as claimed by Benbrook, the USDA actually reports a modest decline. Insecticide applications peaked in 1972 at 158 million pounds, dropping to 29 million pounds in 2008.

It's worth noting that the insecticide DDT accounted for 11 percent of all agricultural pesticides used in 1972. Since biotech crops can protect themselves against insect pests, there is far less need for farmers to spray their crops.

In November 2014, German researchers reviewed 147 agronomic studies and similarly reported that "on average, GM technology adoption has reduced chemical pesticide use by 37 percent, increased crop yields by 22 percent, and increased farmer profits by 68 percent."

What really does cause damage to the environment? Growing low-yield crops, because that means more land must be plowed down instead of being left for nature. And organic farming generally produces lower yields than conventional farming. A 2012 review in the journal Nature found that "overall, organic yields are 25 percent lower than conventional yields."

The latest figures from the USDA note that about 408 million acres of land in 2007 were devoted to growing crops. If the Nature study is accurate, going organic would mean plowing up an extra 100 million acres of land to produce the same amount of food. That's bigger than California and Indiana combined.
Chipotle notes that many of the beverages it sells "contain genetically modified ingredients, including those containing corn syrup, which is almost always made from GMO corn." Scientifically speaking, this is nonsense. After processing, corn syrup contains no detectable levels of genetic material, either "natural" or biotech. Chipotle also minces words when it comes to the cheese it uses. The commercial cheeses served by Chipotle are curdled using rennin derived from genetically engineered bacteria. But Chipotle says that's OK because it is classified as a "processing aid" and no nasty GMO genes are actually in the cheese. Sort of like corn syrup in soft drinks.

Chipotle's third "key reason" is that the restaurant "should be a place where people can eat food made with non-GMO ingredients." Why? The company states, "In our quest to serve the best ingredients, we decided to remove the few GMOs in our food so that our customers who choose to avoid them can enjoy eating at Chipotle." Basically, this is a marketing ploy aimed at appealing to customers who have been bamboozled into thinking that organic is good and biotech is bad.

The customer is always right, even when they are wrong. Companies are free to educate their customers or, like Chipotle, to try to take advantage of their ignorance. Many are choosing the second course.

Consequently, a lot of retailers have now introduced organic and "natural" food products to supply the market based on ignorance. Target's Simply Balanced brand, for example, debuted in 2013. Simply Balanced organic flour goes for $5.34 per five-pound bag, while the same amount of Gold Medal All Purpose unbleached flour sells for $2.49. Simply Balanced Mac & Cheese goes for $1.29 for six ounces, compared to Kraft's Deluxe Mac & Cheese for $1.12. Sixteen ounces of Simply Balanced organic spaghetti sells for $2.29, while Barilla regularly goes for $1.34 and Target's non-organic Market Pantry house brand can be had for $1.24. Simply Balanced organic marinara sauce costs $3.34 for 24 ounces; Barilla sells that much for $1.99. Simply Balanced organic peanut butter costs $5.99 per pound, whereas Jif Crunchy peanut butter goes for $2.20. Even Jif's "natural" crunchy peanut butter is just $2.49.

A similar recent price comparison between Kroger's Simple Truth organic products and the chain's conventional products finds that your best grocery-store dollar bet is on regular foods. Organic products are more expensive, and they provide no extra taste or nutrition benefits. Still, Simple Truth sales reached $1.2 billion by the end of 2014.

The chief reason that Chipotle, or any company, is eschewing ingredients from modern biotech crops is to profit by catering to their customers' preferences. But will they? Perhaps not.

Consider the case of non-GMO Cheerios. In 2014, General Mills announced with great fanfare that it was dropping biotech ingredients in its iconic Cheerios cereal. The move has apparently had no effect on sales. CEO Ken Powell told the Associated Press that the company was "not really seeing
anything there that we can detect" in terms of a sales lift. He further opined that genetically modified organisms aren't really a concern for most customers.

Also in 2014, Boulder Brands, maker of Smart Balance Buttery Spread, announced that it too was going GMO-free. After eight months, CEO Steve Hughes admitted, "We have not seen a widespread lift in our sales due to the non-GMO launch."

Still, dupes of anti-biotech propaganda are evidently buying more quack non-GMO products. According to a recent estimate, sales of non-GMO products in the U.S. reached $8.5 billion last year and are growing faster than many conventional food products. Private companies like Chipotle certainly have the right to try to sell whatever they want. But they cannot claim that they are acting with integrity.

Ronald Bailey is a science correspondent at Reason magazine and author of Liberation Biology (Prometheus).

Obama Announces Renewed Diplomatic Ties with Cuba
Felicia Schwartz
July 1, 2015

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama formally announced Wednesday that the U.S. is renewing diplomatic relations with Cuba and called on Congress to lift the long-standing embargo, which dates to a time when each country considered the other an enemy.

Speaking from the Rose Garden, Mr. Obama said that Secretary of State John Kerry would travel to Havana for a flag raising. Mr. Kerry, speaking to reporters in Vienna where he is participating in international nuclear negotiations with Iran, said he would be going to Cuba later this summer.

“This is a historic step forward in our efforts to normalize relations with the Cuban government and people, and begin a new chapter with our neighbors in the Americas,” Mr. Obama said.

Under formal letters exchanged between the U.S. and Cuba earlier Wednesday, full diplomatic relations will resume on July 20. As of that date, each side is free to hold a ceremony to re-open its embassy, although neither has announced a date for doing so, officials said Wednesday.

Mr. Obama said the U.S. and Cuba would find new ways to cooperate on issues such as counterterrorism and antinarcotics efforts, even as the U.S. continues to have differences with Cuba and will keep raising concerns about human rights.

In a pivot away from decades of Cold War-era foreign policy, the United States and Cuba will restore diplomatic relations.
Despite the lingering issues, Mr. Obama said the old U.S. policy of isolating Cuba had failed and that Americans are ready for change. He called on Congress to take steps to remove the embargo on travel and trade, which was imposed in the early 1960s.

Also on Wednesday, the State Department notified Congress it would restore diplomatic relations, triggering a 15-day notification period.

In Havana, the U.S. chief of mission Jeffrey DeLaurentis delivered a letter to Cuba’s interim foreign minister, Marcelino Medina, from Mr. Obama addressed to Cuban President Raúl Castro, officials said. In Washington, head of the Cuban Interests Section Jose Ramon Cabanas delivered a letter to Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken from Mr. Castro to Mr. Obama confirming the decision to restore ties.

Mr. Obama also plans to travel to Cuba, U.S. officials have said, and would become the first sitting American president to do so in more than 60 years.

Mr. Obama didn’t spell out precisely how differences between Havana and Washington during negotiations were resolved. But he said that on one key point—the freedom of U.S. diplomats to move around Cuba—the U.S. got some of what it was seeking.

“With this change, we will be able to substantially increase our contacts with the Cuban people,” he said. “We’ll have more personnel at our embassy. And our diplomats will have the ability to engage more broadly across the island. That will include the Cuban government, civil society, and ordinary Cubans who are reaching for a better life.”

Anticipating opposition to his policy of engagement, Mr. Obama said most of the country and world were ready for a new approach.

“There are those who want to turn back the clock and double down on a policy of isolation,” he said in his remarks, without taking questions. “But it’s long past time for us to realize that this approach doesn’t work. It hasn’t worked for 50 years. It shuts America out of Cuba’s future, and it only makes life worse for the Cuban people.”
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<td>Wisconsin</td>
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1/ Forecasted.