

Market News

Rising acid levels in the ocean jeopardize the west coast's \$110-million oyster industry, and ultimately will threaten other marine animals, the seafood industry and human health, according to scientists who gathered last month in Monterey, CA to discuss their findings on oceans in a "high-CO2 world." The world's oceans have become 30% more acidic since the Industrial Revolution began more than two centuries ago, with the seas absorbing 500 billion tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, reported *The Los Angeles Times*. [Full Story](#) (Free Registration Required)

Supermarket prices for apples could climb as much as \$1 a pound as the Michigan crop is virtually wiped out and the New York harvest is down by more than half. The fallout is expected to boost juice prices 20% or more, crimp regional supplies of prized local varieties and take a slice of the lucrative export market. According to the marketing chief for sliced apple marketer Crunch Pak, price hikes could be more severe later this year and early 2013 in the Midwest and Northeast as local supplies, which can be stored for several months, dwindle, reported *USA Today*. [Full Story](#)

The dry fall weather delayed the cranberry crop in southwest Washington, and growers are keeping an eye on their bogs to ensure they have enough water to harvest. Industry experts claim the drought will push the harvest out into November, drive up labor costs and put the crop in danger of frost damage, reported *The Daily News*. [Full Story](#)

Paramount Farms predicts U.S. commercial pistachio production could achieve the 1 billion-lb. milestone between 2018 to 2020. If this estimate is accurate, the U.S. commercial pistachio industry would have matured from its first plantings in Chico, CA, to a 1-billion-pounder crop in a little more than 30 years. This bullish projection of 1 billion-lbs. in the next six to eight years is according to Paramount's general manager of grower relations. Paramount is the largest pistachio processor in the world, processing 60% of the California crop, reported *Western Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)

Farmers in California's agricultural heartland state record-high

gas and diesel prices are putting pressure on their bottom lines, but economists claim it is unlikely that will translate into significantly higher food prices across the U.S., according to *The Associated Press*. Farmers are spending more to refuel farm equipment such as harvesters and tractors, and they are having to pay fuel surcharges to people mechanically harvesting or transporting their produce. [Full Story](#)

Brazil's coffee farmers are hoarding some of their crop because of unfavorable prices, which hit two-year lows in June, though buyers are waiting them out as global stockpiles of arabica beans are at their highest level in more than two years. The Brazilian government estimates the annual coffee harvest that concluded in September is a record, and though the farmers are releasing supply slower than usual, a spokeswoman for Smucker stated the company has sufficient supply to meet production demands, reported *The Wall Street Journal*. [Full Story](#) (WSJ Subscription Required)

Crop-damaging stink bugs in Maryland are up 60% from a year ago, according to *The Associated Press*. Researchers are exploring other solutions such as baited traps and a native predator called the wheel bug. USDA scientists continue to study a tiny Asian wasp that holds promise as an even more effective predator. [Full Story](#)

Drought damage to corn and soybean fields in the U.S. is eroding supplies of the nation's two largest crops to below year-earlier consumption levels for the first time since 1974. The government probably will state tomorrow that the U.S. corn harvest and inventories on Sept. 1 will be a combined 11.604 billion bushels, less than the 12.33 billion consumed and exported last year, according to a Bloomberg survey of 31 analysts, reported *Bloomberg.com*. [Full Story](#)

Thanksgiving turkey will be among the first of grocery products to show a price hike due to the drought. Grocery shoppers can expect to see drought-related price increases in the coming weeks on turkey, eggs, vegetable oils and dairy products. Poultry prices are 5.6% higher than prices last year, with chicken prices up 5.3% and other poultry prices, including turkey, up 6.9%, according to the latest Consumer Price Index figures, reported *Chicago Sun Times*. [Full Story](#)

Americans consumers are eating more fresh fruit and vegetables and local foods sales are booming. They grew to \$11 billion in 2011, from \$5 billion in 2007 and \$4 billion in

are booming. They grew to \$11 billion in 2011, from \$5 billion in 2007 and \$4 billion in 2002, according John Ikerd, University of Missouri agriculture economics professor emeritus. Department of Agriculture data shows retail sales of fresh produce averaged growth of 15% a year between 1997 and 2007, while sales of organic fruits and vegetables increased over fourfold from 1997 to 2008, to \$21.1 billion in 2008, reported *CNBC*. [Full Story](#)

This year's drought conditions may result in potatoes becoming a source of feed for cattle. Dry weather before and during the 2012 growing season led to poor forage yields and high hay and corn prices, so beef producers will be looking for other, lower-priced feed sources, stated Carl Dahlen, North Dakota State University Extension Service beef cattle specialist. Byproduct feeds such as distillers grain may be limited and higher priced as well because many producers have secured contracts for byproducts, leaving processing plants with little surplus for other producers, reported *Western Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)

Heeren Bros., Michigan's largest family-owned wholesaler, marketer and distributor of fresh fruits and vegetables, will build and move to a new \$22 million facility in Alpine Township. The new 170,000-sq.-ft. facility will be home to the company's corporate headquarters, warehouse and distribution center, and apple storage and packing facility with new apple grading and packing lines, reported *MLive*. [Full Story](#)

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Malaysia, the world's second-biggest palm-oil producer, will reduce the export duty on the crude variety and abolish a duty-free shipment quota from Jan. 1. The cut will allow the industry to compete with other exporting countries, reported *Bloomberg.com*. [Full Story](#)

The 2012-13 Florida citrus season is beginning on the bearish economic note of low farm prices following one of the best seasons for farm prices in the industry's history. Before USDA's estimate yesterday, Florida juice processors, who buy 95% of the annual crop, were offering \$1.20 to \$1.25 per pound solids for early and mid-season oranges picked through March. If that price holds, the new season will not be a profitable one for the average Florida citrus grower, reported *The Lakeland Ledger*. [Full Story](#) (Free Registration Required)

A USDA regulation puts in place new restrictions on the movement of leaves and other plant materials shipped with citrus from areas with citrus greening disease to packing houses outside the quarantined area. The rule updates protocols enacted in 2010 that quarantined Florida and Georgia, and parts of Louisiana and South Carolina. Quarantined areas include Alabama, Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and parts of Arizona and California, because of Asian citrus psyllid, which can spread the bacterial pathogen that causes citrus greening, also known as huanglongbing (HLB), reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

The global wine market's supply and demand balance is improving and stocks will tighten in the short-term, according to Rabobank. Rabobank's wine outlook states that oversupply in the

global wine market has been so chronic over the past few years that at times it has seemed like a permanent industry characteristic. From 2004 through 2010, the wine industry battled with excess supply, driven first by a series of large global harvests starting in 2004, and then by declining consumption during the global recession that started in 2008. Since then, wine grape production has declined dramatically and consumption has begun to recover, driven by demand from the U.S., China and other emerging markets that has compensated for the declines in the traditional major European markets, reported *Western Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)