

Fish that swim in waters tainted by traces of drugs become hyper, anti-social and aggressive, which could threaten the fish population and upset the delicate dynamics of the marine environment, according to a study published in the journal *Science*, reported *The Associated Press*. [Full Story](#)

Sanderson Farms plans to invest more than \$100 million on a new big-bird deboning poultry complex in and near Palestine, TX. Three facilities are planned, according to the Palestine Economic Development Council. A hatchery and processing plant will be built in Anderson County at a cost of \$92 million; a feed mill will be located in Freestone County at an additional \$32 million, reported *Meat & Poultry*. [Full Story](#) (Free Registration Required)

With many Peruvian asparagus fields being converted into plantings for other commodities, supplies in Peru have been significantly lower this year. As a consequence, prices for asparagus have been high, and suppliers are busy looking for alternative sites in which to grow asparagus, reported *Fresh Plaza*. [Full Story](#)

The blue Chiquita brand sticker will continue to be seen on deciduous and citrus fruit. Although Chiquita Brands International decided to abdicate its deciduous fruit business last year to focus on its core commodities of bananas, pineapple and packaged salads, a new, separate company composed of former Chiquita veterans has acquired the exclusive license to market Chiquita deciduous fruit and citrus in North America, Asia and Latin America, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

The number of farms in the U.S. in 2012 is estimated at 2.2 million, down 11,630 farms from 2011, according to NASS. Total land in farms, at 914 million acres, decreased 3 million acres from 2011. The average farm size is 421 acres, up 1 acre from the previous year. Farm numbers in the \$500,000 and over sales class increased by 8.6%, to 145,190 farms. Higher commodity prices and larger value of sales contributed to changes in the number of farms within these sales classes. [Full Story](#)

The growing global demand for quinoa by health food enthusiasts is not just raising prices for the Andean "super

grain" and living standards among Bolivian farmers, according to *The Associated Press*. Quinoa fever is running up against physical limits. The scramble to grow more is prompting Bolivian farmers to abandon traditional land management practices, endangering the fragile ecosystem of the arid highlands, according to agronomists. [Full Story](#)

Greater competition from Australia and Egypt in the global market dampened export prospects for California rice, and farmers worry they will have a harder time covering their production costs as they face lower returns and uncertainty in future farm programs. One rice farmer noted the market price for rice has come down, even though California acreage and production both dropped last year, reported *Ag Alert*. [Full Story](#)

Pacific Ethanol entered into a multi-year agreement with Chromatin to use, produce and deliver locally grown sorghum in the production of ethanol. The agreement covers up to 30,000 acres of Chromatin sorghum to be grown and supplied to Pacific Ethanol, reported *Sacramento Business Journal*. [Full Story](#)

Much of the West continues to struggle with unusually dry conditions, raising the prospect of another year of wildfires, stunted crops and unnavigable stretches of river in various parts of the country, according to a federal assessment. More than two-thirds of the country is under abnormally dry to exceptional drought conditions, "which, although serious, is a slight improvement since fall 2012," stated the National Drought Early Warning Outlook. While the report noted the drought was over in most of the nation east of the Mississippi River, the portion of the country still facing drought - most of the West and Florida - should expect it "to persist or intensify," reported *Yakima Herald*. [Full Story](#)

The Millennial generation will change the produce industry as they respond to and increase awareness of sustainability, organic produce and fresh healthy fruits and vegetables, according to *The Produce News*. It is strongly recommended that all levels of the produce industry study Gen-Yers and Millennials to better understand who they are, what they like and where they are headed in our industry. For employers, the workers of tomorrow will dramatically revolutionize the way in which business is conducted. For

retailers, these workers will certainly think much differently and breathe new life into efforts to reach consumers. [Full Story](#)

In addition to working on the flavor of apples, breeders in Europe and New Zealand have been working on getting new varieties with red-colored flesh. Next Big Thing (NBT), the cooperative responsible for SweeTango apples, entered into a partnership with some of these breeders and other international interests under the name IFORED, with a goal of bringing red-fleshed apple varieties to the U.S. and global markets within a few years, according to NBT's president, reported *Fruit Growers News*. [Full Story](#)

The spotted wing drosophila was confirmed in Arkansas after reaching U.S. shores in 2008. The invasive species can cause 100% losses in fruit, vegetables. There are reports from North Carolina to Maine where growers have experienced around an average of 20% damage. The same is true on the West Coast from California to British Columbia, reported *Delta Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)