

## *Market News*

**Most experts estimate the cattle feeding industry now has an excess capacity of between 20% and 25%, while the meatpacking industry has an excess capacity of 10% to 15%**, according to a CattleFax market analyst. Years of drought are causing feedlots to dismantle and Cargill Beef to temporarily close a slaughterhouse in Plainview, TX, a state that estimates the annual economic loss to the Panhandle region is \$1.1 billion. If it rains this spring and summer, even fewer animals are predicted to move into feedlots because ranchers will hold back cows to breed and rebuild their herds, reported *The Associated Press*. [Full Story](#)

**Western pecan growers have seen in-shell price offerings for the 2012 crop tumble as much as 40% or more below year-earlier levels after watching a booming market in China and strong sales at home raise prices to record highs for two previous crops.** Pecans simply became too expensive for American tastes, stated a pecan grower and buyer, estimating that consumption dropped to 350 million in 2011 from 425 million in 2008, reported *Western Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)

**Grain sorghum, a crop that once was planted on almost 500,000 acres in California and has now almost disappeared, could make a comeback as a feedstock for ethanol and high-grade biofuel production.** Organizers hope to convince growers to plant as many as 30,000 acres of grain sorghum in the San Joaquin Valley this year to feed the Central Valley's corn-fed ethanol plants, reported *Western Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)

**In the latest round of closures in Maine's scallop fishery this winter, state officials decided to shut down three more areas to scallop harvesting.** The areas being closed include a portion in outer Penobscot Bay immediately west of St. George, Union River and Union River Bay, and the western extremities of Cobscook Bay. As with the earlier closures, the areas are being shut down because of a level of fishing that, if it continues, could hamper the ability of scallops in them to replenish their numbers, reported *Bangor Daily News*. [Full Story](#)

**An orange crop literally falling from the tree and persistently**

**high retail OJ prices may lead to lower OJ sales for the 11th time out of the past 12 seasons**, stated Florida Department of Citrus' chief economist. On the brighter side, this season's rapidly declining orange crop has boosted farm prices for Florida's growers, reported *The Lakeland Ledger*. [Full Story](#) (Free Registration Required)

**The Chilean blueberry harvest was effected by rains in the Southern regions last week.** An increase in the amount of discarded fruit has had a downward effect on export volumes, leading only about 2,000 tons to shipped this week, reported *Fresh Plaza*. [Full Story](#)

**Stemilt Growers and Lantao of Shanghai, China will be the first marketers of d'Anjou pears from Washington state in China.** The d'Anjou is a good multi-purpose pear that is well suited for the Chinese market, according to the VP of sales and marketing for Stemilt, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

**India will be unable to consume or export enough wheat and rice to rein in a record stockpile after another bumper harvest, a failure that means crops risk rotting in fields instead of being sold on world markets to cash in on higher prices.** When threshing is over in June, the government's combined wheat and rice stocks are set to hit 110.2 million tons, reported *Reuters*. [Full Story](#)

**The Scientific Research Department at the Florida Department of Citrus rebranded itself to reflect a new mission focusing on monitoring orange juice quality and flavor that might be affected by citrus greening.** The department's name is now the Center of Citrus Nutrition and Quality Research. To help with flavor analysis, the commission approved spending \$164,145 over the next two years to purchase a new machine capable of doing "gas chromatography with mass spectrometry analysis," reported *The Lakeland Ledger*. [Full Story](#) (Free Registration Required)

**The annual Maine Fishermen's Forum will highlight the bizarre 2012 lobster fishing season, and what can be done to prevent a repeat figure.** What Maine's \$330 million lobster industry went through last year stands out among the ups and downs faced by Maine fishermen through the years, reported *Bangor Daily News*. [Full Story](#)

**A warmer than normal winter is accelerating growth of Florida**

**A warmer than normal winter is accelerating growth of Florida crops.** Grower-shippers stated buyers should expect a bumper crop of bell peppers, which is set to start earlier than normal, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

**Nonpareil Farms, a grower-packer-marketer of fresh potatoes, entered into a letter of intent for the sale of its dehydrated potato business to Basic American Foods.** Nonpareil stated the sale would enable it to focus on its rapidly growing fresh produce brand, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

**Developing countries grew biotech crops on more land than in industrialized countries in 2012, for the first time since the introduction of biotech crops almost two decades ago,** according to a report by the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications. Developing nations planted 52% of the global biotech crops in 2012, up from 50% a year earlier and higher than the 48% that industrial countries grew last year, reported *Western Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)

**Heading into the deal's final weeks, Chilean grapes are still lagging behind last season's volumes.** As the Chilean deal gets closer to its spring end, there are no signs of a last-minute surge in volumes, stated the special projects manager for Pandol Bros., reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

**Tomatoes do not feature in the Chinese national diet yet the country now grows more tomatoes for processing than anywhere except California.** Once processed into paste, the product is shipped mainly to Europe. The rise of the country's tomato industry, which barely existed 10 years ago, is troubling growers in countries which have a rather longer association with the fruit, including Italy. Fresh and dried tomatoes as well as tomato powder, lycopene powder and oil and canned tomatoes are also exported from China, reported *The Guardian*. [Full Story](#)

**Willamette Egg Farms, founded in 1934, is Oregon's largest egg farm and produces about 1.6 million eggs a day for grocery stores and restaurants.** The chickens' new home is state-of-the-art, one of two new henhouses built to increase cage-free egg production. The construction represents a significant pivot for Oregon's largest egg producer, and is a response to rising consumer demand as well

egg producer, and is a response to rising consumer demand as well as legislative changes on the horizon. Nationally, cage-free production was 5.7% of the total as of March 2012, according to the American Egg Board, reported *OregonLive.com*. [Full Story](#)

**Last year's California avocado crop came in at about 460 million-lbs., a substantial increase over the prior year, and an even larger crop is anticipated this year.** Because of the larger crop, shippers are planning to ramp up volume earlier in the season than they did last year in an effort to create a more even flow of fruit throughout the season, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

**Peru's coffee production will be lower than expected this year due to a plant-eating fungus that has affected about one-third of the country's crops.** Peru's National Coffee Chamber stated that about 130,000 hectares of coffee plantations have so far been affected by the roya disease, also known as coffee rust. In total, about 415,000 hectares in Peru are used to grow coffee. The president of the coffee chamber, stated that the fungus will likely spread to more plantations, reported *The Wall Street Journal*. [Full Story](#) (WSJ Subscription Required)

**Gill's mealybug has spread throughout the rest of Tulare County, CA and is now moving into northern Kern County after becoming a problem for pistachio growers around Tulare more than a decade ago.** Once the insect infests an orchard, it requires annual control and the key to preventing spread of this pest is sanitation, reported *Western Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)

**Pork and beef parts not usually eaten by U.S. consumers and considered delicacies in other regions of the world now constitute a major segment of the export market for U.S. meat,** according to the senior VP of global marketing and communication for the U.S. Meat Export Federation. In past four to five years, "the volume of meat going to export has just skyrocketed. In 2011, we were up to just under 5 billion-lbs. of pork exports, and we expect to set a new record in 2012," reported *Western Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)

