

**A 67-year-old emeritus professor of horticulture at the University of Florida (UF) holds patents on more than 30 blueberry varieties bred specifically for Florida's semitropical climate.** Florida blueberry growers estimate 95% of the state's annual blueberry production comes from varieties bred by Prof. Paul Lyrene in his 36-year career at UF's plant breeding program, reported *The Lakeland Ledger*. [Full Story](#) (Free Registration Required)

**Vietnam's coffee production is estimated in marketing year (MY) 2012/13 up to about 25 million 60 kg-bags of green coffee, about a 4% drop from MY 2011/12 due to pre-seasonal rains during the coffee flower blossoming period in main coffee growing areas.** The total export estimate in MY 2012/13 is up to 23.8 million bags due to the pace of green bean exports MY-to-date. [USDA Report](#)

**Georgia and north Florida watermelon growers are late to the game due to a cool spring, earlier season delays held back some of the Mexican and Texan crop, and California and Arizona are coming into their own as production ramps up in June.** All that means the U.S. will be awash in watermelon from now through September, setting up ample opportunity for retailers to promote with abandon. Heavy rains will likely keep Georgia growers out of the fields until mid-June, about two weeks behind the normal start of the deal, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

**Ocean Spray cut freight costs by 40% and greenhouse gases by 20% by working with a competitor to boost transportation efficiency.** As part of a network redesign, the Massachusetts-based producer of fruit juice and food had recently opened a new distribution center in Lakeland, FL to serve customers in the Southeast. By centralizing supply closer to clients, the company had already slashed millions of miles out of its distribution network, cutting both freight costs and carbon emissions, reported *DC Velocity*. [Full Story](#)

**As of May 24, California's tomato processors reported they have or will have contracts for 13.1 million tons of processing tomatoes for 2013, a 4.5% increase from the final contracted production total from last year.** The May contracted acreage of 259,000 is 2,000 below the January intentions forecast and 1,000 above from last year's final contracted acreage. Fresno County remains the top California County in contracted planted acreage for

2013 with 99,000 acres. Curly top virus is an issue this year. Significant damage has been reported throughout the State causing growers to replant some fields. [USDA Report](#)

**The sudden and widespread appearance of a swine virus deadly to young pigs is raising questions about the bio-security shield designed to protect the U.S. food supply.** The swine-only virus poses no danger to humans or other animals, and the meat from infected pigs is safe for people to eat. Though previously seen in parts of Asia and Europe, the virus now has spread into five leading hog-raising U.S. states. How it arrived in the U.S. remains a mystery. While the U.S. imports millions of pigs each year from Canada, it imports pigs from virtually no other country, and no Canadian cases of the virus have been confirmed, reported *Reuters*. [Full Story](#)

**Balaton tart cherry trees at Michigan State University's Clarksville Research Station are descendants of trees from Hungary.** The Hungarian cherry is different from America's dominant sour cherry, a variety called Montmorency. The fruit of the Hungarian tree is firmer, more suited to picking by hand and eating fresh. The flesh is red, as well as the skin. Montmorency cherries have red skin, but the flesh is clear, reported *NPR*. [Full Story](#)

**Western chocolate makers are working more closely with cocoa farmers to increase crop yields and secure future supplies to meet growing demand from emerging economies, as well as make farming the crop lucrative enough to ensure younger generations remain interested in cultivating the beans.** Mars is the latest multinational to pledge to help its suppliers boost cocoa yields over the next 10 years to 1,500-2,500 kg per hectare, up from the current 450 kg. The company stated it would invest roughly \$30 million a year over the next decade to establish development centers that allow farmers to learn about the use of superior planting materials and rehabilitate old cocoa gardens, reported *The Wall Street Journal*. [Full Story](#) (WSJ Subscription Required)

**This month, New England's fishermen again saw a cut to the number of fish they can catch, this time so deep that the historic industry's existence is threatened from Rhode Island to Maine.** But as hard as the cuts are likely to hit fishing communities, local seafood eaters may not notice at all. In the region's markets. *grocery*

stores and restaurants, imported fish dominate, and the cuts make that less likely to change. The cuts will shrink the catch limit 77% for cod in the Gulf of Maine and 61% for cod on Georges Bank, off southeastern Massachusetts. That's the worst of a series of reductions to the catch of bottom-dwelling groundfish, such as haddock and flounder, that many fear could be fatal to the industry, reported *Patriot Ledger*. [Full Story](#)

**For every gallon of olive oil pressed from the fruit, about 38-lbs. of olive skins, pulp and pits are left behind.** Known as pomace, these leftovers typically have low-value uses. But a USDA agricultural engineer is working with olive growers and olive-oil processors in California to find new, environmentally friendly, and profitable uses for pomace, reported *Western Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)

**If the area's cool, wet weather continues much longer, Central Virginia fruit farmers could be in trouble, state agriculture officials claim.** So far, the wet weather has been a boon, and peach farmers in Albemarle County are optimistic for this year's crop, which is coming in thick. Now, the weather needs to warm up and dry out quickly if 2013 is to match the quality of the bumper crops of 2011 and 2012. Hot dry days now will give peaches a chance to sweeten before they are harvested, reported *The News & Advance*. [Full Story](#)

**Since 1984, the price of ground beef has spiraled to a record-breaking \$3.51 this past Memorial Day.** The continuing drought in the Midwest has dwindled herds to levels not seen in six decades, forcing the prices of beef to spike to their current levels. Now there is increasing demand but the smallest number of cattle in the national herd since 1952 - just 89.3 million head. It takes three years to go from a pregnant cow to an animal ready for slaughter, so there is no way to quickly rebuild the supply, reported *USA Today*. [Full Story](#)

**Orange-juice futures climbed to a 13-month high on speculation that supplies will be disrupted during hurricane season.** This month, USDA affirmed that Florida's orange crop will be 138 million boxes, 10% less than first projected in October because of drought and a crop disease, reported *Bloomberg.com*. [Full Story](#)

**Pacific Ethanol has begun commercial production of corn oil at its Magic Valley plant in Burley, ID.** The company announced in

June 2012 that it planned to get into the corn oil business, installing appropriate technology at its facilities. In the renewable fuels industry, corn oil can be used to produce biodiesel. It also is used in numerous other products, depending on the separation and production process. Corn oil is used in cooking fluids, animal feed, soap, paint, inks, textiles, drugs and insecticides, reported *The Sacramento Bee*. [Full Story](#) (Free Registration Required)