

MARKET NEWS

With cattle prices at record levels, reports of missing or stolen cattle rose. The nearly 5,800 livestock thefts reported in Texas in 2014 were the most in five years, with the value of the animals estimated in excess of \$5.7 million, the most in a decade. Through July this year, Texas officials worked nearly 400 theft cases while Kansas's Attorney General's Office has 20 open investigations into stolen livestock, reported *St. Paul Pioneer Press*. [Full Story](#)

Tumbling commodity prices may prompt a face-off between Iowa producers and landowners over farmland rents. Rents are currently about 50% higher than seven years ago, while farmland values declined about 9% to \$7,943 an acre last year. In Iowa, farmers and tenants must notify each other by Sept. 1 if they wish to break an existing lease, reported *Des Moines Register*. [Full Story](#)

Annual catch limits for commercial groundfish vessels are being adjusted by the National Marine Fisheries Service based on the final Northeast multispecies sector rosters of May 1, 2015. Sector annual catch entitlements and common pool allocations for groundfish stocks are also being adjusted. The catch limit and allocation adjustments are not controversial, according to the announcement to be published in the Aug. 18 Federal Register. [Full Notice](#)

USDA proposed a rule to implement a recommendation from the California Walnut Board to increase the assessment rate established for walnuts from 1.89 cents to 3.79 cents per kernelweight pound of assessable walnuts. Sales of California walnuts in the domestic market declined in recent years, and more market development and promotion would reverse the trend, according to the board. The board committed to increasing expenditures on domestic marketing promotion projects and programs to help the market. [Full Notice](#)

Manure is increasingly seen as a resource to utilize in the agricultural industry. Researchers are working with farmers, ranchers, agronomists and other agriculturists to make greater use of manure as a crop fertilizer as it can be less expensive than utilizing commercial fertilizer, *St. Paul Pioneer Press*. [Full Story](#)

Researchers are experimenting with using drones to dry rain-soaked cherry trees at Washington State University. Rain can damage the skin of the cherries, so growers use empty sprayers and wind machines to dry them, but sometimes hire helicopters to hover over the trees, which can be expensive and has led to multiple helicopter crashes, reported *Yakima Herald*. [Full Story](#)

California processing tomato deliveries totaled 6.3 million tons

through Aug. 15, according to the California Processing Tomato Advisory Board. The 1.2 million tons delivered for the week of Aug. 8 beat the previous week's record of 1.1 million tons harvested. The 2015 crop year-to-date is slightly ahead of the 2014 crop. [Full Story](#)

California's raisin grape crop is expected to be larger than last year.

USDA estimated a 13% increase in tonnage, according to the results of its annual field survey with the crop estimated to produce 2 million tons of raisin grapes compared to 1.7 million tons last year. The survey also shows that the number of raisin grape acres dropped to 185,000, with yields estimated at 10.8 tons per acre. [Full Story](#)

Overall export prices were down 6.1% from last year, reaching the lowest levels since 2009. Agricultural products, food, and beverage experienced the biggest hits. According to economists, the drop is a result of a strong U.S. economy and dollar combined with a weak international economy, reported the *Phoenix Business Journal*. [Full Story](#)

Peruvian avocado growers shipped nearly 9 million-lbs. of avocados to the U.S. per week in late July, but volume is expected to decrease slowly as August winds down. Volume shipped to the U.S. was down slightly to 120 million-lbs. from 135 million-lbs. in 2014, with a large portion of the difference in volume shipped to Europe, reported *The Packer*. [Full Story](#)

The Colorado Department of Agriculture placed 70 locations under quarantine after inspectors found horses, mules and cattle herds infected with vesicular stomatitis. The quarantine includes farms in 10 Colorado counties, with 19 locations in Montrose County and 18 in Larimer County, reported *Miami Herald*. [Full Story](#)

U.S. peanut industry leaders view China as a huge potential market for U.S. products, specifically U.S. branded peanuts. Although China is the world's largest peanut producing country with an output of 12 to 14 million tons annually, the quality of Chinese-grown peanuts is often rated below what is produced in the U.S., reported *Southeast Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)

Mangos imported to the U.S. from Mexico, Haiti and Brazil reached approximately 1.8 million boxes for the week ending Aug. 14, representing an increase of 33% when compared to the same week last year, according to the National Mango Board. Mexican exports are expected to taper off within the next three weeks, with early September estimated as the end of the season. [Full Story](#)

The avian flu cost the Iowa economy \$1.2 billion, according to a study commissioned by the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation. The tally includes about \$800 million in lost egg, chicken and turkey production, along with the goods and services needed for production, and \$400 million in lost

the goods and services needed for production, and \$400 million in lost wages to workers and taxes to federal, state and local governments, reported *Des Moines Register*. [Full Story](#)

A Chelan Fruit Cooperative storage facility was destroyed by the Reach Fire. The facility was holding an estimated 1.8 million-lbs. of apples. Chelan Fruit's other facility in the region is fully operational, reported *The Washington Times*. [Full Story](#)

NMFS and NOAA issued in season changes to Pacific Coast groundfish fisheries management measures. The final rule increased commercial fishery trip limits for sablefish, blackgill rockfish, big skate, Minor Shelf Rockfish and California scorpionfish off the coasts of Washington, Oregon and California. [Full Story](#)

USDA issued an interim rule with a request for comment requested by the Idaho-Eastern Oregon Onion Committee regarding a decrease in assessment rates for the 2015-16 and subsequent fiscal periods. The assessment rate was lowered from \$0.10 per cwt. of onions to \$0.05. [Full Story](#)

USDA issued an interim rule with a request for comment requested by the Washington Apricot Marketing Committee regarding a decrease in assessment rates for the 2015-16 and subsequent fiscal periods. The assessment rate was lowered from \$1.50 per ton of apricots to \$0.75. [Full Story](#)

The Modesto/Madera County peach harvest should be complete by Aug. 29, while peach growers in Marysville and Yuba City estimate that harvest will be complete by Aug. 27, according to Pacific Coast Producers. Pear producers in the River, Linden, Mendocino and Lake Districts will complete their harvest by the end of the week. [Full Story](#)

The 2015 Michigan apple crop is expected to be smaller than last year's harvest, but many growers in the region expect a high-quality crop due to excellent growing conditions since initial bloom. Production of Gala, Fuji and Honeycrisp varieties is expected to increase within the state, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

Domestic sales of California-grown almonds increased slightly in July from the typical 30% of the total crop to 35%, according to the Almond Board. The reason for the shift is largely due to decreased sales to Russia following the nation's embargo on Western food products, reported *AgAlert*. [Full Story](#)

Salmon catches in Alaska are unlikely to reach the forecast of 221 million fish. The total Alaska salmon catch is currently at 200 million fish, and the rate of returning pinks in Prince William Sound needs to pick up to reach the forecasted number, reported *Fish Radio*. [Full Story](#)

The lobster population crashed to the lowest levels on record in

southern New England, forcing lobstermen in Connecticut and Rhode Island out of business. The lobster catch in the region sank to about 3.3 million-lbs. in 2013 from a peak of about 22 million-lbs. in 1997. The declines are largely in response to adverse environmental conditions, including increasing water temperatures over the last 15 years that are driving lobsters north to colder water, reported *Press Herald*. [Full Story](#)

Researchers are testing eggs as an antibiotic alternative for livestock.

Wisconsin researchers found that feeding animals eggs, which contain antibodies, help strength an animal's immune system. Poultry, beef and other animals are potential subjects for the protection, reported *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. [Full Story](#)

The drought in California cost the state's agricultural sector \$1.84 billion and 10,100 jobs in 2015, according to the University of California, Davis. The research team estimated that continued drought conditions through 2017 will worsen the economic impact by as much as 6%. [Full Story](#)

California's Kern County's overall crop value reached a record \$7.5 billion in 2014, fueled by a robust year in grapes, almonds and dairy. The county's agricultural gross value rose 12% from 2013 to 2014 as grapes remained the top crop with a value of \$1.7 billion, reported *Fresno Bee*. [Full Story](#)

Total July milk production in the 23 major states rose 1.2% from July 2014, reaching nearly 16.6 billion-lbs., according to USDA. Total milk production during the month for the entire country was also up 1.2%. Production per cow averaged 1,921 lbs. for the month, representing the highest production per cow for the month of July since USDA began recording the statistic in 2003. [Full Story](#)

The fresh cranberry market may be boosted by high-quality fruit this year, according to some growers. However, supplies of some cranberry categories, like concentrate, are so high that outdated product is being discarded. The Cranberry Marketing Committee estimates that 8.6 million barrels of cranberries will be produced this year, slightly higher than the 8.4 million barrels forecast by USDA, reported *The Packer*. [Full Story](#)

Initial Washington state Bartlett pear reports indicate an increase in small-sized pears, according to Columbia Marketing International. The increased supply of small-sized pears will likely lead to promotable volumes of bagged fruit this season, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

The Michigan Blueberry Growers Association is planning a fruit processing and cold storage facility in South Haven, MI. The Growers Association will sell 25 acres of the site to Hanson Logistics, which in turn

would lease space to Dole. Initial plans call for 150,000-sq. ft. of processing space and future phases call for the cold storage facility, reported *The Herald Palladium*. [Full Story](#)

An article claiming U.S. regulators relied on flawed and outdated research to allow the expanded use of an herbicide linked to cancer was published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. A sharp increase in herbicide applied to widely planted GMO crops used in food, and a recent WHO determination that glyphosate is probably a human carcinogen are two key factors that necessitate regulatory review, according to the article, reported *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. [Full Story](#), [Full Article](#)

Farmers Cooperative Co. and West Central Cooperative will explore combining businesses. The move could lower costs and improve services to members, improve access to combined assets such as rail, farm equipment and trucks, and strengthen efforts to diversify the businesses, reported *Des Moines Register*. [Full Story](#)

USDA is seeking to stockpile a bird flu vaccine in preparation of the possible return of the virus. The agency didn't approve an avian influenza vaccine in birds yet, but is expected to publish an environmental assessment in the coming weeks, reported *Reuters*. [Full Story](#)

Tampa port officials approved the development of a \$14.6 million refrigerated warehouse designed to stimulate local business and draw more ships to Port Tampa Bay. The planned 130,000-sq. ft. storage area for bananas, grapes, chicken and other fresh fruits, vegetables and meats will likely be operational within 16 months, reported *The Tampa Tribune*. [Full Story](#)

Farmers in California's Central Valley are seeing the land sink nearly two inches a month as groundwater continues to be pumped during the state's historic drought. Recent NASA research shows that land near the city of Corcoran sank 13 inches in eight months, and part of the California Aqueduct dropped eight inches in four months last year, reported *The Tampa Tribune*. [Full Story](#)

NMFS and NOAA reduced the commercial possession limit for northern red hake for the remainder of the 2015 fishing year, effective through April 30, 2016. The regulations reduced the limit from 3,000 lbs. to 1,500 lbs. [Full Notice](#)

U.S. commercial red meat production totaled over 4 billion-lbs. in July, representing a 3% increase from the same month in 2014, according to USDA. Beef production totaled almost 2.1 billion-lbs., while pork followed closely behind at nearly 2 billion-lbs. Veal production was up 11% from last year at 6.9 million-lbs. [Full Report](#)

The U.S. and Canadian cattle inventory rose 2% to 111.4 million head as of July 1 when compared to the same period last year, according to

as of July 1 when compared to the same period last year, according to USDA. U.S. cattle and calves totaled 98.4 million head, while Canadian cattle and calves totaled 13 million head. [Full Report](#)

The U.S. and Canadian hog inventory was 80.1 million head for June, representing a 7% increase from the same month in 2014 and a 3% increase from 2013, according to USDA. Market hog inventory was at 73 million head, up 8% from last year. [Full Report](#)

USDA, the University of Georgia and the University of Florida created a peach variety called Gulfsnow. The Gulfsnow only requires 400 hours of chilling to flower and set fruit, compared to the standard June Gold, which requires 650 hours. The Gulfsnow variety is expected to increase the supply of early-summertime peaches. [Full Report](#)

Fishermen in 2014 caught a record level 2.8 million tons of tuna in the western and central Pacific Ocean. The tuna catch included over 161,000 tons of big-eye, a 5% increase over the previous year, according to the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority, reported *Radio New Zealand News*. [Full Story](#)

Total mushroom sales for the 2014-15 U.S. crop totaled 953 million-lbs., representing a 6% increase from the previous season, according to USDA. Value for the mushroom crop was estimated to reach nearly \$1.2 billion, representing a 10% increase from the previous season. [Full Report](#)

Researchers claim man-made global warming made California's drought 15% to 20% worse than it would have been and will likely intensify future droughts, according to a study by the American Geophysical Union. California could also face nearly permanent drought conditions by the second half of this century as warming temperatures are making the drought worse as extra heat draws moisture out of plants and soil, exacerbating the dryness, according to the study, reported *Des Moines Register*. [Full Story](#)

NFMS and NOAA proposed a catch limit for longline-caught bigeye tuna for each U.S. Pacific territory. The proposed limit would total 2,000 metric tons. The agencies invite public comment through the next 60 days. [Full Notice](#)