

**Several more areas in Southern California were quarantined** to prevent the spread of the Asian citrus psyllid. Sixty-four square miles of San Francisco and San Mateo County and 173 square miles near San Jose are included in the quarantine, reported *San Francisco Gate*. [Full Story](#)

**Tomato growers expect to produce about 13.2 million tons this year**, but some are concerned the total could be too much. Farmers cited factors including worldwide inventories of processed tomatoes being high, weakness in the export market due to the strong U.S. dollar, and EU tariffs that add 14% to costs as reasons growers will not be able to sell that much, reported *Modesto Bee*. [Full Story](#)

**Hawaii utilized coffee production was estimated at 30.6 million lbs.** for the 2015-2016 season, representing a 16% drop from the previous season, according to USDA. Bearing acreage totaled 6,900 acres, down 900 acres from the previous year. [Full Report](#)

**Farmers tilling fields near poultry barns may have helped spread the avian flu** in Minnesota last year, according to a University of Minnesota study. Researchers found that tilling caused soil disruption, freeing airborne particles that could carry the virus. The study also found truck-washing stations aimed at stopping the bird flu's spread may have contributed, reported *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. [Full Story](#)

**The price for Norwegian salmon hit a 30-year high.** Salmon was priced at \$3.25 a pound, a 53% increase from October, and the cost could increase further in upcoming months. In addition to growing demand, an outbreak of parasitic sea lice may cut output in the first half of 2016 by 5%, reported *Bloomberg*. [Full Story](#)

**European demand for sweet potatoes increased by 300% over the past 10 years**, according to the American Sweet Potato Marketing Institute. Europe imported 80,000 tons in 2013, with the U.S. contributing nearly 50% of that supply. [Full Story](#)

**Pennsylvania mushroom growers are recovering from Winter Storm Jonas** after deliveries, harvesting and packing operations were disrupted by the storm. The American Mushroom Institute noted that it is possible the snow could affect the preparation of substrate, the growing medium for mushrooms, for the rest of the first quarter, reported *The Produce News*.

[Full Story](#)

**Vertical farm company FarmedHere will locate a year-round indoor farm** and food processing facility in Louisville, KY. It plans to invest \$23.5 million in a 60,000-sq. ft. space, and use half the space for vertically stacked grow beds. The company will dedicate the remaining space to sorting and packaging leafy greens and processing herbs and other plants,

reported *Area Development*. [Full Story](#)

**Moroccan citrus will be banned from entering the U.S.** following the discovery of medflies in a shipment of clementines at the Port of Philadelphia. Clementines, mandarins, tangerines and sweet oranges from the country will be banned from the U.S. effective Feb. 8, reported *The Packer*. [Full Story](#)

**California's snowpack is 115% of its historical average** at 18.5 inches, the deepest level in five years. The snowpack's water content must be higher than 28 inches by April 1 to have a significant effect on the drought, reported *Los Angeles Times*. [Full Story](#)

**The Southeast is experiencing the start of an oyster boom** as the region adopts aquaculture techniques that restored the oyster populations in the northern parts of the country. Local producers are reporting upticks in demand, and states are adopting new farming techniques to improve flavor and cultivate oysters in different areas, reported *NPR*. [Full Story](#)

**Regional farmers in the fourth quarter remained strapped for cash to run operations**, according to the Kansas City Fed. Officials reported a stronger demand for farm operating loans due to abysmal prices for commodities like corn and soybeans. The volume of operating loans remained historically high in the fourth quarter, reported *Omaha World-Herald*. [Full Story](#)

**South Africa and Israel resumed imports of U.S. beef for the first time in 13 years.** Both countries previously prohibited U.S. beef and beef products imports due to the December 2003 case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, reported *Agnet.net*. [Full Story](#)

**The California Department of Water Resources increased its water delivery estimate** for most recipients from 10% to 15%. The increase is in response to increased snow pack following El Nino weather patterns. Officials noted that additional rainfall and snowpack totals could further increase the estimates. [Full Story](#)

**Farmers in San Bernardino County, CA, are removing citrus trees in abandoned groves** to protect against citrus greening. Government officials fear that the abandoned groves will serve as breeding grounds for the Asian citrus psyllid, and removed the trees from lots after warnings issued by the state failed to elicit responses from landowners, reported *Ag Alert*. [Full Story](#)

**Fishing regulators are trying to broker peace between herring and haddock fisheries** in the Northeast. Herring fishermen are allowed a "catch cap" of haddock in Georges Bank every year, but regulators closed a large section to herring fishing until May 1 after the cap was exceeded. Some herring fishermen would like the rules to be changed, reported *Press Herald*. [Full Story](#)

[Press Herald. Full Story](#)

**Cargill, Wells Fargo, Monsanto and Deere & Co. retreated from the crop insurance business.** Volatile crop prices, extreme weather and pressure on government subsidies increased risk for insurers, and large agriculture companies are increasingly divesting themselves of insurance businesses, reported *Chicago Tribune*. [Full Story](#)

**Seattle is suing Monsanto to make it pay for cleaning up chemical compounds** from the city's drainage system and the Duwamish River. The city claims that Monsanto knowingly continued to profit from the sale of polychlorinated biphenyls even after it knew the chemicals were polluting the environment, reported *Seattle Times*. [Full Story](#)

**Researchers developed a robot that can sort fruit and vegetables and remove weeds** from a field. Cambridge Consultants created algorithms that can help robots deal with natural variations and small changes in the environment, making them more suited for tasks that involve detecting varied shapes and sizes, reported *Reuters*. [Full Story](#)

**Poultry certified wholesome during December 2015 totaled about 3.9 billion-lbs.**, representing a 1% drop from Dec. 2014, according to USDA. The preliminary total live weight of all federally inspected poultry during the month was about 5.1 billion-lbs., down 1% from the same period last year. [Full Report](#)

**Shrimp landings in the Gulf of Mexico for 2015 totaled 106.9 million-lbs.**, the lowest total since 2010 and the third lowest total recorded in the last sixteen years, according to the Southern Shrimp Alliance. The decline was due to the drop in shrimp landed in Louisiana at 45.3 million-lbs., 30% below the historical average. [Full Story](#)

**California agriculture officials established a 97 mile quarantine over much of Fresno** after finding an Asian citrus psyllid nearly three weeks ago. The psyllid was found on a citrus tree at a private residence, reported *Fresno Bee*. [Full Story](#)

Meanwhile, **USDA will release another \$6.8 million for citrus greening research** to the University of Florida. The money will come from a five-year, \$125 million trust fund in the 2014 Farm Bill. President Obama will ask for additional greening research dollars in the 2016-2017 federal budget, reported *The Ledger*. [Full Story](#)

**East Coast produce markets fared well through Winter Storm Jonas.** Workers at Hunts Point Terminal Market in Bronx, NY, Exp Group LLC in North Bergen, NJ, and Maryland Wholesale Produce Market in Jessup, MD, reported relatively few interruptions in service due to the storm, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

**U.S. refrigerated warehouse capacity totaled 4.2 billion cubic ft. as of**

**Oct. 1, 2015**, a 3% increase from the last survey conducted in October 2013, according to USDA. The states with the largest gross warehouse capacity include California with 570 million cubic ft., Florida with 286 million cubic ft., Texas with 253 million cubic ft., and Georgia with 250 million cubic feet. [Full Report](#)

**A 25,000 acre tree farm in Oregon will be converted to a dairy and a farm** for irrigated crops. Willow Creek Dairy purchased about 7,000 acres, while AgriNorthwest bought the remaining land, reported *East Oregonian*. [Full Story](#)

**Researchers in Idaho are using drones to detect diseased potato plants.** Idaho State University scientists mounted cameras on drones and flew them 60 meters above potato fields, and were able to detect individual diseased and stressed plants early and accurately over two years, reported *The Capital Press*. [Full Story](#)

**U.S. cattle and calves on feed for the slaughter market totaled 10.6 million head** Jan. 1, a slight decrease compared to Jan. 1, 2015, according to USDA. Placements in feedlots during December 2015 totaled 1.5 million head, 1% below the 2014 level. [Full Report](#)

**U.S. egg production totaled about 8.1 billion during December 2015**, an 8% decrease from December 2014, according to USDA. Egg-type chicks hatched increased 10% to 47.3 million during the period, while broiler-type chicks hatched posted a slight gain. [Full Report](#)

**U.S. milk production in the 23 major states totaled 16.4 billion-lbs. in December 2015**, a 0.7% increase from December 2014. Production per cow averaged 1,894-lbs. for the month, the highest production per cow for the month of December on record. [Full Report](#)

**The Alaskan Department of Fish and Game is forecasting a harvest of 1.7 million sockeye** salmon for Copper River. In Prince William Sound, where pink salmon is the major harvest, a total of 2.7 million fish is expected, reported *Alaska Journal*. [Full Story](#).

**Farmers are beginning to sell off crop stockpiles**, easing a months-long logjam prompted by the lowest grains prices in at least five years. Farmers are being lured to sell by a 4% rise that resulted in March futures for corn on trading at about at \$3.70 per bushel, while soybeans closed at about \$8.77 a bushel, reported *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. [Full Story](#)

**U.S demand for Chilean grapes is very strong at the beginning of the season.** Peak volumes likely won't start until mid-February, according to Seald Sweet International, reported *The Packer*. [Full Story](#)

**Processing conditions were nearly perfect for sugar beets** as Western Sugar Cooperative wound down its 2015 campaign. Extremely good weather is creating a yield of 28 tons per acre, with a 17.8% sugar content, [Full Story](#)

reported *Agnet.net*. [Full Story](#)

**Maine is closing several areas to scallop farming for the rest of the season**, including Fox Islands Thoroughfare, Whiting Bay and Dennys Bay. The Department of Marine Resources claims that further harvesting in these areas could threaten the future of the scallop population, reported *Washington Times*. [Full Story](#)

**Maine lobstermen are scrutinizing a proposed law** designed to streamline the process of obtaining a lobster fishing license. Changes include the creation of a new class of license that would be limited to 300 traps instead of the typical 800 and altering the rules that govern the retirement of lobster licenses, reported *CBS News*. [Full Story](#)