

MARKET NEWS

A cold snap is endangering winter wheat, particularly in Kansas, according to agricultural meteorologists. Supplies of hard red winter wheat are already low due to poor protein levels in the previous two harvests, and as much as 75% of Kansas is at risk of losing crops to cold weather, according to Commodity Weather Group, reported *Reuters*. [Full Story](#)

U.S. peanut stocks reported in commercial storage totaled about 5.5 billion-lbs. as of Nov. 30, 2017, according to USDA. Shelled peanuts on hand totaled about 574 million-lbs., while millings during the month totaled about 400 million-lbs. [Full Report](#)

U.S. shell eggs broken totaled about 189 million dozen during November 2017, a 3% drop from November 2016, according to USDA. Shell eggs broken totaled about 2.1 billion dozen between January and November 2017, up 1% from the same period in 2016. [Full Report](#)

Chilean blueberry producers shipped about 11,000 tons of product the week ending Dec. 24, with 58.5% of the total exported to the U.S., according to the Chilean Blueberry Committee. Europe accounted for 23.4% of Chile's exports, while Asia imported 17.9% of the total. [Full Story](#)

Avocado growers in Mexico, Chile and the Dominican Republic shipped about 60.7 million-lbs. the week of Dec. 24, up from the 47.4 million-lbs. the week prior, according to the Hass Avocado Board. About 38.3 million-lbs. of avocados are projected to ship from Mexico and Chile for the week of Dec. 31. [Full Story](#)

Mars partnered with the University of California Berkley to save cacao using CRISPR technology to produce crops capable of surviving new challenges, including dryer, warmer conditions. The team wants to develop cacao plants that won't wilt or rot at current elevations, eliminating the need to relocate farms or find another growing method, reported *Business Insider*. [Full Story](#)

About two-thirds of South Dakota's winter wheat crop is in fair, good or excellent condition, even as soil moisture continues showing the effects 2017's prolonged summer drought, according to USDA. Topsoil moisture supplies are rated only 47% adequate to surplus, and subsoil moisture is 44% in those categories. [Full Story](#)

Cold weather delayed grain shipments from the Gulf Coast due to the Illinois River freezing over, preventing deliveries from being made. Prices for soybeans and wheat climbed due to the combination of delays and crop damage, and cattle futures are expected to grow as well, reported *Reuters*. [Full Story](#)

Maine fishing regulators shut down a pair of scallop fishing areas to

maine fishing regulators shut down a pair of scallop fishing areas to protect the health of the population. The Maine Department of Marine Resources closed Hussey Sound in Casco Bay and Rogue Island Harbor. Maine scallops were worth nearly \$13 per pound at the dock in 2017, the highest price in history, reported *Press Herald*. [Full Story](#)

USDA implemented a final rule to increase the assessment rate for onions grown in south Texas. The rule, recommended by the South Texas Onion Committee, will increase the rate to \$0.065 per 50-lb. equivalent of onions handled under the order for the 2017-2018 and subsequent fiscal periods. [Full Notice](#)

Meanwhile, **USDA implemented a final rule to increase the assessment rate for pears grown in Oregon and Washington.** The final rule, recommended by the Processed Pear Committee, will increase the rate to \$8.00 per ton of summer and fall pears grown for canning in the 2017-2018 and subsequent fiscal periods. [Full Notice](#)

Florida citrus and strawberry farmers are preparing for the threat of frigid weather. Freezing or near-freezing temperatures are expected overnight and through the morning hours from Jan. 4 through 6. Citrus growers worry trees could see additional fruit loss due to being weakened by Hurricane Irma and more than a decade fighting citrus greening, reported *The Ledger*. [Full Story](#)

U.S. soybeans crushed for crude oil totaled about 5.2 million-tons in November 2017, compared to about 5.1 million-tons in November 2016, according to USDA. Canola seeds crushed for crude oil totaled about 151,000 tons during the month, down from the 209,000 tons produce the prior year.

[Full Report](#)

California strawberry growers shipped approximately 179.1 million flats through Jan. 1, a 5.7% increase from the year-ago period, according to the California Strawberry Commission. The highest recorded daily production between Dec. 25, 2017, and Jan. 1 was Dec. 27, with a total of about 155,000 flats. [Full Story](#)

USDA proposed a change to the percentages of free and restricted volume control for cranberries in the 2017-2018 crop year. The proposed change would designate 85% of the crop as free, and 15% of the crop as restricted for cranberries under the marketing order regulating the handling of cranberries grown in the 10 cranberry-producing states. [Full Story](#)

East Coast commercial fishermen are raising concerns about offshore wind farms leading to more restrictions. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, which oversees wind farm developments in federal waters, has taken steps to address fishermen's concerns, among them excluding specific habitats off Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New York state from wind farm development, reported *Omaha World-Herald*. [Full Story](#)

The University of Maryland received a \$288,000 federal grant to support

restoration efforts in the Chesapeake Bay and coastal waters. The grant was released by the NOAA, reported *Washington Times*. [Full Story](#)

Texas farmers are surveying potential damage to crops in the aftermath of sub-freezing temperatures the first week of January. Meanwhile, Florida strawberry growers expect the frost protection measures put in place Jan. 3 to protect a majority of the state's crop, reported *The Packer*. [Full Story](#)

U.S. cheese output totaled about 1.1 billion-lbs. in November 2017, a 2.8% increase from the year-ago period, according to USDA. Production was broken down into 455 million-lbs. of Italian type cheese and 401 million-lbs. of American type cheese. [Full Report](#)

California is facing a shortage of agricultural field workers. The number of farm laborers from Mexico has been declining, while companies have found it impossible to attract enough U.S.-born workers to make up for the shortage despite enticing new hires with better salaries and benefits, reported *Modesto Bee*. [Full Story](#)

More than 400 berry workers have been laid off in northern California as the industry struggles with labor and other cost issues. Dole Food Co. will lay off 140 raspberry workers as of Jan. 16. Growers are dealing with state rules that shortened the work week, require more overtime hours that's added to costs and increased restrictions on the use of fumigants, reported *Los Angeles Times*. [Full Story](#)

Monsanto's use of dicamba will rise as a centerpiece of its GMO cropping systems. About 20 million acres of dicamba-tolerant Xtend soybeans were planted in the U.S. in 2017, which the company projects to double for the upcoming growing season. The company is developing the Xtend technology for sugar beet, canola and corn, reported *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. [Full Story](#)

Two agriculture co-ops in the Dakotas merged under the name Agtegra. North Central has about 2,400 members in South Dakota and North Dakota, while Wheat Growers has 5,100 members in the two states, reported *The State*. [Full Story](#)