

**Issues for the 1990's.** Janet B. Stevens, editor. Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 664.

### **Abstract**

Food and agriculture, more than ever, operate globally, with producers and agribusiness people competing head on with foreign interests. This increasing integration of world financial markets means that national and international monetary and fiscal policies directly affect U.S. agriculture. New and diverse groups, such as consumer and environmental interests, compete for policy agenda. A broader range of congressional committees also deal with issues affecting agriculture. And, a growing number of government agencies promulgate rules, regulations, standards, and programs involving agriculture and rural America. These rules and regulations are coming under increasing scrutiny by the food and agricultural sector. This report is a collection of front-burner policy issues focusing on America's food and agricultural industry and rural economy. The premise of this collection is that awareness and understanding improve decisionmaking.

**Keywords:** Trade, environment, markets, technology, commodity programs, food, nutrition, rural economy, and conservation

## Contents

### Trade

U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement: Trade Disputes and Settlement ...	3
Economic Realignment Affecting Trade: EC Agreements with EFTA and Eastern Europe .....	5
EC Agricultural Policy Reform.....	7
Relationships of Agricultural Trade and the Environment .....	9
Economic Realignment Affecting Trade: China.....	11
Safety Net Policies and Food Security for Low-Income Importing Countries.....	13
Enterprise for the Americas Initiative .....	15
Food Aid Needs.....	17
Trade Agreements: Liberalizing Multilateral and Regional Trade .....	19
Economic Realignment Affecting Trade: Republics of the Former Soviet Union.....	21
Humanitarian Aid Needs .....	23
Cotton Textile and Apparel Imports.....	25
Supply Variability and Grain Stocks Policies in a Global Market.....	27
Agricultural Export Assistance and High-Value Product Exports .....	29
Grain Cleanliness in the World Market.....	31
Trade Competitiveness of U.S. Agriculture .....	33
Private and Public Financing of Agricultural Research and Development...	35

### Environment

Registration of Pesticides Used To Produce Food .....	39
Improving Water Quality through Policy Reform .....	41
Endangered Species Preservation and Western Water Allocation .....	43
Wetlands Protection Policy .....	45
Environmental Concerns Associated with Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Production .....	47

### Markets

Federal Milk Marketing Orders: Minnesota-Wisconsin Price Hearing....	51
Federal Milk Marketing Orders.....	53
Dairy Price Support Program .....	55
Federal Support for Nonprice Export Market Promotion .....	57
Commercial Export Assistance .....	59
Animal Welfare.....	61
Pricing and Use of Publicly Owned Rangeland.....	63
Prorate Regulations in U.S. Citrus Industry .....	65
Foreign Investment in U.S. Agribusiness .....	67
Generic Commodity Advertising and Promotion .....	69

## **Technology**

Alternative Fuels: Ethanol .....	73
Regulating Bio-Engineered Foods .....	75

## **Commodity Programs**

The Distribution of Direct Government Payments .....	79
Government Support for the U.S. Tobacco Industry .....	81
Commodity Program Entitlements: Deficiency Payments .....	83
Acreage Reduction Programs .....	85
Government Support for the U.S. Sugar Industry .....	87

## **Food and Nutrition**

Chemical Inputs and Food Safety .....	91
Food Sector Regulation: Organic Labeling .....	93
Food Sector Regulation: Nutrition Labeling .....	95
Evaluation of Nutrition Education Polciy .....	97
Food Safety: Microbial Risks and Costs .....	99
Pesticide Use and Fresh Produce Grades .....	101
Changes in the Food Stamp Delivery System .....	103
Multiple Participation in Domestic Food Assistance.....	105
WIC Program Expansion.....	107
Changes in Commodity Distribution and Food Assistance Programs.....	109

## **Rural Economy**

Financial Market Intervention .....	113
Value-Added Agriculture as a Growth Strategy .....	115
Effect of Bank Consolidation on Rural Credit Availability .....	117
Preferential Tax Treatment for Capital Gains.....	119
Rural Economic Disadvantage.....	121
Rural Enterprise Zones and Economic Development .....	123
Effects of the Investment Tax Credit on Farmers.....	125
Improving Living and Working Conditions of Hired Farmworkers .....	127
Trends in Numbers, Sizes, and Ownership of Farms .....	129
The Rural Apparel Industry .....	131
Assisting Farm Entrants .....	133
Ethanol Production and the Rural Economy .....	135
Role of Government in Agricultural Finance .....	137
Rural Business Incubators and Economic Development .....	139
Agriculture as a Rural Growth Strategy.....	141
Rural Manufacturing Links to Rural Development.....	143
Persistent Poverty in Rural Areas and Small Towns.....	145
Infrastructure Investment and Rural Economic Development.....	147
Workforce Education and Training.....	149

Areas Where Farm Program Payments Are Important ..... 151  
Population Loss in Remote Rural Areas ..... 153

**Conservation**

Expiration of Conservation Reserve Program Contracts ..... 157  
Water Reallocation and Policy Reform ..... 159

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (braille, large print, audio tape, etc.) should contact the USDA Office of Communications at (202) 720-5881 (voice) or (202) 720-7808 (TDD).

To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC, 20250, or call (202) 720-7327 (voice) or (202) 720-1127 (TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity employer.