

# Stay Strong, Wuhan!

# Stay Strong, China!

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## Policies

### **China's No. 1 central document prioritizes poverty relief, improving rural weak links**

[Xinhua, 05-02-2020] Agriculture, rural areas and farmers' issues remain China's top priorities for the 17th consecutive year as this year's "No. 1 central document," released 5<sup>th</sup> Feb, stressed poverty alleviation and improving rural weak links.

As the first policy statement released by China's central authorities each year, the document is seen as an indicator of policy priorities. This year it urged efforts on two main tasks -- winning the battle against poverty and strengthening areas of weakness concerning agriculture, rural areas and farmers, as the country strives to complete the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects this year.

Facing a complex situation with emerging challenges from home and abroad and downward pressures on economic growth, it is of great importance for the country to stabilize the agricultural industry and give full play to the role of agriculture, rural areas and farmers as the ballast stone, said an official with the office of the central rural work leading group.

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### **China to roll out a host of policies to boost economic development**

[Xinhua, 19-02-2020] China will boost agricultural production in the spring season and take a multi-pronged approach adopted to facilitate business operation and employment, with specific measures including provisionally lowering or waiving employers' social insurance contributions and deferring their payments to the housing provident fund, in an effort to boost economic development.

All sub-national governments must fulfill their jurisdictional responsibilities and lose no time to promote spring farming with comprehensive and concrete measures, thus laying a solid foundation for a bumper harvest of summer crops. Detailed and categorized guidance will be provided for science-based epidemic control in the rural areas. Localities will be directed to promptly start spring plowing and farming preparations from south to north of the country. Companies producing agricultural supplies will be urged to resume production as early as possible.

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### **Governments take steps to ensure steady farm product supply**

[China daily, 14-02-2020] Central and local level governments will gather information on the production, sale, storage and processing ability of agricultural products across the country to ensure sufficient supply of necessities and maintain market stability, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Local governments must prepare solutions and make emergency plans for farm products that have suffered from slow sales due to the novel coronavirus outbreak, per a circular unveiled by the ministry late Friday.

For agricultural products at risk of slow sales, it is necessary for local governments to understand the current status of production and operations of agricultural enterprises and cooperatives. They should also find out local businesses' conditions of harvesting, sorting, packaging, transportation, sales and inventory, as well as government reserves, the document said.

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## **Farmers ready for spring farming to ensure grain supply amid epidemic**

[Xinhua, 07-02-2020] As spring is just around the corner, Chinese farmers in northeast China's breadbasket province of Heilongjiang are preparing for this year's season, which comes with even more responsibility to ensure the national grain supply due to the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Heilongjiang, China's major grain producer, saw a bumper harvest for the 16th year in a row in 2019, with annual grain yields exceeding 75 billion kg.

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## **China state planner to increase food supplies to coronavirus-hit Hubei province**

[Reuters, 07-02-2020] China's state planner said it has coordinated with state-owned agriculture conglomerates COFCO and Sinograin to increase supply of meat, rice, flour and edible oils to coronavirus-hit Hubei province and its capital Wuhan to ensure food security.

The coronavirus outbreak has killed over 630 people including the doctor who sounded the alarm regarding the disease.

China will move 2,000 tonnes of frozen pork to state reserves in Wuhan, China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) said in a statement on WeChat.

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## **Agricultural germplasm resources to be protected, utilized**

[GOV.CN, 11-02-2020] The General Office of the State Council released a circular on Feb 11, outlining requirements to improve the protection and usage of agricultural germplasm resources.

By 2035, a scientific and efficient system will be established for the protection and utilization of agricultural germplasm resources, and the resource volume will reach the front ranks of the world, according to the circular.

To protect agricultural germplasm resources, the circular also called for efforts to conduct general surveys, systematic investigations, rescue collections and medium and long-term preservation, and to increase international exchanges.

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## **China's legislature adopts decision on banning illegal trade, consumption of wildlife**

[Xinhua, 24-02-2020] The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, or China's top legislature, adopted a decision on thoroughly banning the illegal trading of wildlife and eliminating the consumption of wild animals to safeguard people's lives and health.

The move aims to safeguard biological and ecological security and effectively prevent major public health risks, among other purposes.

The consumption of terrestrial wild animals "of important ecological, scientific and social value" that are under state protection, as well as other terrestrial wild animals, including those that are bred or reared in captivity, shall be thoroughly prohibited, according to the decision.

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## **Official list of livestock and poultry expected soon**

[China Daily, 27-02-2020] The agriculture department will soon release a new list of the country's livestock and poultry, as a consequence of the recent ban on trade and consumption of wild animals across the country, a senior official said.

On Feb 24, the National People's Congress announced a decision to ban the hunting, trade and transportation of wild terrestrial animals for purposes of consumption, which comes after the outbreak of the novel coronavirus.

Common poultry and livestock like pigs, cattle and sheep are not included in the ban. Aquatic wild animals like fish are not prohibited, since fishing is an important agricultural mode of production.

Animals that have been farm-raised for a long time so as to have become widely accepted by the public, and that form value chains helpful in local poverty alleviation, such as pigeons and rabbits, are also excluded.

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## **Science, Technology and Environment**

### **China reports outbreak of deadly bird flu among chickens in Hunan province**

[SCMP, 02-02-2020] China has reported an outbreak of the deadly H5N1 bird flu in Hunan province, which lies on the southern border of Hubei province, the epicentre of the rapidly spreading coronavirus.

“The outbreak occurred in a farm in the Shuangqing district of Shaoyang city. The farm has 7,850 chickens, and 4,500 of the chickens have died from the contagion. Local authorities have culled 17,828 poultry after the outbreak,” according to a statement by China’s Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

No human cases of the Hunan H5N1 virus have been reported.

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### **China reports first H5N6 bird flu in Sichuan poultry farm**

[Reuters, 10-02-2020] China’s agriculture ministry said the highly pathogenic H5N6 strain of avian flu had been found in a poultry farm in southwestern Sichuan province.

This is the first H5N6 avian flu detected from a poultry farm after four cases found in swans this year.

The ministry said on Sunday night 1,840 birds had died in the farm of 2,497. The rest have been culled.

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### **Pangolin may be bridge for coronavirus**

[China Daily, 08-02-2020] The pangolin may be an intermediate host for the novel coronavirus, given that the genome sequence of a virus strain taken from the animal was up to 99 percent identical to that of the virus that attacks humans, a study has found.

The study, jointly conducted by researchers from South China Agricultural University and other scientific research institutes, may be of great significance to the prevention and control of the virus outbreak.

Previously, a study published in the academic journal Science China Life Science said the novel coronavirus is likely to have originated in bats, but there may be intermediate hosts between bats and humans.

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### **Research results show Sanjiangyuan National Park enjoys better ecological environment**

[Xinhua, 02-02-2020] The Sanjiangyuan National Park in northwest China's Qinghai Province has enjoyed a better ecological environment in recent years, phased research results from the country's second comprehensive scientific expedition to the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau have shown.

Sanjiangyuan literally means "the source of three rivers." The park was established to protect the headwaters of the Yangtze, Yellow and Lancang (Mekong) rivers. It covers 123,100 square km and is home to many rare species.

According to the research results, the pilot area of Sanjiangyuan National Park and its adjacent areas have become warmer, wetter and greener, with stable vegetation productivity and significant increase in the number of wild animals.

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### **Battered animal industry needs support**

[China daily, 12-02-2020] As one of the main pillars of the agricultural industry, the pig farming industry is suffering from the outbreak of novel coronavirus after the blow of African swine fever last year. Moreover, the outbreak of H5N1 bird flu in a farmer's chickens in Hunan province also poses a great threat to the poultry industry.

The sustainable development of the animal industry involves various links including breeding, feed, transportation and consumption. All the links of the animal industry have been hit by the epidemic, which has caused tremendous losses throughout the industry.

The logistical challenges are particularly evident in the shortages of fodder in some areas. The smooth supply of fodder is the fundamental guarantee for the sustainable development of the animal industry.

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### **Very low risk of plagues of locusts hitting China: agricultural experts**

[GT, 16-02-2020] Chinese authorities and experts all agreed over the weekend that the risk of a plague of desert locusts hitting China was "very low" as Chinese scientists contacted their counterparts in African countries to learn about the devastating swarms on the continent that are fast becoming a global concern.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations warned the world on February 11 of a plague of locusts leaving Africa to fly over the Red Sea into Europe and Asia, reaching Pakistan and India.

But spokespersons for China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs reassured Chinese media on 15 Feb that the country had the most modern monitoring and warning systems to tackle the ravenous swarms.

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### **China's armyworm situation set to worsen in 2020**

[Reuters, 21-02-2020] China's agriculture ministry said the danger from the armyworm pest is more severe this year, adding that prevention and control measures will be more aggressive.

The destructive pest is expected to affect about 100 million mu (6.67 million hectares) of corn acreage this year, as well as other crops like sugar cane, sorghum and winter wheat, said the ministry in a statement on 21 Feb.

The armyworm first arrived in China in January 2019, hitting over a million hectares of farmland in China last year, damaging mainly corn and sugarcane crops, according to a government institute report.

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### **Three Gorges reservoir diverts more water to support fight against epidemic**

[Xinhua, 06-02-2020] The Three Gorges reservoir has replenished more water to the lower reaches of the Yangtze River to meet the water and power demand as the novel coronavirus outbreak has affected the power supply in Hubei Province.

As of Feb. 4, nearly 6.18 billion cubic meters of water had been diverted to the lower reaches, 2.5 billion cubic meters more than the same period last year, according to the China Three Gorges Corporation.

The increase in water diversion has effectively secured the demand for water and power consumption in the middle and lower reaches, and facilitated the shipping of supplies for epidemic prevention, said an official with the corporation.

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### **Yellow River Delta replenished by emergency water**

[Xinhua, 14-02-2020] China has diverted over 80 million cubic meters of emergency water into the Yellow River Delta for the 2019-2020 period, official data showed.

As of Feb 10, emergency ecological water replenishment for the Yellow River Delta has totaled 81.42 million cubic meters, supporting the delta's ecological improvement, said the Ministry of Water Resources.

The water replenishment was launched in December 2019 to protect the ecosystem along the Yellow River regions and maintain the biodiversity of the Yellow River estuary, an official with the ministry said.

The project is expected to last until June 2020 and supply a total of 448 million cubic meters of water for the delta, according to the ministry.

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## **Trade and Business**

### **Chinese appetite for UK pork lifts exports**

[China Daily, 25-02-2020] The United Kingdom's red meat trade enjoyed "one of the best years on record" in 2019, according to the country's agriculture levy board, thanks in large part to a 61 percent increase in pork exports to China.

Customs data shows that the total value of UK red meat exports last year rose by 13 percent to more than 1.5 billion pounds (\$1.9 billions). The UK Agriculture and Horticulture

Development Board, or AHDB, says that 2019 was one of the strongest years on record for British meat exporters.

"This year has been phenomenal," said AHDB International Market Development Director Phil Hadley. "As well as a record year in terms of both volume and value, we have also seen some incredible market access wins, which has helped make 2019 one of the best years for our red meat exports."

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### **China warns against virus-related trade restrictions**

[Politico, 11-02-2020] China warned other countries that an "overreaction" to the impact of the coronavirus outbreak through trade restrictions could have a negative impact on the global economy.

Beijing made the statement at a meeting of the World Trade Organization, where it noted that it is a large contributor to global economic output and growth, according to a Geneva-based trade official.

The warning comes as the world comes to grips with the uncertainty caused by the spread of the virus that has killed hundreds in mainland China.

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### **China tells officials to help feed, poultry firms after virus disruption**

[Reuters, 15-02-2020] China's government told local authorities on 15 Feb to allow companies involved in feed production and poultry slaughtering to resume work as soon as possible and overcome disruptions caused by the coronavirus outbreak.

Local authorities should ensure transport runs smoothly between cities and the countryside and should provide tax rebates, low interest rates and other financial support to help the companies, Chinese state planner, as well as the agriculture and transport ministries said in a joint statement.

In an effort to contain the spread of the virus, some provincial governments have imposed restrictions that have disrupted feed supplies and the transport of live animals to slaughterhouses.

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### **Chinese dairy enterprises resume work to ensure supply**

[Xinhua, 13-02-2020] Chinese dairy giant Inner Mongolia Yili Industrial Group Co., Ltd. said to ensure the supply of dairy products, more than 10,000 employees have been working in the factories across the country since the Spring Festival.

The current yearly production capacity of Yili is nearly 12 million tonnes.

The group has also rolled out detailed epidemic prevention and control efforts, checking employees' health and workshops, to ensure the safety of both workers and production.

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### **Chinese regulator promises to help firms resume work amid virus outbreak**

[Reuters, 15-02-2020] China's market regulator announced on 15 Feb policies to encourage companies to resume work amid a coronavirus outbreak, saying it would accelerate the approval process for production licenses.

The State Administration for Market Regulation would also facilitate online reporting for merger and acquisition deals, as well as anti-monopoly reviews, it said in a statement on its website.

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### **China coronavirus putting more pressure on pork supplies, prices**

[Reuters, 09-02-2020] China's coronavirus outbreak has delayed the launch of new pig breeding facilities and put even more pressure on pork supplies and prices, an official with the agriculture ministry told a briefing on 9 Feb.

Kong Liang, deputy director at the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Bureau of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, said new projects had been disrupted, and regional blockades designed to prevent the spread of the epidemic had impacted supplies in some region, pushing up prices.

China's pork supplies have already been reduced as a result of an African swine fever outbreak. It is currently aiming to raise imports to alleviate shortages.

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### **Feed sent to chickens in need amid epidemic**

[Xinhua, 06-02-2020] Farmers of some 300 million starving chickens in epidemic-stricken Hubei can breathe a sigh of relief now.

Over 8,000 tonnes of soybean meal is on its way to chicken farms in the central Chinese province hit hard by the novel coronavirus outbreak.

The feed supplied by China Grain Reserves Group, a state-owned grain giant, is required to be sent to farms in a timely manner and within reasonable price ranges.

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### **China to release agricultural reserves to meet market demand**

[China daily, 10-02-2020] China will gather goods, release more reserve of agricultural products and encourage innovation of commercial enterprises' operational models to meet market demand and stabilize prices for goods, the Ministry of Commerce.

To minimize the impact caused by the novel coronavirus epidemic, the ministry already began to support commercial enterprises — in particular, supermarkets, convenience stores, wholesale and community grocery markets — important to epidemic prevention and control in resuming business as soon as possible, said Zhu Xiaoliang, director-general at the ministry's department of market system development.

About 92 percent of 7,000 supermarkets in 34 large and medium-sized cities are being operated, data from the ministry show.

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### **Mexico sees bigger Chinese demand for its beef on coronavirus concerns**

[Reuters, 06-02-2020] China's appetite for Mexican steaks and other cuts of beef is expected to increase more than 40% this year, in part due to disruptions caused by the coronavirus outbreak, according to Mexico's top cattle association.

Chinese buyers represent only about 4% of Mexico's foreign beef sales but the Asian market has been a steady source of growth, especially since most shipments in the past have gone to just Hong Kong. More than 80% of total Mexican beef exports go to U.S. customers.

China is by far the top beef importer, with imports in 2020 projected to be a record 2.9 million tonnes, nearly double 2018's total, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture data.

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### **China lifts import ban on U.S. poultry, related products**

[Xinhua, 16-02-2020] China announced 14 Feb that it would lift restrictions on the import of poultry and related products from the United States, according to a statement jointly released by the General Administration of Customs and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

Based on risk assessment, the statement, effective immediately, removed a series of restrictions imposed by the now-defunct General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine and the Ministry of Agriculture in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

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### **China smooths channels to promote farm produce sales**

[Xinhua, 17-02-2020] China has smoothed channels to promote the sale of farm produce stock hit by the coronavirus fallout.

Vice Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Han Jun said on 17 Feb that priority should be given to the purchase and delivery of agricultural products produced in impoverished regions and called on e-commerce platforms to open up an anti-epidemic farm produce section to help farmers weather the impact.

Affected by the epidemic outbreak, sales of vegetables, fruit and poultry have felt the pinch of blocked transport and sales channels.

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