



UK-China  
Sustainable Agriculture  
Innovation Network

# China Agri-food News Digest

## February 2021 (Total No 98)

### Contents

<b>Policies .....</b>	<b>1</b>
China to fully advance rural vitalization, facilitate modernization of agriculture, rural areas .....	1
Party leadership outlines key tasks .....	1
China outlines key tasks for rural work in 2021 .....	1
MARA calls for leveraging greater financial support for rural revitalization .....	1
Seed security tops No 1 document.....	2
Top legislature to work on food security law .....	2
Chinese legislator committed to addressing food wastage .....	2
Build industries in rural areas but never cross redline for land .....	3
Jilin launches soil pollution prevention fund .....	3
China increases wildlife protection with protection list revision.....	3
New carbon trading rules take effect amid China's efforts to go carbon-neutral.....	3
Facts and figures about China's poverty reduction drive .....	4
China updates poverty alleviation office to rural vitalization body.....	4
<b>Science, Technology and Environment .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Overall seed supply is guaranteed in China.....	4
China to promote R&D in agricultural genetically modified organisms .....	4
Chinese researchers find natural mutation in African swine fever virus .....	5
Urban modern agriculture development in Shanghai the best in China .....	5
Chinese researchers develop new method to detect heavy metals in farmland .....	5
China boosts protection of Yangtze finless porpoise.....	5
Syngenta Group China to build world-class innovation center in Nanjing .....	6
More Chinese turn to light meals to stay healthy .....	6
<b>Trade and Business .....</b>	<b>6</b>
China's rural vitalization gains momentum from cooperatives.....	6
COFCO reports over 500B yuan revenue in 2020.....	7
F&B industry bounces back over Spring Festival .....	7
China hog inventories to return to end-2017 levels by June this year .....	7
China to import less pork.....	7
Mainland issues temporary ban on import of Taiwan pineapples .....	7
China importing \$2.2 billion durian from Thailand in 2020 .....	8
Chinese enterprises expand in UK .....	8
Nation to enhance trade ties with Central, Eastern Europe .....	8
Chinese garlic exports hit 10-year high .....	8

## Policies

### **China to fully advance rural vitalization, facilitate modernization of agriculture, rural areas**

[Xinhua, 21-02-2021] China unveiled its "No. 1 central document" for 2021 on Sunday 21 Feb. The document clearly lists the targets and tasks concerning agriculture and rural areas for 2021, as well as a broader vision for the period up to 2025.

This year, the country will keep its sown areas stable, with the grain output to exceed 650 billion kg, further improve the quality of agricultural products and food safety, and ensure that the growth of farmers' incomes outpaces that of urban residents, said the document.

The country will also start implementing the plan on the modernization of agriculture and the countryside, and further promote reforms in rural areas.

By 2025, China will see substantial progress in the modernization of agriculture and the countryside, with achievements seen for a more solid agricultural foundation, a narrower income gap between rural and urban residents, and basically realizing agricultural modernization where conditions permit, said the document.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Party leadership outlines key tasks**

[China daily, 27-02-2021] A key Party meeting held on Friday outlined China's priority tasks during the period of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25), and called for efforts to ensure a head start in fully building a modern socialist country.

Meeting participants said that the period of the 14th Five-Year Plan bears great significance in terms of expanding the country's achievements in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, as well as in eradicating poverty.

This period should focus on promoting high-quality development with supply-side structural reform as the main task and with reform and innovation as the fundamental driving force. And the fundamental goal is to meet people's ever-growing desire for a better life, they said.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China outlines key tasks for rural work in 2021**

[Xinhua, 25-02-2021] China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs unveiled guidelines on the country's rural work for 2021 on 25 Feb, stressing efforts to push rural vitalization and accelerate the modernization of agriculture and rural areas.

The guidelines outlined 34 specific tasks to be achieved this year, covering areas including ensuring agricultural supply and enhancing the sector's technological strength.

The ministry will step up policy support to help grain output stay above 650 billion kg this year amid efforts to ensure food security, and upgrade agricultural machinery and apply new technologies to modernize the agricultural sector.

The guidelines also detailed policies to make agriculture greener and improve living conditions in rural areas.

Click [here](#) for details

### **MARA calls for leveraging greater financial support for rural revitalization**

[MARA, 06-02-2021] The MARA organized a symposium on leveraging financial support in rural revitalization in Beijing on Feb. 5, 2021. Relevant officials and executives from 19 banking institutions participated in the event.

At the symposiums, participants agreed to increase investment in such priority areas as the development of high-quality farmland, seed industry, rural development, storage and cold chains of agricultural products, agricultural production chain, fostering of new-type agricultural entities and risk prevention and defusing in agriculture during the 14th Five-Year Plan period.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Seed security tops No 1 document**

[China Daily, 25-02-2021] On Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> Feb, the release of the official document on agricultural affairs, also called the year's "No 1 central document", attracted widespread attention because, for the first time, seed security appeared as an independent chapter.

It is necessary to improve the quality of domestic seeds to meet agricultural development demands. Many might not realize it, but seed quality is of great importance to the country's national security, food security, as well as economic and social security. It is urgent to solve this problem.

Solving that problem will require undertaking multiple measures such as building a national storage of seeds and related resources, providing more and firmer support to modern agricultural seed research programs and sharpening domestic technologies on cultivating seeds.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Top legislature to work on food security law**

[China daily, 25-02-2021] Making a law guaranteeing food security has been put on the work agenda this year of the Standing Committee of National People's Congress, China's top legislature, a senior legislator said.

The legislative work is another step toward implementing a central leadership call for the country to promote healthy, rational and green lifestyles and consumption habits.

In December, a 32-article draft law on curbing food waste was submitted to the NPC Standing Committee for a first review. Drafting of the law was based on similar overseas laws, rules and regulations, surveys of catering service providers and visits by legislators to such establishments.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Chinese legislator committed to addressing food wastage**

[CGTN, 28-02-2021] With food waste being a key factor in China's national food security, the country's legislators and political advisors will explore ways to tackle the problem at their annual Two Sessions set to begin in Beijing next week.

Official statistics show China wastes about 50 million tonnes of grain annually, accounting for a staggering 7.7 percent of the country's total grain output.

China needs to feed 1.4 billion people. That means food security is always a top concern for the government. At this year's Two Sessions, legislators are going to deliberate on draft laws to tackle food waste. The aim is to help the country build a legal system which promotes a green lifestyle and a green society.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Build industries in rural areas but never cross redline for land**

[China daily, 10-02-2021] The Ministry of Natural Resources, the National Development and Reform Commission, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs recently issued a joint circular defining the scope of land for the integrated development of primary, secondary and tertiary industries in rural areas.

According to the circular, land earmarked for the integrated development of rural industries should not be used for commercial housing, villas, hotels, apartments and other real estate development. Neither should it be divided, transferred or sublet without authorization.

One of the most critical purposes of rural land is grain production. If large tracts of rural land are occupied, China's red line of 1.8 billion mu (120 million hectares) of arable land will be breached and its food security greatly hit.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Jilin launches soil pollution prevention fund**

[China daily, 25-02-2021] Jilin province in Northeast China recently launched the Jilin Province Soil Pollution Prevention Fund, making it one of the first provinces in the country to establish such a mechanism.

The fund focuses on supporting the prevention and control of soil pollution in agricultural land (including the safe use of contaminated farmland), the prevention and control of soil pollution in industrial and mining land, public facilities and sites, the development of soil pollution control and restoration technology, engineering design and construction, and other related industries.

Click [here](#) for details

## **China increases wildlife protection with protection list revision**

[Xinhua, 05-02-2021] China announced its first major revision in 32 years of its list of endangered wild animals as a further step toward wildlife conservation and increasing biodiversity.

Based on changes in wildlife resources and the latest research results, China added another 517 species and classes of animals to the list of state-protected wildlife. The new list now includes 980 species and eight categories of wild animals, said a statement jointly released by the National Forestry and Grassland Administration and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

Under its two-tier protection system for wildlife under state protection, the country will elevate the conservation of 65 types of wild animals to the highest level, the statement said.

Click [here](#) for details

## **New carbon trading rules take effect amid China's efforts to go carbon-neutral**

[Xinhua, 01-02-2021] A set of interim rules for carbon emissions trading management in China came into effect on 1 February, marking a key step in the establishment of a unified national emissions trading system (ETS) amid the country's all-out efforts to meet its 2060 carbon-neutral target.

A total of 2,225 power firms across the country, assigned with carbon dioxide emission caps, can trade their emission quotas via the system whereby firms that exceed their caps can purchase unused quotas from those with low emissions.

It is the first time China has specified the responsibilities of enterprises to cut greenhouse gas emissions, which will help boost green development and tackle climate change.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Facts and figures about China's poverty reduction drive**

[Xinhua, 02-02-2021] Over the past 40-plus years of reform and opening up, more than 700 million people in China have been lifted out of poverty, contributing to more than 70 percent of global poverty reduction.

According to different causes of poverty, China explored a slew of targeted and scientific alleviation measures, providing poor households with customized plans. The measures include developing industries and relocation.

China also develops ecological poverty-relief programs, including ecological compensation and government-sponsored afforestation projects. Other policies include providing medical insurance and aid, developing microfinance programs, establishing online platforms for selling agricultural products from poverty-stricken areas.

Click [here](#) for details

## **China updates poverty alleviation office to rural vitalization body**

[GT, 25-02-2021] China launched a new government body for the promotion of rural vitalization on 25 Feb, marking overall victory in the battle against poverty and a starting point of fulfilling rural revitalization and a new life and new struggle.

The newly established government body was reshuffled by the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, and it will be under the charge of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

While it's not immediately clear what the implications of the new administration would be for China's agricultural sector, experts have a bullish outlook for agriculture-related investment opportunities.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Science, Technology and Environment**

### **Overall seed supply is guaranteed in China**

[GT, 08-02-2021] Experts and officials said that the supply of seed industry in China is secure during an online meeting, though there is still a big gap between China and developed countries.

China should increase investment in seed industry development, and drive agricultural modernization through the seed industry's pioneering modernization, according to experts, media reported.

Officials from the agriculture ministry revealed that although the coverage rate of improved crop varieties in China is more than 96 percent, and the area of independently bred crop varieties accounts for more than 95 percent, there are still many deficiencies and gaps in the protection and utilization of seed resources, independent innovation in science and technology, and the level of enterprise development between China and developed countries.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China to promote R&D in agricultural genetically modified organisms**

[GT, 18-02-2021] China will support innovative research and development (R&D) of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), according to a document published by the Ministry

of Agriculture and Rural Affairs on 18 Feb, which analysts said was a move to strengthen food security, especially involving seeds, in China.

As shown in the document, China will support R&D of innovative agricultural GMOs, such as new genes, new technologies and new products.

China will also ensure that enterprises play a dominant role in the promotion and application of agricultural GMOs, as well as R&D, read the document of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Chinese researchers find natural mutation in African swine fever virus**

[Reuters, 05-02-2021] Chinese scientists have found a natural mutation in the African swine fever virus they say could be less deadly than the strain that ravaged the world's largest pig herd in 2018 and 2019.

The findings, published in the February edition of the Chinese Journal of Veterinary Science this week, come amid intense debate in the industry over the evolution of the disease for which there is no approved vaccine.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Urban modern agriculture development in Shanghai the best in China**

[China daily, 24-02-2021] Shanghai topped the national ranking in terms of urban modern agriculture development in 2018, according to a report released by Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

According to the report, the quality and security of agricultural products across the country has been improving over the past years.

In addition, the report highlighted the domestic cities that have been promoting agricultural industry transformation, optimizing the industrial structure, expanding the industrial chain, and strengthening the integration of primary, secondary and tertiary industries in urban modern agriculture.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Chinese researchers develop new method to detect heavy metals in farmland**

[Xinhua, 04-02-2021] Chinese researchers have developed a new method for detecting heavy metals in farmland and analyzing pollution sources, according to the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS).

CAAS researchers combined two machine classification and screening methods to characterize heavy metal pollution sources in the sediment of an urban river and its surrounding farmland soil. They proposed a new source analysis method for heavy metals in farmland and a screening mechanism for the remediation of contaminated soils.

The new method can improve the accuracy and efficiency of heavy metal pollution source analysis in farmland soil, providing references for the restoration and management of farmlands contaminated by heavy metals.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China boosts protection of Yangtze finless porpoise**

[WWF, 05-02-2021] In a major boost for the critically endangered Yangtze finless porpoise, the Chinese government upgraded it to national first level protected species – the country's highest protection for wild animals.

It was one of 65 species that were upgraded in the ‘List of National Key Protected Wild Animals’ by the State Council of China – representing the first large-scale adjustment of China’s wildlife protection list since 1989.

The decision will greatly strengthen efforts to save the iconic species, whose numbers have fallen to just over 1000, although the population appears to have stabilized recently.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Syngenta Group China to build world-class innovation center in Nanjing**

[Syngenta Group, 02-02-2021] Syngenta Group China announced on 2 Feb it has entered into an agreement with the National Innovation Center for Modern Agri-technology (Nanjing) to build a new world-class innovation center in Nanjing’s Pukou District. It will be Syngenta Group’s most advanced global innovation research and development (R&D) center and agro-tech science hub in China.

The initial capital investment will be US\$ 230 million and the new Syngenta Group China Innovation Center will cover a wide range of advanced research areas across the entire agriculture value chain, with a strong focus on biologicals, digitalization and big data technologies for agriculture.

Click [here](#) for details

### **More Chinese turn to light meals to stay healthy**

[CEN,16-02-2021] A report released by major Chinese food delivery platform Meituan Waimai shows that in the first nine months of 2019, light food orders on the platform increased by 98 percent year on year.

The new trend stands in contrast to the established eating habits of Chinese people -- large quantities of meat and carbohydrates are generally favored at tables.

In 1961, China's daily per capita caloric intake was less than 1,500 kilocalories. An adult male needs about 2,000 kilocalories a day as suggested by the FAO.

However, with the quality of life improving over the decades, many Chinese are now able to satisfy their previously unmet cravings for meat and carbohydrates, and obesity has become an increasingly challenging issue.

According to an official report on Chinese residents' nutrition and chronic diseases published in December last year, the overweight and obesity rates of Chinese residents aged 18 and above are 34.3 percent and 16.4 percent, respectively.

Click [here](#) for details

## Trade and Business

### **China's rural vitalization gains momentum from cooperatives**

[Xinhua, 07-02-2021] China's rural supply and marketing cooperatives saw their sales expand 14.2 percent year on year to 5.3 trillion yuan (about 818.7 billion U.S. dollars) in 2020, the latest data showed.

The profit of these cooperatives totaled 51.79 billion yuan, up 11 percent from one year earlier, according to the All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Cooperatives.

Cooperatives nationwide purchased farm produce worth 272.6 billion yuan from impoverished areas last year, up 14.1 percent year on year. Their sales of farm produce grew 19.5 percent year on year to 2.2 trillion yuan.

Click [here](#) for details

## **COFCO reports over 500B yuan revenue in 2020**

[China.org, 07-02-2021] China's biggest food trader COFCO has seen its revenue exceed 500 billion yuan (about 77.27 billion U.S. dollars) in 2020, a historic high despite the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic.

Meanwhile, the group's total profits topped 20 billion yuan in 2020, according to COFCO. Its revenue in 2019 was 498.4 billion yuan.

In 2021, COFCO will focus on the businesses of agriculture and grain production, food production, financial services and real estate, and push forward the implementation of its three-year reform plan.

Click [here](#) for details

## **F&B industry bounces back over Spring Festival**

[China daily, 27-02-2021] China's food and beverage industry rebounded to pre-COVID-19 levels during the weeklong Lunar New Year holiday, with staycationers driving up takeout sales.

During the holiday week that ended on Feb 17, the total sales revenue of China's F&B operators increased 358.4 percent compared with the same period in 2020, when COVID-19 started to spread in the country. This was up 5.4 percent from that of 2019, according to the State Taxation Administration.

Click [here](#) for details

## **China hog inventories to return to end-2017 levels by June this year**

[Reuters, 22-02-2021] China's hog inventories are expected to return to end-2017 levels by around June this year, the country's agriculture minister said on Monday, 22 Feb.

The worst pork shortage period has passed and supplies will be more ample going forward, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Tang Renjian said at a news briefing.

The number of hogs slaughtered and supplies of pork will return to normal levels in the second half of the year, Tang added.

Click [here](#) for details

## **China to import less pork**

[Food Processing, 05-02-2021] Pork imports by China will decline this year compared to last, with implications for prices and supply in the United States and the rest of the world, according to a quarterly report from Rabobank.

The report notes that in 2020, China imported a record amount of pork meat and processed products. Total imports were 5.56 million metric tons, which was an 85% increase over 2019. The main factors were the pandemic and the continuing impact of African swine flu.

However, the report noted, China's pork imports are expected to decline between 10% and 30% this year as its domestic hog herds recover, nudging domestic production up by 10% to 15%.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Mainland issues temporary ban on import of Taiwan pineapples**

[China daily, 26-02-2021] Chinese mainland issued a temporary ban on the importation of pineapples from Taiwan to prevent the fruit from bringing pests in and it will take effect on Monday, the General Administration of Customs said.

The ban aims to cut off the risk of plant-caused epidemics from root causes as since last year, customs of the Chinese mainland repeatedly found quarantine pests in pineapples imported from Taiwan, the administration said.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China importing \$2.2 billion durian from Thailand in 2020**

[GT, 28-02-2021] The Chinese appetite for Thai durian remains strong despite the coronavirus pandemic. China imported 575,000 tons of durians worth 14.7 billion yuan (\$2.2 billion) from Thailand in 2020, up 78 percent year-on-year. This makes China the largest export market for fresh durian from Thailand.

Since 2019, imported durian has overtaken cherries as the most favored imported fruit among Chinese consumers.

The top nine fruits in order of import value in 2020 were fresh durians, cherries, bananas, mangosteens, fresh grapes, dragon fruit, longans, kiwifruit and oranges (fresh and dried).

Click [here](#) for details

### **Chinese enterprises expand in UK**

[China daily, 27-02-2021] Chinese business activity in the United Kingdom remained resilient last year despite trade tensions and pandemic disruption, a new report has shown, with the number of large UK-based China-owned businesses increasing along with the total value of Chinese investments into Britain.

The number of Chinese businesses in the UK with an annual revenue of at least 5 million pounds (\$7 million) rose to 838 in 2020, up from 795 the year before, said the Tou Ying Tracker, an annual analysis of China-UK enterprises produced by accountancy company Grant Thornton UK in collaboration with China Daily UK and the China Chamber of Commerce in the UK, or CCCUK.

The companies contributed a total of 92 billion pounds (\$128 billion) in revenue, up by 1 billion year-on-year, and the total value of Chinese merger and acquisition deals in the UK was 4.7 billion pounds, an increase of 31 percent from 2019.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Nation to enhance trade ties with Central, Eastern Europe**

[China daily, 10-02-2021] China will actively expand its imports from Central and Eastern European countries and aim to boost balanced and sustainable trade between them.

China is planning to import more than \$170 billion worth of goods from Central and Eastern European countries over the next five years.

Central and Eastern European countries have comparative advantages in mechanical and electrical products, automobiles and parts, agricultural and textile products, mineral raw materials and other goods. There is huge room for China to expand imports from those countries.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Chinese garlic exports hit 10-year high**

[Produce Report, 13-02-2021] According to customs statistics, China's export volume of fresh and cold-stored garlic in 2020 reached 2.232 million tons, marking a high point for the past decade. This represents a year-on-year increase of 500,000 tons or 28.4% compared to 2019, when the annual export total was 1.738 million tons.

Indonesia continues to be the main destination for Chinese garlic exports, with 90% of the country's garlic imports originating from China.

From 2004 to 2018, China's position as a global leader in garlic production gradually trended upward. Now, with its relatively stable export market, China is the most critical country in the international garlic supply chain, accounting for 80% of global garlic exports. At present, Indonesia, Vietnam and the U.S. are the largest export destinations, with Southeast Asia, Brazil, the Middle East and Europe also serving as important markets.

Click [here](#) for details

**This issue is compiled by SAIN Secretariat (UK). If you have any further enquiries, please contact Yuelai Lu at: [y.lu@uea.ac.uk](mailto:y.lu@uea.ac.uk); for more information about SAIN, please visit: [www.sainonline.org/English.html](http://www.sainonline.org/English.html)**

**To stop receiving emails from the SAIN Secretariat please email: [y.lu@uea.ac.uk](mailto:y.lu@uea.ac.uk) and we will remove you from our distribution list.**