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## Policies

### **China to establish modern environmental governance system**

[Gov.cn, 03-03-2020] China issued a guideline on March 3 to build a modern environmental governance system in a bid to provide institutional support for a better ecological environment.

The guideline aimed to put in place by 2025 a sound environmental governance system that specifies responsibilities of governments at all levels and firms, encourages public participation and features stronger government supervision.

Efforts will be made to build an open and regulated environmental treatment market. The country will offer a level playing field for all types of enterprises and guide capital to participate in the investment, construction and operation of environmental governance.

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### **Subsidies to help farmers replace old agricultural machinery**

[China daily, 02-03-2020] China will further step up the elimination of aged agricultural machines that consume high levels of energy, generate heavy pollution and have poor safety record to promote green development and agricultural mechanization, according to a government document.

In response to the issue of overdue service of agricultural equipment, the government will offer subsidies to farmers to scrap and replace aged machines, and guide local governments to equip more modern farming tools, said a guideline jointly released by the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China to reach 2020 grain targets despite coronavirus outbreak**

[Reuters, 05-03-2020] China can attain this year's grain targets despite a coronavirus outbreak, agriculture officials said on Thursday, adding that a recovery of the pig herd was also on track.

More than half of China's grain area is planted in the spring, Pan Wenbo, director of planting administration at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, told a media briefing, but roadblocks intended to curb the spread of the virus have also served as an obstacle to planting.

The ministry is working to get extra supplies to farmers in the central province, who also face a shortage of key inputs such as fertilisers.

China is also trying to encourage farmers to plant two crops of rice each year, a trend that has been in decline as costs have risen.

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### **China eases unlawful restrictions on hog production**

[Xinhua, 10-03-2020] Chinese authorities have stepped up support for hog production, reducing the number of zones where pig breeding is forbidden by unlawful measures, an official said 10 March.

The country's environmental and agricultural regulators have jointly urged local authorities to standardize the zoning and management of pig breeding. To date, the ban on 14,000 areas has been lifted.

The supply of pork is closely related to people's food consumption. Actions of restricting hog breeding beyond the provisions of laws and regulations in the name of environmental protection should be firmly opposed.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China develops green finance for the agriculture sector**

[ESI, 27-03-2020] The World Bank Directors have approved a loan of \$300 million for China to foster green agriculture investments, development of standards, and technological innovation in Henan Province.

China's agricultural sector accounts for about 14% of global agriculture-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and is a major source of two highly potent GHGs: methane and nitrous oxide.

The level of green financing in China is low due to a general reluctance of financial sector institutions to finance agriculture investments, which are perceived to be of high risk and relatively low return.

Lack of clear green finance standards has also been an obstacle to developing the market and attracting investments.

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### **China takes multi-pronged measures to ensure agricultural supplies for spring farming**

[Xinhua, 23-03-2020] China has rolled out a string of measures to resume the transport and production of agricultural materials, as part of efforts to meet spring farming needs amid the ongoing epidemic fight.

The country has continued region-specific, tiered and targeted approaches to shore up the work resumption of agricultural material providers, said an official with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

About 88 percent of key enterprises and 90 percent of outlets in the sector have restarted business, restoring the supply to normal levels.

"Green channels" have been launched to ensure timely transport of agricultural materials, said an official with the Ministry of Transport, adding that regions with relatively high infectious risks have implemented "point-to-point" non-stop transportation.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China rolls out policies to help migrant workers find jobs in local, nearby areas**

[Xinhua, 30-03-2020] China will bolster policy support to help migrant workers staying in their hometowns obtain employment locally or in nearby areas, in an effort to boost the virus-hit rural job market, the country's agriculture ministry said.

The country will pool resources to guide migrant workers to engage in agriculture, create jobs by implementing rural infrastructure projects, nurture innovative business models and support startups.

It also urged efforts to implement pro-employment policies and guide enterprises to increase jobs. Supportive fiscal, tax and credit policies such as subsidies and loans with discounted interest rates for those starting their own business shall be put in place.

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## **Imperative to treat fall armyworm**

[China daily, 31-03-2020] Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs has warned that formidable harm of fall armyworm (*spodoptera frugiperda*), an invasive insect native to tropical and subtropical zones of the Americas, could erupt in all regions and forceful measures should be adopted to prevent large scale outbreak.

Fall armyworm, a polyphagous pest, can live on more than 80 host plants such as maize, wheat, sorghum and sugarcane. Under ideal climatic conditions it can produce several generations in a single season.

Fall armyworm invaded China in January, 2019. More than 15 million mu (1 million hectares) of cropland were infected that year and 2.46 million mu actually harmed. Maize was the most seriously affected crop.

Click [here](#) for details

## **China ramps up efforts to improve water environment**

[Xinhua, 24-03-2020] China stepped up financial efforts to improve the water environment for key water basins in 25 regions across the country, according to the National Development and Reform Commission.

The country has allocated a total of 3.5 billion yuan (about 493 million U.S. dollars) from this year's central budget in a bid to aid project construction for water environment treatment, the top economic planner said.

This batch of investment will be focused on water environment projects in 16 water basins, including the Yellow River basin and Taihu Lake, and pilot regions for sustainable development.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Science, Technology and Environment**

### **High tech beefs up agricultural production**

[Xinhua, 16-03-2020] Rather than relying on experience alone to fertilize crops, farmers in Jiangxi, a major agricultural province in eastern China, are creating their fertilizer formulas on a mobile app for this year's plowing season.

The detailed and tailored testing reports available to thousands of farmers are based on a provincial-level database.

A total of 4.3 million hectares of farmland, about 88 percent of the total in Jiangxi, have introduced individualized fertilizer formulas based on soil tests and the database as China is expected to see negative growth of the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides for major crops by 2020.

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### **Agricultural sector quickens pace to go digital**

[Xinhua, 20-03-2020] Ranging from professional training on agricultural knowledge to technical support and product sales, Chinese farmers are quickening their pace to go digital during this year's plowing season disrupted by the outbreak of coronavirus.

According to statistics released by the China Internet Network Information Center, the number of people in rural areas capable of accessing the internet had reached 220 million in 2019 and 98.6 percent of them are mobile internet users.

For agricultural enterprises that deal with farmers every day, their efforts to go digital are not restricted to online shops. The whole process of agricultural production is included, covering everything from community management, guidance on agricultural technology to smart agriculture.

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### **Drones, data saving seeding season**

[China daily, 26-03-2020] Farmers nationwide are losing no time in getting the spring farming season underway to ensure a good harvest as China continues to battle the coronavirus outbreak.

The season usually begins after lichun, the official start of spring and the first of 24 solar terms in the traditional lunar calendar, which sees temperatures rising.

The actual start of the season — which includes planting, fertilizing, weeding, and spraying pesticides and herbicides — varies across the country in line with different environments and conditions.

This year, virus prevention and control measures have seen most villagers staying at home, resulting in widespread use of machinery and online service platforms to ease the labor shortage.

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### **UK university study identifies Chinese drone maker XAG as best fit for disinfection operations to fight coronavirus spread**

[SCMP, 27-03-2020] Drones made by Chinese company XAG were identified in a university research study as one of the most suitable to carry out community disinfection operations in the UK.

The research, conducted last week with the help of experts from Harper Adams University, aimed to identify drones best-suited for disinfectant spraying in communities hit by the coronavirus epidemic as the UK scrambles to stem the spread of the disease.

The test results released earlier this week showed that British police believe the waterproof and dustproof design of XAG drones can best adapt to “the complex and volatile climate environment in the UK”, Chinese drone maker XAG said in a release on 26 March.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China uses irrigation water more efficiently**

[Xinhua, 26-03-2020] China's irrigation water use efficiency improved from 2010 to 2016 as the gap of irrigation efficiency in different regions is gradually narrowing, according to a recent research.

Researchers from the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences analyzed the spatiotemporal characteristics of irrigation water use efficiency in China, providing a reference for the management and utilization of water in the agricultural sector.

Although the irrigation efficiency gap is narrowing, the research showed the irrigation efficiency in the eastern regions was still significantly higher than that in the western regions, and the efficiency in northern regions was higher than that in the southern regions.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Machines ease rural labor shortage**

[China Daily, 26-03-2020] This is the "golden time" for spring plowing and sowing in China. While villagers are confined at home to curb the novel coronavirus outbreak, modern technology has come to the fore, helping to mitigate the temporary labor shortage and secure a bumper harvest.

According to the provincial agricultural and rural affairs department, 1.4 million agricultural machines will be put into use for this year's spring farming season, including 450,000 fertilizing and sowing drills, and about 4,000 drones.

In addition, online services are also lending farmers a helping hand during this special period.

Click [here](#) for details

## **China issues warning for desert locusts**

[China daily, 02-03-2020] China's forestry and grassland authority urged efforts to prevent the spread of desert locusts as the destructive migratory pests may enter the country from Pakistan, India, Myanmar and Kazakhstan.

Desert locusts may enter Tibet from Pakistan and India, fly to Southwest China's Yunnan province from Myanmar, or invade Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region from Kazakhstan, posing a major threat to food security and rural livelihoods, according to experts.

The administration urged local authorities to step up monitoring of the pests, issue early warnings and alerts in a timely manner, strengthen staff training, and devise and improve emergency response plans to combat the possible spread of locusts.

Click [here](#) for details

## **China issues contingency plan against locust threat**

[Xinhua, 09-03-2020] China on 9 March unveiled its contingency plan to monitor and control the spread of locusts from home and abroad, in a bid to secure grain production and ecological safety.

Regional governance and scientific prevention and control should be given priority, said the plan jointly issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, the General Administration of Customs and the National Forestry and Grassland Administration.

The plan clarified the goal of locust control, which is to ensure that desert locusts from abroad will not cause harm and domestic locust outbreaks will not turn into a plague, with no more than 5 percent of crops affected.

Local authorities are urged to prevent the invasion of desert locusts from abroad. The plan requires that monitoring stations be set up in Tibet, Yunnan and Xinjiang on the potential migration routes of the destructive pests.

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## **Major rice research platform to be built in northeast China**

[Xinhua, 05-03-2020] A major rice research platform will be built in northeast China with a total investment of about 90 million yuan (about 13 million U.S. dollars) to promote the upgrading of the rice industry in the northern part of the country.

The construction of the northern rice research center of the China National Rice Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences has recently been approved by the National Development and Reform Commission and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

The center will be built in Baoqing County, Shuangyashan City, Heilongjiang Province. The center will focus on rice resources innovation, new variety selection, ecological research, cultivation technology innovation and soil fertilization and remediation research.

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### **Sowing tech to reap profitable farm bounty**

[China daily, 02-03-2020] As the nation convulsed through the COVID-19 outbreak last month, China, with the world's largest population — over 1.4 billion — to feed, realized how crucial stable and secure agriculture is for society and economy.

At no time is the value and importance of adequate nutritious food, and its distribution across society, more obvious than during crises — and the novel coronavirus-stricken China is still well placed to meet the challenge, thanks to innovative technologies like farm drones, agricultural sector experts said.

China is looking beyond familiar recourses like fertilizers, pesticides, scientific techniques for higher yields, and imports to make farm produce not only adequate and economy-stabilizing but profitable for farmers, they said.

Custom-built drones are playing a critical role in the battle to ensure farm production levels are maintained at a reasonable level for adequate food supply to the nation at all times.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Trade and Business**

### **Agricultural Bank of China ups credit support for small businesses**

[Xinhua, 15-03-2020] The Agricultural Bank of China (ABC), one of China's biggest commercial lenders, has stepped up credit support to help small and micro enterprises as well as farming companies tide over difficulties.

To ease the strain in cash flow, the bank has implemented a raft of moves like streamlining the procedures, reducing services fees and deferring the repayment to aid the companies that underwent severe impact of the outbreak.

The ABC has so far deferred the repayment of loans worth 130 million yuan (about 18.6 million U.S. dollars) for 252 firms, adjusted repayment plans of loans valued at 870 million yuan, and provided renewal services for 933 enterprises involving 6.27 billion yuan of loans.

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### **Farmers go online to satisfy their customers**

[Shanghai daily, 30-03-2020] Jiading (of Shanghai) farmers are selling their fruit and vegetables online and via WeChat in addition to traditional offline sales during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A “media plus service” rural aid program was launched during the outbreak by Shanghai Baidikai Vegetable and Fruit Growing Cooperative and Jiading Converged Media Center. Through media promotion and online sales, farmers managed to sell their produce to satisfy customers’ needs for daily necessities.

Strawberry-picking is popular in Jiading from December to March. However, Dengta Village in Jiading Industrial Park, a renowned strawberry area, saw few visitors because of the outbreak. But there was no shortage of farmers harvesting the fruit.

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### **Pinduoduo provides 300 mln yuan in farm supply subsidies**

[Xinhua, 18-03-2020] China's fast-growing online group discounter Pinduoduo launched 300 million yuan (about 42.86 million U.S. dollars) in discounts on farm supplies to ensure this year's spring plowing.

More than 15,000 subsidized products have been put on Pinduoduo's platform for direct sale, including agricultural machinery, plastic films, seeds, fertilizers and other producer goods, which are expected to cover more than 666,000 hectares of arable land.

The company will also join hands with the National Engineering Research Center for Information Technology in Agriculture, China Agricultural University and domestic agricultural resources e-commerce platform DFS168.com to provide online training courses and free one-on-one offline service for 4 million farm operators.

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### **Despite coronavirus, China 2020 poultry output seen level with 2019**

[Reuters, 19-03-2020] China's poultry and egg output in 2020 are expected to be level with last year, an agriculture official said, despite the severe disruption to the industry because of the coronavirus epidemic.

Many Chinese chicken farmers struggled to feed their birds and send them to slaughter in February after the government imposed strict restrictions on the movement of people and transport to curb the coronavirus outbreak.

Some farmers were forced to cull their birds because of the difficulties. But 80% of poultry enterprises in the country have resumed production, said Wei Hongyang, an official with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs' animal husbandry and veterinary bureau.

Poultry output had expanded by 12% last year to 22.39 million tonnes after farmers sought to plug the gap from a pork shortage caused by African swine fever.

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### **China reports new African swine fever case in wild boar in Hubei province**

[Reuters, 03-03-2020] China's agriculture ministry said on Tuesday it had detected the African swine fever virus in wild boar in Hubei province.

The ministry said seven wild boar had been found dead in the Shennongjia Forestry district in the northwest of the province, which is in central China.

China's domestic hog herd has already shrunk by more than 40% because of an epidemic of the disease, though few cases have been found in wild boar in the country.

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### **China reports fewer outbreaks of African swine fever this year**

[Xinhua, 05-03-2020] Fewer cases of African swine fever were reported in China this year compared with the same period last year, the country's agricultural ministry said.

China confirmed this year's first outbreak of African swine fever in Shennongjia Forestry District in Hubei Province Tuesday, with seven wild boars found dead, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs said.

There were 12 outbreaks of African swine fever detected in the same period last year, and a total of 63 cases were reported in China last year, according to the ministry.

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## **China's agricultural material supply sufficient for spring farming**

[Xinhua, 05-03-2020] China is able to meet spring farming needs as the transport and production of agricultural production materials has mostly resumed amid the ongoing epidemic fight, agricultural officials said.

About 78 percent of township-level roads in more than 1,500 agricultural counties of 25 provinces reported smooth traffic flows, said Zhang at a press conference.

About 92 percent of the 362 key seed enterprises followed by the ministry have resumed production so far, with their production capacity at 62 percent, up 10 percentage points from last week, Zhang said.

Click [here](#) for details

## **China encourages firms to raise pigs overseas to plug domestic pork shortage**

[Reuters, 16-03-2020] China has urged local authorities to support qualified domestic firms to “go out,” and build hog farming bases in countries where pig products are eligible to be exported back to China, according to a joint statement issued by the country’s state planner and agriculture ministry.

Beijing has been taking various measures to boost pig production and increase pork supplies, after the deadly African swine fever significantly cut output and pushed prices of the country’s favorite meat to record high levels.

The latest official document, from the top economic planning body and agriculture authority, highlights Beijing’s concern as soaring pork prices pushed consumer inflation to its highest levels in years, and an unprecedented coronavirus disease further disrupted logistics and hindered pig production.

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## **Chinese farmers dodge coronavirus and go online for spring seeds and supplies**

[Reuters, 10-03-2020] Many Chinese farmers are shopping online for vital supplies as the spring planting season gets under way and the coronavirus outbreak disrupts traditional supply chains, providing a huge boost to business for e-commerce platforms.

Fertilizers, chemicals, seeds and machinery are traditionally distributed to China’s hundreds of millions of farmers via a network of traders and local distributors.

Chinese e-commerce platform Pinduoduo saw a near 1,000% jump in sales of farming products including seeds, fertilizer and sprinklers in February versus last year.

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## **Online commerce helping farmers reap gains**

[China daily, 20-03-2020] While foodies might be a latecomer in China's battle against the coronavirus outbreak, they turn their smartphones into effective "weapons" to buy fruit and vegetables from village farms that would have otherwise gone to waste.

Measures to stem the coronavirus outbreak disrupted traditional supply chains and forced many offline trading centers to close. With targeted consumers and sellers on both ends, logistics becomes an obvious obstacle lying ahead.

Many farmers and local government officials have jumped on the livestreaming video bandwagon to attract viewers to buy their produce.

E-commerce platforms have also offered a helping hand.

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### **China to resume imports of Canadian canola**

[Reuters, 31-03-2020] China has agreed to allow imports of Canadian canola to resume, two sources briefed on the matter told Reuters on 31 March, lifting a ban in place since March 2019 that had halted \$2 billion worth of trade.

The agreement was reached during a call held by China's customs administration and Canada's farm ministry on 31 March, said the sources who declined to be named because of the sensitivity of the matter.

The two sides also agreed that the percentage of foreign materials in the canola shipments must be below 1%, the sources added.

In 2018, Canada exported C\$2.7 billion (\$2.1 billion) worth of canola seed to China, a market that accounted for approximately 40% of all Canadian canola exports.

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### **NW China province sees stable agricultural product trade with B&R countries**

[Gov.cn, Northwest China's Gansu province has exported 31,800 metric tons of apples, with a total value of \$40.95 million, to 22 countries and regions this year, according to the customs in Lanzhou, capital of the province.

The customs said Gansu has seen stable export of agricultural products to the Belt and Road (B&R) countries since February.

On March 3, 23 tons of cherry tomatoes were exported from the city of Jiuquan to Kazakhstan. On March 10, the province also exported 20.6 tons of apples worth \$32,000 to Kuwait.

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