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## Policies

### **Xi calls for maintaining new development philosophy, winning "three tough battles"**

[Xinhua, 29-04-2018] Chinese President Xi Jinping has called for maintaining the new development philosophy and winning the "three tough battles."

Forestalling and defusing major risks, carrying out targeted poverty alleviation, and preventing and controlling pollution have been identified as the three tough battles that China must win.

A holistic approach should be used to conserve the mountains, rivers, forests, farmlands, lakes, and grasslands, while controlling the pollution of the air, water, and soil should be strengthened, Xi said.

Xi also stressed that the rural revitalization strategy is central for China to address issues relating to agriculture, rural areas and residents.

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### **Policies released to boost China's agricultural growth**

[Xinhua, 03-04-2018] China on 3 April announced a package of key policies to boost the growth of agriculture for the year, offering more financial support for the sector.

China has confirmed it will give subsidies to corn and soybean producers in the northeastern provinces of Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang, as well as Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. Soybean subsidies will be higher than those for corn, with specific standards for allocation not yet set up by local governments.

Central finance will also allocate rice subsidies for major rice producing provinces to protect farmers' interests and push reform of the minimum purchase price of rice.

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### **A 'good start' for China's agricultural sector, uncertainty remains**

[China Daily, 23-04-2018] China's agricultural sector made a good start in the first quarter of 2018, but challenges and uncertainty remain, a senior official said 23 April.

"The sound performance of the sector laid a solid foundation for the rural revitalization strategy," Wei Baigang, an official at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, told a press conference.

According to Wei, per-capita disposable income for rural residents rose 6.8 percent to 4,226 yuan in the first quarter. Fixed-asset investment in the sector grew 24.2 percent to 290 billion yuan, accelerating from the 19.8 percent rise registered the corresponding period last year.

"Uncertainty, including changes in the global trade environment, international commodity market volatility and domestic macro-economic development, will affect the sector's performance," Wei said.

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### **China needs 'extraordinary measures' to revitalize countryside: minister**

[Reuters, 11-04-2018] China must adopt "extraordinary measures" to help revitalize the countryside and prevent its rural economy from falling further behind amid continuing urbanization, the country's agriculture minister said.

China needed to modernize its farm sector and will also provide support for entrepreneurs to return to rural regions and start businesses, Han Changfu, minister of agriculture and rural affairs told the Boao forum on the southern island province of Hainan.

Rural revitalization was a major priority of the agriculture ministry. The ministry has taken on additional powers for farm sector investment.

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### **China makes progress in agricultural green development**

[Xinhua, 25-04-2018] China has made progress in environmental protection and resource conservation in the agricultural sector, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Han Changfu said 25 April.

Outstanding problems have been "preliminarily contained," Han said when delivering a report at the ongoing bimonthly session of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress.

China saw zero growth in chemical fertilizer and pesticide use in 2017, achieving its target three years in advance, according to Han.

More than 60 percent of livestock excrement, straw and agricultural plastic film are utilized or recycled, while irrigation efficiency is improving, he said.

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### **Four sites in China designated by FAO as GIAHS**

[MARA, 25-04-2018] On April 19, the 5th International Forum on Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) hosted by FAO was convened in Rome, Italy. Four new sites in China were designated as GIAHS, including the "Zhagana Agriculture-Forest-Animal Husbandry Composite System," the "Huzhou Mulberry-dyke & Fish Pond System," the "Xiajin Yellow River Old Course Ancient Mulberry Grove System," and the "Rice Terraces in Southern Mountainous and Hilly Areas" (Chongyi Hakka Terraces in Jiangxi province, Youxi Lianhe Terraces in Fujian province, Xinhua Ziquejie Terraces in Hunan province, and Longsheng Longji Terraces in Guangxi province). At present, China has a total of 15 GIAHS sites, ranking first in the world.

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### **China's agricultural investment abroad is rising**

[USDA, 24-04-2018] China's need for agricultural resources and technology and the country's considerable financial clout are driving rapid growth in Chinese investment in agriculture and food sectors abroad. The trend reflects the growing global ambitions of Chinese companies, and it is attracting the attention of business and government leaders around the world.

According to Chinese investment statistics, overseas ventures in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries soared from \$300 million in 2009 to \$3.3 billion in 2016. But these totals understate the magnitude of Chinese agricultural-focused foreign assets because the statistics exclude the acquisition of food processing and trading companies classified in manufacturing and service sectors. A more complete count issued by China's Ministry of Agriculture said the country had over 1,300 agricultural, forestry, and fisheries enterprises with registered overseas investments of \$26 billion, at the end of 2016.

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## Science, Technology and Environment

### **White rapeseed flower makes its spring debut**

[China daily, 04-04-2018] A sea of golden rapeseed flowers is a perfect destination for tourists to enjoy spring, but now people have another choice. The sea of white rapeseed flowers in Shanghai are a new variety of rapeseed, "Hubai 1", cultivated by Chinese scientists.

Scientists from the Shanghai Academy of Agricultural Sciences produced the new flower variety using two mustard plants.

The new blossom retains the agronomic traits, such as maturity, plant height, and yield, of its parents. Not only beautiful, it also has the same economic value.

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### **Chinese scientists complete full genome sequencing of Peruvian scallop**

[Xinhua, 08-04-2018] Chinese scientists have completed the world's first whole genome sequencing of the Peruvian scallop, an economically important bivalve in Chile, Peru and China.

Wang Chunde, chief scientist of the research group and professor of the Qingdao Agricultural University, said it was the third scallop genome sequence map in the world after the Japanese and Zhikong scallops.

Wang's team finished the genome sequencing, assembly and annotation of the Peruvian scallop. A total of 26,256 protein-coding genes and 3,057 non-coding RNAs were predicted from the genome assembly.

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### **New date-picking machine saves labor in Toutunhe district**

[China daily, 20-04-2018] A mechanical date-picker developed by Xinjiang Machinery Research Institute Co Ltd in the Urumqi Economic and Technological Development Zone (Toutunhe district) is expected to be launched in the market at the end of this year, according to a local report.

Generally speaking, a worker can pick about 400 to 500 kilograms of dates every day. The mechanical date-picker can pick eight tons of dates every day, equivalent to the work done by 20 workers.

In recent days, the mechanical date-picker has entered the final stage of testing of its comprehensive functions, the last before it enters the market.

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### **Agriculture quality improving steadily**

[China Daily, 21-04-2018] China will make noticeable progress in agricultural output and quality to meet peoples' demand for better food over the next 10 years, according to an outlook report released by the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences on Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> April.

The volume and quality of major agricultural products will continue to rise steadily under policies that promote green, high-yield products and the application of new technologies over the next 10 years, according to the report - China Agricultural Outlook 2018-27.

China's annual output of grains, such as rice and wheat, will remain stable at more than 600 million metric tons, but the output of pork, beef, poultry, dairy and fruits is predicted to increase by 1 to 2 percent on average in coming years.

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### **China helping in fight against drug-resistant microbes**

[China Daily, 09-04-2018] China is playing a vital part in tackling the global scourge of antimicrobial resistance, the ability of a microorganism to withstand the effects of drugs previously used to treat them, a top official from the UN FAO said recently in Beijing.

"Antimicrobial resistance is a very big global problem and one that the FAO takes very seriously," said Daniel Gustafson, the organization's deputy director-general.

Equally, China plays an indispensable role in finding solutions to problems such as controlling avian flu, he said.

China is the world's largest consumer of antibiotics, which are mainly used in medical treatment, and poultry and livestock raising.

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### **Hainan cultivating high-tech agriculture**

[China Daily, 06-04-2018] Hainan province is increasingly working to hasten agricultural supply side structural reforms, speed up the development of the sector's modernization and strengthen tropical agriculture.

Before it was upgraded to a province in 1988, about 80 percent of its grain and animal husbandry products was supplied from outside. But it is now becoming the country's biggest fruit and vegetable producer in the winter, contributing 4.8 million metric tons of vegetables to the domestic market last year.

A total of 430 tons of litchee, longan, mango, paw paw and green oranges were exported from Hainan to Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States last year, while another 960 tons of fresh vegetables were sold to Hong Kong, according to official statistics.

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### **'Seawater rice' may help fill food gap**

[China daily, 09-04-2018] Chinese agricultural researchers have selected 176 strains of saltwater-tolerant rice out of more than 1,000 candidates from experimental paddies and expect them to be widely planted across the country in further trials this year.

Rice that can thrive in a saline-alkali environment - so-called seawater rice - is designed to grow in tidal flats or other areas with heavy saline-alkaline content.

The selected strains, grown in Hainan province paddies, will be planted on five different types of saline-alkali land around the country. Researchers aim to find at least one type with nationwide applicability for future use.

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### **Residents love their free-range chickens**

[China daily, 17-04-2018] Chickens roam on a vast farm in Hebei province, occasionally fluttering up into the trees.

Unlike other free-range fowl, each wears an electronic anklet that count steps to determine when they are ready for market.

"We don't sell them until they have taken more than 1 million steps, roughly 160 days," said He Xiaofei, manager of the chicken farm in Wuyi county. Walking around tightens chickens' muscles and makes their meat more tasty. Some 10,000 chickens are currently strolling around the farm's 14 hectares. All of them eat only natural food.

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## Trade and Business

### **Chinese delegation arrive in UK to carry out BSE inspections**

[Farming UK, 18-04-2018] A Chinese delegation has arrived in the UK this week to carry out inspections as part of the ongoing process to lift the BSE ban on British beef exports.

Hosted by Defra and working closely with the wider industry, the delegation is visiting farms, abattoirs, a BSE testing laboratory and rendering sites as well as meeting with key UK government officials.

The inspections mark a major step forward in the process to open the Chinese market to British beef for the first time in over 20 years – which could be worth £250 million in the first five years.

AHDB International Market Development Director Dr Phil Hadley said this week's visit follows years of collaboration across industry and government to gain market access.

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### **First batch of 12 Chinese young farmers visits EU on exchange program**

[Xinhua, 28-04-2018] The first batch of 12 Chinese young professional farmers for a China-EU exchange program ended their 14-day trip to Europe on 27 April for agricultural expertise and capacity building.

Luo Ming, head of the Chinese delegation and an official with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, said the delegation members were impressed by the trip to Belgium, Britain and Estonia with modern agriculture business in Western Europe and the agricultural development in Eastern Europe, which will be modified and applied in accordance with the Chinese local circumstance.

He said that the key of China's rural vitalization strategy was talents and the China-EU exchange program of young farmers to share knowledge and farming experience came at the right time for cooperation in the agricultural sector.

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### **China loves the flavour of Scotland**

[The Times, 08-04-2018] Nicola Sturgeon has hailed as "astonishing" the growth in food and drink exports to China as she begins an official visit to the country.

She said strengthening international trade links was key to promoting inclusive economic growth, social justice and human rights around the world.

Scottish industries and activities are experiencing "growing interest" from the Chinese market and promoting these will be an objective of her first official visit to country in three years, the first minister added.

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## **Scotland's food and drink trade with China increases 150% in ten years**

[SBNN, 08-04-2018] First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has hailed the “astonishing” growth in Scotland's food and drink exports to China.

Exports of food and drink to China have increased by more than 150% in the last 10 years, highlighting China's growing importance as a market for Scottish goods.

Scotch whisky exports accounted for the majority, worth some £61 million – up 45% compared to 2007. Fish and seafood continues to be the primary food export to China, valued at about £50 million in 2017 – up more than 12-fold compared to the value in 2007.

China currently ranks ninth in Scotland's top ten food export markets.

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## **China-focused salmon-smuggling ‘syndicate’ spawns raids**

[FT, 12-04-2018] A Norwegian citizen who acted as a linchpin for Norway's lucrative Chinese seafood export industry has been detained in China as state media trumpeted the smashing of a large salmon smuggling ring.

Chinese customs detained 17 people after co-ordinated raids in late March in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong, Guangxi and Fujian, according to a report published on the Guangdong provincial government website.

Among the operations uncovered was “a smuggling crime syndicate” which had illegally imported salmon worth up to Rmb620m (\$98.4m) from Norway, according to the official report.

According to the Chinese report, the Norwegian salmon was brought from Norway by air in frozen consignments to Vietnam, then shipped overland to points on the China-Vietnam border and smuggled across by Chinese gangs for sale in big cities.

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## **China will allow Irish beef exports**

[China daily, 17-04-2018] China will allow Irish farmers to export beef to China after granting approval to a number of meat processing establishments, the Irish minister for agriculture announced on 16 April.

China first banned exports of beef from Europe in 2001 in response to the outbreak of mad cow disease and the ban also covered US beef after the disease appeared in the United States in 2003.

In January, China said it would lift its ban on British beef but farmers may have to wait years before receiving regulatory approval from Beijing; it took three years from lifting the ban on Irish beef for China to approve imports.

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## **Taiwan vertical farm to invest US\$25 million in Britain: UK minister**

[Focus Taiwan, 10-04-2018] Graham Stuart, minister for investment in the United Kingdom's Department for International Trade, announced a plan by a Taiwanese company to establish a vertical farming factory in the UK.

YesHealth Agri-Biotechnology Co., which operates a 14-storey vertical farm in Taoyuan City called YesHealth iFarm, will invest 18 million pounds sterling (US\$25.47 million) over two years to establish a pilot factory at the National Agri-Food Innovation Campus (NAFIC) in York, "bringing the next generation of

food production to UK shores," Stuart announced at a press conference held at the farm in Taoyuan.

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### **U.S. dairy group partners with China researchers to boost trade opportunities**

[Reuters, 02-04-2018] U.S. dairy trade export group has partnered with a Chinese university to create a food science research center, hoping to bolster relations and expand dairy exports from the United States into China, the group said in a statement.

The U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC) signed a memorandum of understanding on Monday with China's Jiangnan University, in the city of Wuxi, near Shanghai, to build the U.S.-China Dairy Innovation Center at the school, the USDEC said.

The tie-up is occurring amid rising trade tensions between the world's two largest economies, as the administration of President Donald Trump has imposed tariffs targeting Chinese products including solar panels, steel and aluminum.

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### **Dutch dairy giant bullish on China**

[China Daily, 13-04-2018] Dutch global dairy giant Royal FrieslandCampina plans to invest 100 million euros (\$123.7 million) in the China market this year, its CEO Hein Schumacher said in Beijing.

The investment will be used to expand the production and sales channels of Friso, the company's high-end infant and toddler formula brand, and further expand its sales in smaller Chinese cities, as it projected that about 50 percent of the future growth in China will come from third to sixth-tier cities, according to the company.

Currently, China's per capita consumption of dairy products in China is around 36 kilograms a year, while the figure is around 50 kg in Japan and South Korea. Industry experts said China's dairy market is expected to continue to grow significantly, following the introduction of the country's two-child policy.

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### **Alibaba helps Thailand sell agriculture products online to China**

[Xinhua, 20-04-2018] Thailand's Commerce Minister Sontirat Sontijirawong gifted founder of China's e-commerce giant Alibaba Jack Ma with a fresh "golden pillow," the kingdom's most famous variety of durian, at a signing ceremony on 19<sup>th</sup> April.

Ma, who has agreed to help build a digital hub in Thailand, has surprised the Thais by selling 80,000 golden pillow durians on his online platform T-mall within just one minute.

Alibaba has signed a durian deal worth 428 million U.S. dollars with the Thai government.

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### **China not expecting any soybean supply problems in short term, agriculture ministry says**

[SCMP, 10-04-2018] China's agriculture ministry said on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> April it expects soybean supplies to be "basically normal" in the short-term after Beijing proposed a 25 per cent tariff on US imports, but will monitor the impact for the rest of the year.

In its first official comment on the issue, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs said in its monthly crop report that South America is the main supplier to China during the first part of the year.

However, “further developments and the impact on supply and demand for the whole year must continue to be monitored”, it said.

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### **China's soybean production to recover in 2018**

[Xinhua, 22-04-2018] China is expected to increase its soybean planting area this year due to a pro-production policy, according to a panel of experts with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

The production area is expected to grow by 1.1 percent this year, with output exceeding 15 million tonnes, according to the latest report on China's agriculture outlook released over the weekend.

Rising demand will keep soybean imports at high level but structure optimized, the report noted.

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### **Guizhou upgrades villages to develop rural tourism**

[China Daily, 16-02-2018] Guizhou province has decided to turn another 1,481 rural villages into tourism villages and upgrade 292 existing rural tourism villages. Rural tourism is an effective means of developing rural areas and increasing the quality of life for villagers.

Statistics show that Guizhou province has 102,000 villages with more than 30 households, only 3,345 of which are rural tourism villages, accounting for 3.27 percent of the total. That is to say, Guizhou has enormous potential for rural tourism. There are many advantages to develop rural tourism in villages.

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### **China pork output jumps 2.1 percent in Q1, pressuring prices**

[Reuters, 17-04-2018] China's pork output rose 2.1 percent to 15.4 million tonnes in the first quarter compared with the period during the prior year, official data showed on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> April, after farmers rushed to slaughter their pigs amid a rapid decline in prices.

Live hog prices in China plunged by around 30 percent in the first quarter, in one of the steepest declines ever recorded, after a significant increase in production by new farms.

The falling price led some farmers to send more hogs to slaughter amid worries prices would come under further pressure later in the year.

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### **China's barley imports jump as trade spat ruffles grain markets**

[Reuters, 23-04-2018] China imported one of the highest tonnages of barley in years in March, while sorghum arrivals fell by 21 percent, customs data showed on 23 April, in a sign that China's growing trade spat with the United States is roiling grain flows.

China imported 860,000 tonnes of barley in March, up 22 percent on a year ago and the third highest monthly level since at least the start of 2016.

Demand for barley, used in both animal feed and brewing, has risen since China said in early February it would investigate alleged dumping of another feed grain, sorghum, by the United States.

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## **Belt and Road Initiative provides opportunities for FAO to collaborate with China**

[Xinhua, 15-04-2018] Director-general of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) José Graziano da Silva has said the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative and FAO share common goals and there exist many opportunities for the UN organization to cooperate with China under the framework.

The FAO chief made the remarks in an exclusive interview with Xinhua on the sidelines of the 34th FAO Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific.

The Belt and Road Initiative, proposed by China in 2013, aims to build trade and infrastructure networks connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along the ancient Silk Road trade routes to seek common development and prosperity.

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