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Policies

China adopts new law to promote rural vitalization

[Xinhua, 29-04-2021] A law on the promotion of rural vitalization was adopted by China's national legislature on 29 April, providing the country a legal guarantee in pursuit of the rural vitalization strategy.

Chinese farmers' harvest festival, which falls on the Autumn Equinox every year, has been written into this law.

According to the new law, an assessment system of rural vitalization will be built, along with the establishment of an annual work report system as well as supervision and inspection systems. The law stipulates protecting the permanent basic cropland, building a system to ensure a steady increase in rural income, and strengthening the work involving rural talent.

It also demands efforts to improve the protection system of key ecosystems and the ecological compensation mechanism.

Click [here](#) for details

China adopts law against food waste

[GT, 29-04-2021] The long-awaited law was officially approved by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) on 29 April. It is expected to establish a basic code of conduct and build a long-term mechanism to stop food waste and guide society to foster rational and healthy catering consumption habits.

Observers noted that adoption of the legislation against food waste does not imply that China is facing an immediate food shortage risk, but it is a far-sighted move for food security as the country seeks to stabilize domestic grain output and ensure supply, facing increasing domestic demand for grain due to population growth and external uncertainties.

Legal experts reached by the Global Times said the main role of this law is to spearhead the advocacy of a resource-conserving and environmentally-friendly society.

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China's Biosecurity Law goes into effect

[Xinhua, 15-04-2021] Biosecurity Law went into effect on Thursday 15 April, the country's sixth National Security Education Day, ushering in a new phase of law-based governance of biosecurity in the country.

The law, adopted by China's top legislature in October last year, clarifies the composition, responsibility and operating mechanism of a national biosecurity coordination mechanism.

Consisting of 10 chapters and 88 articles, the law stipulates the establishment of 11 basic systems for biosecurity risk prevention and control, including biosecurity risk monitoring and early warning, risk investigation and assessment, information sharing and information release.

The law has detailed provisions on the prevention and control of major new or sudden outbreaks of infectious diseases and epidemics related to animals and plants.

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China to establish ecological product value-realization mechanism

[Xinhua, 26-04-2021] China has issued a guideline on setting up and improving the mechanism to realize the value of ecological products amid its environmental protection and green development efforts.

The country vows to establish a basic policy framework for value realization of the products by 2025, according to the guideline jointly issued by the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council.

Problems related to measuring, mortgages, transactions, and value realization of ecological products will be effectively solved by 2025, and an interest-oriented mechanism for environmental protection will take a basic shape.

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Road to agricultural modernization

[China daily, 14-04-2021] China will prioritize agricultural development and rural areas to modernize agriculture by 2035.

Going forward, China should properly handle the following relationships.

- It should find a balance between enhancing self-reliance and using the international market.
- Given the great regional disparities, China should also offer policy guidance for regions based on their comparative advantages.
- The agricultural modernization strategy must prioritize breakthroughs in agricultural technology.
- China should further beef up support for the agricultural sector and improve its agricultural policies.
- China should implement more differentiated and targeted subsidy policies, prioritizing main producing areas and scale operating entities to increase the efficiency of government subsidies.

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Poverty alleviation: China's experience and contribution

[Xinhua, 06-04-2021] China's State Council Information Office on Tuesday 6 April issued a white paper titled "Poverty Alleviation: China's Experience and Contribution."

China is home to nearly one fifth of the world's population. Its complete eradication of extreme poverty – the first target of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – 10 years ahead of schedule, is a milestone in the history of the Chinese nation and the history of humankind, making an important contribution to the cause of global poverty alleviation, the White Paper says.

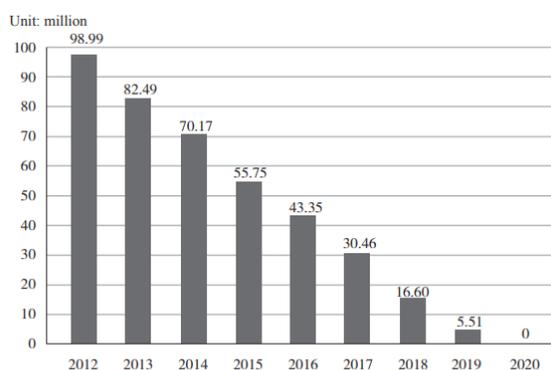


Figure 1 Number of Rural Residents in Poverty (2012-2020)

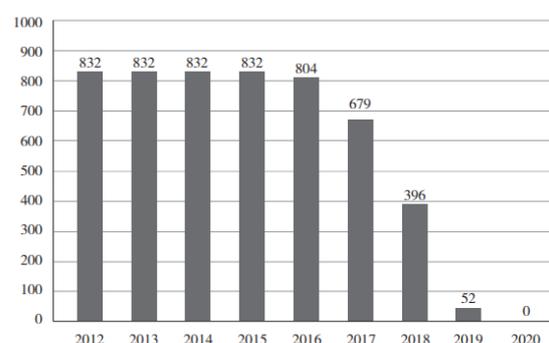


Figure 2 Number of Impoverished Counties (2012-2020)

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Over 30 policies in pipeline for transition towards rural vitalization

[China daily, 06-04-2021] China will roll out more than 30 policies to ensure the resources leveraged for intensive poverty elimination be redirected toward an extensive drive for rural vitalization, a government official said on Tuesday 6 April.

China is reviewing, adjusting, optimizing and improving existing support policies for poverty alleviation. The official pledged to keep policies consistent and stable as part of efforts to prevent people from falling back into poverty.

After removing all remaining impoverished counties from the country's poverty list as of November 2020, China is now working to advance its rural vitalization strategy and prevent people from falling back into the clutches of destitution.

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Grain production target announced

[China daily, 05-04-2021] China will maintain its annual grain production at no less than 650 million metric tons in the next five years, with food security having been outlined in the country's five-year plan for the first time, food authorities revealed.

Liang Yan, deputy head of the National Food and Strategic Reserves Administration, said the per capita stock of grains in China, an important indicator of food security, is 470 kilograms, well above the international average of 400 kg.

Apart from maintaining the country's annual grain output, she also stressed the importance of food reserve safety as well as the safety of the processing and sale of food in the next five years.

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China to make it easier for rural workers and students to get residency status in cities

[Caixin, 14-04-2021] China plans to make it easier for migrants to apply for household registration in cities by putting renters on an equal footing with homeowners, said the nation's top economic planning agency.

Authorities should facilitate certain rural migrants in obtaining urban household registration, or a "hukou", **including those who have worked and lived in those areas for more than five years and students who study in cities**, the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) said in a document issued 12 April.

The policy is the latest effort by authorities to grow cities and expand the urban population, as policymakers push forward with urbanization during the 14th Five-Year Plan which runs from 2021 to 2025.

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China to step up plans for domestic Better Cotton Initiative

[SCMP, China has stepped up plans to launch its own version of the under-fire Better Cotton Initiative after the network cut off all ties with Xinjiang due to concerns about the alleged forced labour issue in the region, according to three people familiar with the matter.

Beijing-based cotton vertical service provider Zhongnong Guoji started the Weilai Cotton, or future cotton, project two years ago, but it did not make much progress until January when two state-backed organisations – the China Fashion Association and the Modern Seeds Development Fund – became involved, according to Zhao Yan, one of the coordinators for the project.

The group may also establish a separate company called Weilai Cotton to run the day-to-day affairs and organise various events in the industry, added Zhao, with various preparations still ongoing before the project itself can be launched.

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China probes food delivery giant Meituan amid antitrust squeeze

[Reuters, 26-04-2021] China launched an antitrust investigation into food delivery giant Meituan, the market regulator said, the latest target in a crackdown on the country's sprawling internet platform economy.

The State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR) said in a statement that its investigation was focused on the practice whereby a company forces vendors to use their platform exclusively, known as "choose one from two".

Meituan, which competes with Alibaba-backed Ele.me among others, had an estimated 68.2% of China's food delivery market in the second quarter of 2020, according to Trustdata. Meituan's businesses also include bike sharing, community group buying and restaurant reviews.

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Science, Technology and Environment

Sci-tech innovation promotes China's cash crop industry

[Xinhua, 13-04-2021] China has made notable achievements in boosting its cash crop industry through innovations in science and technology during the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) period, said the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS).

The CAAS has made efforts in optimizing crop varieties, developing green cultivation techniques, and building a crop germplasm resource pool during the period.

The total output of China's oil crops exceeded 56 million tonnes in 2019, with rapeseed breeding up to advanced world standards.

The CAAS has built the world's largest oil-crop germplasm resource pool, which preserves more than 36,000 domestic and foreign germplasm resources. It has become a strategic resource for China's oil science and technology innovation.

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Researchers explore method to reduce heavy metal contamination in crops

[Xinhua, 27-04-2021] Chinese researchers have proposed a cost-effective and practical solution for the safe utilization of farmland polluted with low to moderate levels of heavy metals.

The low heavy metal cadmium accumulating cultivars can efficiently exclude the cadmium from entering their edible parts by decreasing root cadmium uptake, restricting cadmium translocation from roots to shoots and reducing cadmium translocation from shoots to grains.

The researchers from the Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, verified the average cadmium decreasing rate of grains was 58 percent.

They also built a germplasm list of low heavy metal accumulating cultivars, according to different regions, types of heavy metals and crops such as rice and vegetables.

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It's not exactly a pig hotel, but it's close

[China daily, 01-04-2021] A 26-story structure is rising from the ground in Ezhou, Hubei province. This is no office building: Inside will be thousands of pigs.

It's one of the tallest pig-raising facilities in the country, and will use new technology to eliminate odors. It's being funded by local investors to the tune of 2 billion yuan (\$300 million). Once put into operation, it is expected to produce 600,000 pigs annually.

The structure is designed for luxury, with air conditioning and heating systems to adapt to winter and summer. Each floor has its own ventilation system and deodorizing system. Pig wastes will be disposed of via a flushing toilet system.

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China's import of breeding pigs account for just 10%: agriculture ministry

[GT, 28-04-2021] China has imported fewer than 10,000 breeding pigs each year, accounting for less than 10 percent of overall breeding pigs population, a scientist said on 28 April, stressing that domestic breeding pigs supply is guaranteed.

"China has been engaged in localized breeding of lean meat pigs, including duroc, landrace and large white, since 1980s, which has ensured nearly 90 percent of the breeding pigs supply for the domestic hog market," Chen Yaosheng, chief scientist of the State Swine Reproduction System Project, said at a press conference held by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

Chen's remarks refuted some domestic media reports claiming that the market share of locally bred pigs has plunged to 2 percent from 90 percent before, with most of the pork on the market are from foreign pigs.

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China wants to improve genetics of its pigs so they're fatter and eat less

[Bloomberg, 28-04-2021] China will work to improve the genetics of its hog herd and other livestock in the coming decade with the aim of breeding animals that produce more meat and -- at the same time - consume less grains.

Sow herd productivity is about 30% lower than in developed countries and dairy cows produce only 80% of the milk than their peers in some leading markets, Shi Jianzhong, an official with the agriculture ministry's National Livestock and Poultry Genetic Resources Committee told reporters on 28 April. China has to rely on overseas stock to produce white-feathered broiler chickens, he said.

The drive to improve livestock genetics is part of China's goal of relying less on imports to feed its massive and increasingly affluent population. However, the nation will continue to bring in animals from overseas to improve its domestic stock to catch up faster with advanced countries, said Chen Yaosheng, an official at the ministry's National Pig Genetic Improvement Program.

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Biodiversity conservation goes mainstream in China

[Xinhua, 22-04-2021] As one of the most bio-diverse countries globally, China is actively promoting the awareness of biodiversity protection among the general public -- with the help of the internet.

Ahead of the World Earth Day, which was observed on Thursday 22 April, a discussion on biodiversity conservation featuring internet celebrities and industry insiders was streamed on

China's short-video platform Kuaishou, attracting more than 100,000 views and 1 million likes in less than three hours.

Organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the event was part of a campaign by the UNDP aimed at raising public awareness of biodiversity protection, especially among young people.

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China releases 10,000 sturgeon into Yangtze River

[Xinhua, 10-04-2021] A total of 10,000 captive-bred Chinese sturgeon were released into the middle reaches of the Yangtze River on 10 April to help restore the fish's wild population.

The released sturgeon, with a total weight of 13,130 kg, include both young and adults. Fishery authorities have tagged them to track their migration and monitor their activities. Sixteen sturgeon that are close to sexual maturity are carrying satellite-tracking receivers.

The release, which took place in the city of Yichang, in central China's Hubei Province, was conducted jointly by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, the China Three Gorges Corporation (CTG) and the local government.

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Milestone reached as China assigns first on-board observers to distant-water fishing vessel

[Seafood source, 19-04-2021] Five Chinese government-appointed observers have departed a Chinese port onboard a reefer, in what is potentially a major development for China's governance of its distant-water fleet.

The five observers, appointed by China's Agriculture Ministry, are the first such observers to travel on Chinese fishing vessels, according to the ministry. They are now travelling on the transport ship to the Pacific and Indian oceans to ensure that "no illegal catches" are taken, according to a statement from the ministry.

A ceremony marking the observers' departure in Rongcheng, Shandong Province, was co-hosted by the Agriculture Ministry's Fisheries Management Office, along with the Distant Water Fishing Association.

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Smart irrigation saves water, increases yield

[Xinhua, 11-04-2021] China plans to add 18.3 million hectares of high-standard farmland in the next five years, which will bring the total area of high-standard farmland to 71.6 million hectares by 2025. Some 4 million hectares of farmland will be added to be equipped with efficient water-saving irrigation facilities during this period.

This year alone, an additional 1 million hectares of farmland will have water-saving irrigation facilities, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

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Trade and Business

Reshaping grain trade? China acts to change animal feed recipes

[Reuters, 21-04-2021] China issued guidelines on 21 April recommending the reduction of corn and soymeal in pig and poultry feed, a measure that could reshape the flow of grains into the world's top corn and soybean buyer.

Chinese feed makers have already been switching corn for cheaper alternatives, especially wheat, after the grain rallied by more than a third in the last year following a drop in corn output and state stockpiles.

Imports of corn, used largely in animal feed, into China surged as it sought to compensate for the domestic deficit.

The ministry said rice, cassava, rice bran, barley and sorghum were also suitable alternatives to corn, while rapeseed meal, cottonseed meal, peanut meal, sunflower meal, distillers dried grains, palm meal, flaxmeal, sesame meal and corn processing byproducts were good options to replace soymeal.

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China's Swine Fever lockdown reshapes \$300 billion pig industry

[Bloomberg, 26-04-2021] China's plan to control the transport of live hogs to rein in the spread of African swine fever is set to reshape the market and create regional price differences in the world's biggest consumer and producer of pork.

The country will be split into five regions from May, the agriculture ministry said last week, and live pigs will not be allowed across the boundaries. The move will push down pork prices in the main producing areas in the north and increase the cost of the popular protein in demand centers in the south. If the controls stay in place over the longer term, companies will be forced to open more pig farms closer to where their customers are.

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China's agricultural, rural economy remain stable in Q1

[Xinhua, 20-04-2021] China's agricultural and rural economy reported stable performance in the first quarter (Q1), the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs said Tuesday 20 April.

The value added of the country's primary industry in Q1 exceeded 1.13 trillion yuan (about 173.57 billion U.S. dollars), up 8.1 percent year on year, ministry official Zeng Yande told a press conference.

The planting area of winter wheat has reported an increase of more than 200,000 hectares, according to him.

Meanwhile, the country's hog production continued to recover, with further advancement in green agriculture and rural industries, Zeng noted.

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China Q1 pork output jumps 32% to highest in two years

[Reuters, 16-04-2021] China's first-quarter pork production rose 31.9% from a year earlier to 13.69 million tonnes, data showed on 16 April, the highest quarterly volume in two years.

The surge comes after huge investments in rebuilding China's hog herd since the deadly African swine fever disease ravaged farms in 2018 and 2019.

China's pig herd increased to 415.95 million head at the end of March, a 29.5% rise on the year, and up from 406.5 million at the end of December, the National Bureau of Statistics said.

A severe wave of disease over the winter added to pork production as many farms wary of the rising risk of infection sent pigs to slaughter early.

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China releases rice for feed in face of high corn prices

[Reuters, 02-04-2021] China released 2 million tonnes of rice from state reserves for sale to feed producers to bolster supplies of feed grains amid elevated corn prices, three sources close to the matter said.

Corn prices hit record highs in China earlier this year as dwindling stocks and reduced output raised concerns over supplies.

China on Wednesday 31 March sold between 1.4 million and 1.5 million tonnes of rice - about 70% of the total volume put up for sale - for feed use, said two sources briefed on the matter.

This rice would be sold through state companies directly to feed makers, unlike the rice sold from reserves in regular auctions to the broader market.

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China's grain reserves stable, sufficient

[GT, 02-04-2021] China's grain reserves are stable and sufficient to feed 1.4 billion people, with the national grain storage surpassing 650 million tons and reaching an advanced level, an official at the National Food and Strategic Reserves Administration said.

The size of grain reserves in major grain producing areas is able to meet Chinese market demand for three months, and grain reserves in main sales areas for six months, Liang Yan, deputy head of the administration told a news briefing on Friday 2 April in Beijing.

Specifically, the cereal and wheat inventory is able to meet market consumption demand for more than one year. Rice and flour products in 36 big and medium-sized cities can meet market demand for more than 15 days.

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The 129th Canton Fair promotes Chinese agricultural supplies online to global businesses

[PRNewswire, 16-04-2021] The 129th China Import and Export Fair (Canton Fair) is showcasing more than 20,000 food and agricultural products from 707 industry exhibitors online.

Many "Chinese taste", such as seabuckthorn juice which contains rich vitamin supplements, organic camellia oil, wine produced from grapes in plateaus, wild Ganoderma lucidum and high-mountain green tea, are extremely welcomed in global market for their unique flavor. However, their suppliers are hard to find since they are located in the far, less-developed areas with limited transportation and resources to reach international buyers.

To connect potential buyers with these suppliers, the 129th Canton Fair has set up a special zone for rural vitalization, showcasing 1,160 companies from 22 provinces free of charge. These companies, many of which are agricultural and food producers, are now able to open up their businesses to the global buyers, helping them further expand their market reach.

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Nation urged to strengthen pig breeding industry

[China daily, 07-04-2021] When it comes to buying and eating meat, Chinese have a clear preference for pork, favoring it over beef, mutton and fish.

However, some 90 percent of the pork on dining tables in China has overseas origins.

China imported a record 27,000 pigs last year to help restock its breeding farms with high-quality animals. The previous record was 17,300 in 2013.

The country mainly imports these pigs from Denmark, the US, Canada and the United Kingdom.

Although the central government and companies have been working to ensure that the pig farming industry meets domestic demand, there have been suggestions that other improvements may be needed.

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Beyond Burgers: China Plant-Based Protein Market Growing Up

[Bloomberg, 08-04-2021] China is driving growth in Asia's plant-based protein market as health-conscious consumers embrace an array of new products, according to Archer-Daniels-Midland Co., one of the world's biggest agricultural traders.

The uptake of locally-sourced plant-based protein has generally been faster in China than in other parts of the world and the industry there is moving quickly beyond burger analogues, according to ADM. Alternatives to shrimp and shellfish, plant-based cheeses and ready-to-eat protein snacks are all becoming more popular.

The rising interest in plant-based protein dovetails with Beijing's increasing focus on the environment and food security.

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Nestle announces new investment projects in E China's Qingdao

[China daily, 27-04-2021] Global food and beverage giant Nestlé announced new investment projects in Laixi, a county level city in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, including a new Product Innovation Center and the launch of production of Gerber puree, in a bid to expand its production in baby food, coffee and dairy products.

China, as the world's most promising market for maternal and infant products, has shown a rapidly growing demand for high-quality organic baby food. The new factory in Laixi - following strict organic standards - is Nestlé's only factory for Gerber wet products in the Asia, Africa and Oceania area. This production line has introduced 18 flavors of Gerber puree to consumers in China.

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Ireland eyes China boost for agri-food exports

[China daily, 07-04-2021] China is expected to become Ireland's second-largest destination for exports after the United Kingdom, especially for foodstuffs and agricultural products, over the next several years, Irish business leaders said.

Though trading activities were disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic last year, Irish agri-food exports to China rose by 2 percent on a yearly basis in value terms to a record 737 million euros (\$870.62 million) last year, data from Ireland's Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine showed.

China is now the fourth-largest market for Irish food exports and accounts for more than 6 percent of the European country's food exports. The country mainly ships dairy, meat and seafood to China.

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