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## Policies

### **China to release state wheat reserves after weather damages output**

[Business times, 25-08-2018] China will release state wheat reserves after bad weather curbed output in major growing areas this year, an official at the country's grain administration said, the Xinhua news agency reported.

Chen Shuyu, spokesman for the State Grain and Reserves Administration, said in an interview with Xinhua on Friday 24 August state wheat inventories were still ample despite the drop in output and market supplies would be fully guaranteed.

"Government authorities will closely monitor the wheat market and release some of the state wheat stockpiles at an appropriate time to meet market demand and avoid drastic price fluctuations," Chen was quoted as saying.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China will not close the door of agricultural opening-up**

[Xinhua, 10-08-2018] China will remain committed to opening up its agricultural industries despite trade tensions with the United States, a senior Chinese official said, adding that tariffs will only have a limited impact on the country's markets.

"China's diversified sources of imports from a wide range of overseas markets will ensure its countermeasures against U.S. tariffs will only have a limited influence on the domestic market," said Han Jun, deputy director of the office of the central agricultural work leading group and vice minister of agriculture and rural affairs.

The government will work to minimize the impacts on industrial production and people's everyday life, Han said.

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### **Changes could help to improve nation's food safety**

[China daily, 09-08-2018] Last year, during the World Congress on Farm Animal Welfare in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, the central government for the first time publically expressed support for the moves and stressed its determination to promote better conditions and treatment.

"It is not only an important choice to boost the green development of China's agricultural industry, but also a positive step to improve food safety and meet the demands of the general public," said Yu Kangzhen, vice-minister at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

Animal welfare standards have also been added to the Terrestrial Animal Health Code formulated by the World Organization for Animal Health, which stresses that the one of the main tasks is to improve the lives and treatment of farm animals and requires member states to implement the code's minimum animal welfare standards.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China helps train African youth in agriculture**

[Xinhua, 29-08-2018] A total of 30 young people from around 20 African countries attended the week-long "Youth Leadership Program in the Belt and Road and South-South Agricultural Cooperation," which started Monday, 27 August.

Jointly launched by the Institute for South-South Cooperation in Agriculture, China Agricultural University, and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, the

training program includes a series of sessions, a field trip to the northeast city of Shenyang and dialogue among participants.

The program also gained support from the World Food Programme, the World Bank, International Fund for Agricultural Development and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Outbreak of African Swine Fever in China**

### **China launches emergency response after first outbreak of African swine fever**

[Xinhua, 03-08-2018] On 1 August a suspected outbreak was discovered in a pig farm in the city of Shenyang, capital of northeast China's Liaoning Province. The case was confirmed 3 August, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs said in a statement on its website.

Of the 383 pig herds, 47 pigs were affected and killed by the disease.

After the outbreak, the ministry launched a Level II emergency response plan and local authorities have adopted measures such as implementing a blockade and culling the pigs.

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### **China to introduce stricter controls on pig farming after African swine fever outbreak**

[SCMP, 10-08-2018] China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs said on 10 August it will implement stricter controls on the slaughter and transport of pigs following the outbreak last week of African swine fever.

The statement comes after China reported its first outbreak of the deadly disease last week in the northeastern province of Liaoning.

The ministry said it would ban pigs in any areas affected by the disease from being transported elsewhere, in line with steps introduced last week near Liaoning's capital, Shenyang.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Liaoning culls over 8,000 pigs after African swine fever outbreak**

[Xinhua, 15-08-2018] Northeast China's Liaoning Province has culled 8,116 pigs in response to an outbreak of African swine fever, the provincial animal health and production bureau said 15 August.

Earlier this month, an outbreak of African swine fever was discovered on a farm in the provincial capital Shenyang. It was China's first outbreak of African swine fever.

The outbreak is currently under control, with no new cases discovered. No cases of the African swine fever were reported in other cities in the province.

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### **Heilongjiang probes African swine fever epidemic**

[Xinhua, 16-08-2018] Experts in northeast China's Heilongjiang Province are looking into a local pig breeding company, following an outbreak of African swine fever in a slaughterhouse in central China's Henan Province.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs reported the outbreak of the disease in the city of Zhengzhou on Thursday 16 August and said the slaughterhouse had bought 260 pigs from a market in Tangyuan County, Jiamusi in Heilongjiang.

Heilongjiang Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Bureau said it was found that the pigs were from a local company. They traveled 2,000 km and arrived at Zhengzhou on Aug. 14.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Jiangsu Province reports outbreak of African swine fever**

[Xinhua, 19-08-2018] An outbreak of African swine fever has been discovered at a farm in the city of Lianyungang, east China's Jiangsu Province, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs said Sunday, 19 Aug.

The farm in Haizhou District has reported 615 infected pigs and 88 have died after deaths began to be registered on Aug. 15, the ministry said in an online statement.

The agricultural ministry has sent teams to Jiangsu, where local authorities have initiated an emergency response mechanism to block, cull, and disinfect the affected pigs.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Zhejiang Province reports outbreak of African swine fever**

[Xinhua, 23-08-2018] An outbreak of African swine fever has been discovered in the city of Wenzhou, east China's Zhejiang Province, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs said Thursday.

On August 17, a suspected outbreak was reported by pig farmers in Yueqing of Wenzhou. The case was confirmed Wednesday, the ministry said in an online statement.

So far, 430 pigs have been affected, of which 340 were killed.

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### **China reports fifth case of African swine fever**

[Reuters, 30-08-2018] African swine fever has infected 185 pigs on a farm in Wuhu city in eastern China's Anhui province, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs said on Thursday 10 August, in the country's fifth case of the deadly disease in less than a month.

The infection killed 80 of 459 hogs on a farm in Wuhu's Nanling county, with the remaining 379 culled.

Transport of hogs and related products has been banned in the affected area, said a notice on the ministry's website.

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### **Predicting the impacts of the first ASF outbreak in China**

[The Pig Site, 07-08-2018] As diagnosed by China Animal Health and Epidemiology Center at 5pm on 2 August 2018, the first suspected case of African swine fever (ASF) has been found in the Liaoning Province of northeastern China. The case was further confirmed by Liaoning Bureau of Animal Health and Production at 11am on 3 August 2018.

Following the outbreak, China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) initiated its "level two" emergency mechanism to block, cull and inoculate pigs and relevant waste. It has also banned the transport of pigs in and out of the infected area in Shenyang City.

The ASF outbreak has caused some negative impacts on local pork production and consumer demand, but so far, the effects remain under control. It will depend on the outbreak's progress whether ASF materially affects domestic pork production, import and price.

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### **Outbreak of African swine fever threatens to spread from China to other Asian countries**

[FAO, 28-08-2018] The rapid onset of African Swine Fever (ASF) in China, and its detection in areas more than one thousand kilometres apart within the country, could mean the deadly pig virus may spread to other Asian countries anytime, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) warned 28 August.

There is no effective vaccine to protect swine from the disease. And, while the disease poses no direct threat to human health, outbreaks can be devastating with the most virulent forms lethal in 100 percent of infected animals.

So far, in efforts to control the spread of the disease, Chinese authorities have culled more than 24,000 pigs in four provinces. China is a major pig producing country and accounts for approximately half the global population of swine, estimated at 500 million.

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### **China's agriculture ministry says containment of African swine fever complex and serious**

[Reuters, 31-08-2018] China's agriculture ministry said prevention and containment of African swine fever is complex and serious, according to a statement released on the ministry's website on Friday 31 August.

Han Changfu, China's minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, asked local authorities to do everything they can to ensure safe production from animal farming, and secure meat supplies in the country, the statement said.

China has reported five swine fever cases in five different provinces in a month.

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## **Science, Technology and Environment**

### **'Green revolution' crops bred to slash fertilizer use**

[Nature, 15-08-2018] A gene that enhances plants' ability to absorb nitrogen could be used to breed high-yield varieties of rice, wheat and other staple crops that would need less fertilizer, researchers report on 15 August in *Nature*. That could slash costs for farmers worldwide, and help to limit the environmental damage that occurs when nitrogen-rich water and soil wash from farm fields into rivers and oceans.

The research focused on crops bred during the 'green revolution' of the 1960s, hardier versions of common crops. Farmers used these alongside improved irrigation methods, strong pesticides and efficient fertilizers. That sent the global harvest of cereal crops soaring from 741 million tonnes in 1961 to 1.62 billion in 1985.

That practice is costly for farmers and harmful to the environment, says study co-author Xiangdong Fu, a plant geneticist at the Chinese Academy of Sciences Institute of Genetics and Developmental Biology in Beijing.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Chinese scientists develop smart app to identify pests on crops**

[Xinhua, 25-08-2018] It is difficult for even veteran farmers to recognize every pest variety, making choosing the right pesticide to kill them difficult. But Chinese scientists have made the work as easy as using a smartphone to photo them.

A pest-recognizing application developed by the Hefei Intelligent Machine Institute with the Chinese Academy of Sciences has tested successful for recognizing over 50 varieties of rice pests.

Xie Chengjun with the program said excessive use of pesticide and a lack of pest monitoring and farming technology support for farmers were the primary problems in China's agriculture.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Chinese scientists perform genetic surgery to create first single-chromosome yeast**

[Xinhua, 02-02-2018] Brewer's yeast, one-third of whose genome is said to share ancestry with humans, has 16 chromosomes. However, Chinese scientists have managed to fit nearly all its genetic material into just one chromosome while not affecting the majority of its functions, according to a paper released 2 August on the website of the journal Nature.

Qin Zhongjun, a molecular biologist at the Center for Excellence in Molecular Plant Sciences of the Shanghai Institute of Plant Physiology and Ecology under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and his team used CRISPR-Cas9 genome-editing to create a single-chromosome yeast strain, the paper said.

Yeast is a type of eukaryote, which also includes humans, plants, and animals. Humans have 46 chromosomes, whereas male jack jumper ants have just one.

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### **China's agricultural remote sensing monitoring provides global service**

[Xinhua, 28-08-2018] China's agricultural remote sensing monitoring platform has provided information services to 147 countries and regions, its developer said Tuesday.

Named CropWatch, the platform was launched in 1998. Based on remote sensing and ground observation data, the system independently assesses crop growth, yield and related information at global and national scales. It is currently one of the major international remote sensing monitoring systems for agriculture.

The system was initiated by the Aerospace Information Research Institute under the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

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### **AI to boost China's growth, with manufacturing and agriculture to benefit**

[SCMP, 07-08-2018] Artificial intelligence (AI) could add as much as 1.6 percentage points to China's economic growth rate by 2035, with industries like manufacturing, agriculture and retail seeing the most value from the technology, according to a recent report by consultancy firm Accenture.

According to Accenture, AI will have the largest impact on industries such as manufacturing, retail and agriculture in China, as well as allowing labour-intensive sectors such as health care to become more productive over time by allowing workers to focus on more critical tasks, while AI handles the more mundane ones.

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## **AI tech boosting smart agriculture**

[China daily, 07-08-2018] In order to transform an ancient business that was largely run using intuition, the modern answer is technology. Artificial intelligence has come to the farmyard, helping to ensure the country's increasing numbers of pigs remain active and crop yields grow ever larger.

The winning recipe lies in the vast array of AI solutions offered by the cloud computing arm of Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. Using smart sensors and data analytics, Alibaba Cloud can help Tequ's farm to monitor each hog's activity and log their state of health in real time.

Dubbed ET Agricultural Brain, it is the same technology that the tech giant has been applying to optimize urban transportation and run its e-commerce platforms more smoothly. Now Alibaba Cloud is training its sights on agriculture to provide efficient and technically advanced farm management approaches.

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## **Farm app connects gamers and growers**

[China Daily, 07-08-2017] Popular online farming games allow users to run virtual farms, harvest their own crops and steal produce from other players, all with a tap on a smartphone. With internet of things technologies, this virtual experience is becoming a reality.

Saiot Group, a Hong Kong-based company focusing on the sharing economy, has launched its Yiwu Farm project. Users can rent land, remotely manage their crops through the mobile app and have their produce delivered to their door after the harvest. They can even 'steal' from neighboring farms, to add to the fun.

The model is achieved through internet of things technologies, which are applied to connect users' phones to employees and farming facilities, including temperature control and water tubes.

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## **Nation's drones enabling UK farmers to reap rich dividends**

[China daily, 03-08-2018] Farming drones from China may soon be buzzing across British fields as a result of a new partnership between Chinese agricultural technology company XAG and Harper Adams University in the United Kingdom.

XAG and Harper Adams have formed an academic and research partnership that will focus on the development of agricultural technology, including drones that spray crops and ground-based robots that will lend a hand to farmers.

Guangzhou-based XAG, which is one of the world's largest agricultural drone manufacturers, will team up with Harper Adams at its National Center for Precision Farming.

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# **Trade and Business**

## **China's farm produce prices continue to climb**

[Xinhua, 01-08-2018] Prices of farm produce in China continued to climb in the week ending July 29, with a rise in the cost of 30 types of vegetable, data from the Ministry of Commerce showed.

The price index for farm produce edged up 0.9 percent in the past week, following a 0.6 percent gain the previous week, while the index for production materials rose 0.3 percent.

The average wholesale price of 30 types of vegetable went up 1.6 percent, compared with a 2.4 percent gain the week earlier.

Food accounts for about one-third of China's consumer price index.

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### **Unfavorable weather conditions temporarily push up China's farm produce prices**

[Xinhua, 28-08-2018] Farm produce prices in China continued to climb in the week ending on Aug. 26 as unfavorable weather conditions across the country affected supply, data from the Ministry of Commerce showed Tuesday.

The price index for farm produce went up 1.6 percent in the past week, following an 1-percent gain the previous week, while the index for production materials edged up 0.1 percent.

The average wholesale price of 30 types of vegetables surged 6.1 percent, compared with an 1 percent rise the week earlier.

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### **Chinese buyers explore further UK trade opportunities**

[AgriLand, 14-08-2018] Chinese cereal buyers have made a special visit to the UK to explore new opportunities for importing wheat and barley into China.

Organised by the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), the four-day visit included a tour of a farm and grain store to showcase the high levels of cleanliness of UK grain.

The delegation, who were from the private sector and state-owned companies, also had a tour of Portbury grain export terminal to see what happens to grain once it leaves the farmgate and to learn about the intake processes.

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### **China says wants to 'fully strengthen' trade ties with Britain**

[Reuters, 23-08-2018] Chinese Vice Premier Hu Chunhua told visiting British trade minister Liam Fox on Thursday 23 August that China wanted to “fully strengthen” its trade and business ties with Britain, state media said, as the country prepares to leave the European Union.

Britain has pushed a strong message to Chinese companies that it is fully open for business as it prepares to leave the EU next year, and China is one of the countries with which Britain would like to sign a post-Brexit free trade deal.

Last month, China offered Britain talks on a post-Brexit free trade deal.

Click [here](#) for details

### **International Trade Secretary secures major deal for UK dairy in China**

[Gov.UK, 23-08-2018] International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP, on Thursday 23 August, met with China's General Administration of Customs to reach an agreement which would allow the import of UK dairy products made with milk from third countries. The agreement is estimated to be worth £240 million over 5 years to the UK.

With demand for most dairy categories growing by more than 20% each year in China, it is one of the country's fastest growing areas of food demand. The UK exported over £96



million of dairy products to China in 2017, and there has been significant interest in the market following the Prime Minister and Dr Fox's visit earlier this year.

This deal means that producers will have increased flexibility on sourcing the dairy they use for their products.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Export of UK seed potatoes to China**

[Gov.UK, 24-08-2018] China's developing taste for chips and crisps will soon be fuelled by British produce, as International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP secures a deal which enables the UK to export seed potatoes to China.

The deal is expected to bring major benefits to Scotland, with around 70% of the 100,000 tonnes of seed potatoes exported annually from the UK coming from Scottish farms. The seed potato export market is already worth an annual £90 million to the UK, with some varieties fetching up to £900 per tonne.

China is the largest global consumer of potatoes in the world. As the country's demand for potato-based foods increases, the humble spud is now China's fourth staple crop after rice, corn and wheat – with demand increasing at a rapid rate.

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### **China expects its U.S. agricultural imports to fall sharply**

[Reuters, 10-08-2017] China's imports of U.S. agricultural products will fall sharply once Beijing implements retaliatory trade measures and the country is able to cover its demand for cooking oil and animal feed, vice agriculture minister Han Jun said on Friday, 10 August.

The trade dispute will have a limited impact on China's agriculture sector, but hit its U.S. counterparts harder, Han Jun was quoted by state radio as saying.

China, the world's top agricultural products importer, has an annual shortfall of 90 million tonnes of soybeans and the U.S. supplies a third of China's total imports.

One solution is to boost imports from other exporters such as Brazil, and soymeal could easily be substituted by animal feeds made from other seeds, Han added.

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### **China may have to resume U.S. soybean purchases in weeks**

[Reuters, 07-08-2018] China may have to start buying U.S. soybeans again in coming weeks despite the trade war between the two countries as other regions cannot supply enough soybeans to meet China's needs, Hamburg-based oilseeds analysts Oil World said on Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> August.

In July, China imposed import tariffs on a list of U.S. goods, including soybeans, as part of the trade dispute with the United States. China is the world's largest soybean importer and has been seeking alternative supplies, especially in South America, where supplies available for export are down.

Oil World said with South American export supplies expected to be down sizeably from a year earlier in the next six months, China will face very tight domestic soybean supplies unless it resumes large-scale purchases of U.S. soybeans.

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## **PepsiCo powers up its China food presence**

[China Daily, 06-08-2018] PepsiCo highlighted its strong and growing presence in China, announcing plans at the start of the month to invest \$100 million to expand and transform its Shanghai Songjiang Foods plant.

The investment will establish new manufacturing lines and introduce advanced packaging and warehouse technologies to expand and fully modernize the factory.

The move reflects PepsiCo's continued and long-standing commitment to the Chinese market, according to the company.

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## **Bayer partners with Chinese firms to develop sustainable farming**

[China daily, 07-08-2018] German pharmaceutical and life sciences company Bayer AG is teaming up with Chinese partners to develop sustainable agriculture via advanced technologies, aiming to deliver higher-quality food to consumers at affordable prices.

Bayer launched the Sustainable Farming Program in Beijing in June, together with drone company XAG and e-commerce giant Alibaba Group Holding Ltd's Rural Taobao initiative.

Over the next three years, the initiative aims to develop and promote sustainable farming standards all over the world through a series of farm management solutions.

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## **Feed alternatives reducing soybean demand**

[China daily, 06-08-2018] China could reduce imports of soybeans by more than 10 million metric tons this year - down more than 10 percent from last year - because of domestic production and the promotion of soybean substitutes, analysts said.

Because of its low cost, farmers nationwide have long relied on imported soybean meal, the remains of the plant after oil is extracted, to supplement animal feed.

However, as the cost of imported soybeans and soybean meal has increased as a result of trade frictions between China and the United States, alternatives such as rapeseed meal and cottonseed meal are becoming more economical, according to Li Qiang, chief adviser at commodities consultant Shanghai JC Intelligence.

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