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Policies

President Xi outlines position on 13th five-year plan

[Xinhua, 28-05-2015] Chinese President Xi Jinping on Wednesday 27th May said the 13th five-year plan period (2016-2020) will be crucial, and governments at all levels should foresee the major trends and plan economic and social development well.

China's development prospects are broad, but the country is facing many difficulties and challenges, as well as a tough restructuring of the economy, transformation of growth modes and the need to boost innovation, he said.

While mapping the 13th five-year plan period, governments should face risks and challenges soberly, with better evaluation of difficulties and complexities, the president said.

During the period, breakthroughs should maintain economic growth, transform the growth mode, optimize industrial structure, promote innovation, step up agricultural modernization, reform institutional mechanisms, boost coordinated growth, strengthen ecological progresses, safeguard people's living quality and improve support for the poor, Xi stressed.

With the changing growth mode and improving quality and efficiency at the center, the economy will be driven by consumption, investment and exports instead of only by investment and exports. China will shift from relying on secondary industries alone to reliance on the primary, secondary and tertiary industries, turning away from resource consumption and toward technological progress through innovation, he said.

Among industrialization, informatization, urbanization and agricultural modernization, the weakest link is agriculture. More needs to be done to transform agricultural development and speed up agricultural technology innovation, Xi said.

[Click here for details](#)

China issues guideline for agricultural development

[Xinhua, 27-05-2015] China's Ministry of Agriculture on Wednesday published a guideline on achieving "zero discharge" of agricultural waste by 2030.

The guideline also set targets on agricultural science and mechanization.

China must guarantee to maintain the basic farmland at a level of no less than 1.56 billion mu (about 104 million hectares) by 2020, said the guideline.

Annual water consumption for irrigation should not exceed 372 billion cubic meters, while the utilization rate of irrigation water should rise to 55 percent from the current 50 percent level, One cubic meter of water only produces a kilogram of grain harvested in China, lower than the average of 1.2-1.4 kilograms in advanced countries; a huge waste of water.

The guideline asked farmers to reduce use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides by limiting waste and switching to organic alternatives. Chemical fertilizer use hit 59 million tonnes in 2013. Manure and waste, agricultural films and crop straw resources should be managed properly, said Agricultural Minister Han Changfu.

China also aims to increase forest coverage rate to 23 percent by 2020. Forest coverage totaled 195 million hectares, or 20.4 percent of the country's total area, at the end of 2008.

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China cools land transfer fever

[Xinhua, 29-05-2015] As China encourages farmers to pool their land for better productivity, the country has gone on high alert for illegal seizures and speculation.

Most of China's farmland is owned collectively by the people who work on it. As the rural workforce migrated to better paid jobs in the big cities, China began, in 2008, to allow farmers to rent out, transfer and merge the land they have contracted, amid a reform to bolster modern farming and reuse abandoned land.

But the sweeping land transfer fever has brought problems of improper seizure and use of farmland; big issues in the world's most populous country where food security and the well-being of both current and former rural residents are matters of the highest priority.

President Xi Jinping queried the effectiveness of the "land for land" scheme, which requires local governments to prepare the same amount of new or restored arable land before any existing farmland is appropriated for non-farming purposes.

Xi told local authorities to take a step-by-step approach instead of a "great leap forward" and warned against headlong pursuit of commercial investment in arable land for non-farming purposes.

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China sets economic reform priorities for 2015

[Xinhua, 18-05-15] China's State Council, the cabinet, on 18th May unveiled this year's priorities for economic reforms.

The reforms aim to add new impetus to the country's development, the State Council said in a statement on the government website. In the statement, the government vowed to cut red tape, loosen control on market access and investment, and improve pricing mechanisms for public services including medicine and natural gas.

Specifically, the government will promote public-private partnerships to attract private capital into infrastructure construction and public enterprises. The government will push reforms of state-owned enterprises in key industries including electricity by reorganizing and consolidating them to improve efficiency, and it will support private firms to make the market less monopolistic.

Reforms on urbanization, widening funding channels for city construction, improving the current rigid household registration system, and accelerating reforms on rural land to boost agriculture were all also identified as priorities.

In addition, China will make more effort to protect the environment through energy conservation, emission cuts and stricter regulation, the statement said.

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"Made in China 2025" plan unveiled to boost manufacturing

[Xinhua, 19-05-2015] China's State Council has unveiled a ten-year national plan, Made in China 2025, designed to transform China from a manufacturing giant into a world manufacturing power.

The plan, endorsed by Premier Li Keqiang, is the country's first action plan focusing on promoting manufacturing, a notice said on Tuesday.

The plan will be followed by another two plans in order to transform China into a leading manufacturing power by the year 2049, which marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Nine tasks have been identified as priorities: improving manufacturing innovation, integrating technology and industry, strengthening the industrial base, fostering Chinese brands, enforcing green manufacturing, promoting breakthroughs in 10 key sectors.

The 10 key sectors are new information technology, numerical control tools and robotics, aerospace equipment, ocean engineering equipment and high-tech ships, railway equipment, energy saving and new energy vehicles, power equipment, new materials, medicine and medical devices, and agricultural machinery.

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China adjusts subsidy policy to help farmers

[Xinhua, 01-05-2015] China will improve agricultural subsidy policies in an effort to deepen rural reform, promote agricultural modernization and increase peasants' income, the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) announced Thursday.

A total of 14 billion yuan (2.3 billion U.S.dollars) will be given directly to grain farmers. Another 20.4 billion yuan will go to farmers to promote good crop varieties. A total of 23.4 billion yuan will be used to support the appropriate management scale of grain, with a focus on big professional bodies such as family farms and farmer cooperatives.

The ongoing trial program on land use reform announced by the MOA in March, will be adjusted. The number of pilot regions, including the three experimental regions in Jiangsu, Sichuan and Guizhou and 27 counties, will be increased by 9 in Jiangsu and Jiangxi provinces.

Under the pilot scheme, farmers will be allowed to turn their land-use rights into shares in farming enterprises or cooperative societies.

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Industry nurturing agriculture

[China Daily, 05-05-2015] Xi Jinping presided over a session of the Communist Party of China Central Committee's Political Bureau on improving the mechanisms and institutions for the integrated development of urban and rural areas. During the session, Xi said China must strive to make breakthroughs on coordinated development between urban and rural areas to enable farmers to participate in the country's development on an equal footing and share the fruits of economic growth.

Xi said to meet the needs of China's future development, the country should regard industry nurturing agriculture and cities supporting countryside as long-term guiding principles and the government will improve the policies that enrich and benefit farmers and agriculture in order to form a new pattern of integrated urban-rural development.

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Can China's new agricultural strategies boost food and nutrition security?

[IFPRI, 13-05-2015] China is a rising economic powerhouse that is simultaneously home to roughly 82.5 million impoverished people, many of whom are undernourished. New agricultural strategies that seek to shift away from food self-sufficiency and toward heavier reliance on international trade and stronger farmers' property rights, could have a positive impact on the country's ability to feed itself.

This promising shift in focus is one of many China-related topics discussed in the [2014-2015 Global Food Policy Report](#), an annual publication by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) that examines major food, agriculture, and nutrition developments and

trends with a view toward reducing poverty around the globe. The report is being unveiled in Beijing on May 13.

“Rapid changes are taking place in China that increase the need for policies that will safeguard the most vulnerable and ensure food security for all,” said Shenggen Fan, Director General of IFPRI. “China has an opportunity to focus its attention on international trade and to emulate the smallholder agriculture-led strategies for reducing hunger that have been successful elsewhere.”

For instance, a recent “Beijing Declaration” promises greater food security and safety in the wake of several tainted food scandals. The government has begun to implement reforms of agriculture and social protection policies aimed at providing safety nets for the most vulnerable. And it has pledged to reduce the prevalence of child stunting—a result of malnutrition—by more than two-thirds in two to three decades.

There are avenues for greater food production: according to the report, about half of the projected increase in world aquaculture production, and thereby total fish production, is projected to occur in China.

However, China also is increasingly suffering from a “triple burden of malnutrition”—it is home to the second-largest population of hungry people in the world, yet hidden hunger, overweight, and obesity are on the rise—1.5 to 2 times higher than 1991 levels—as the country’s middle class grows and consumer preferences change.

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China's food, nutrition security faces challenges

[Xinhua, 13-05-2015] The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) said in a report Wednesday that China's food security faces pressure that warrants government action.

"Manufacturing and services are replacing agriculture as economic drivers, which may impact food security," noted the 2014-2015 Global Food Policy Report.

Shenggen Fan, IFPRI's director general, said industrialization and urbanization have reduced the already limited arable land base, hampering efforts to improve food security.

China increasingly suffers from a "triple burden of malnutrition" (undernourishment, micronutrient deficiencies and obesity), according to the Washington-based institute.

As China becomes more affluent and consumer preferences change, micronutrient deficiencies and obesity are on the rise -- 1.5 to 2 times higher than 1991 levels, said the IFPRI report.

"If China is to make significant headway toward improving food security, then steps need to be made to promote sustainable agriculture," said Fan.

More specifically, China's scarce and degraded natural resources call for greater research and development of efficient agricultural technology and practices, Fan said.

"As more people leave the country for urban areas, government policies should enable remaining residents to increase their farm's size," said Fan.

Critical steps in this direction include certification of land rights, proper rental and sale markets, and fairer compensation for requisitions.

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China's farming sector is on an unsustainable path

[Reuters, 08-05-2015] China must abandon its policy of paying high prices to farmers for

grains if it is to create a sustainable farm sector, said the director of Washington-based think-tank the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

The world's top producer of wheat and rice, and second biggest corn grower, buys domestic grain at prices far above the world market for state stocks.

The policy, aimed at supporting farmers and ensuring self-sufficiency in key grains, has led to a huge financial burden on the country and warehouses overflowing with surplus grain. Corn stocks are currently estimated at more than 80 percent of annual domestic consumption.

"China is in a trap right now. On the one hand, it purchases agricultural products from farmers at a very high price, but in meantime it cannot sell to the market [at such high prices] so all the purchases go into stocks, and that's very costly," said Fan Shenggen, IFPRI director general, in an interview.

Beijing has recently abandoned its stockpiling system for cotton and soybeans, replacing it with a direct subsidy for farmers based on their output. Fan, whose institute works closely with Chinese government advisors, said the new system was also "a mistake".

"Many countries use a similar approach but in the long run it is not sustainable," he told Reuters.

China should gradually shift from a subsidy system to offering income support and helping farmers expand their scale or exit the sector, he said.

Fan said there is growing recognition at high levels that China's farm policy needs to change, with a new emphasis on achieving security in staple foods, rather than a rigid focus on self-sufficiency in all major crops.

The change in thinking is set to be integrated into China's new five-year plan for 2016-2020, which is currently being drafted, he said.

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Chinese GMO law could further delay approval of new crops – industry

[Reuters, 22-05-2015] May 22 Proposed changes to China's regulations on genetically modified organisms (GMO) could further delay an already lengthy approval process for imports of new GMO crops, plant science industry association CropLife Asia said.

China's Ministry of Agriculture revealed plans to amend its regulations on GMOs last month, which was seen as an attempt to reassure consumers concerned about the contamination of conventional foods with GMOs.

The changes, open for public comment until May 24, include the removal of fixed periods for the submission and review of new GMO crops, which is likely to result in further delays for seed firms, said CropLife Asia, whose members include Monsanto , Bayer CropScience and DuPont.

"We have particular concerns about the amendments to articles 16 and 22 since they are likely to have significant negative impacts on the timeliness, predictability and transparency of the Chinese agricultural biotechnology approvals system," said executive director Siang Hee Tan.

Current law stipulates three deadlines for the submission of GMO crops for approval each year - March 1, July 1 and Nov. 1. At each deadline, an expert biosafety committee meets to review pending applications.

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China 'to hold officials accountable for life for environmental problems'

[Caixin, 08-05-2015] China will start holding officials accountable for the entirety of their lives for pollution problems that occur on their watch, a top official said.

Zhang Yong, a deputy director of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the country's top economic planner, said officials who fail to prevent problems such as pollution of waterways or soil contamination cannot be promoted or hold other positions.

They will also be held responsible if problems crop up after they've moved on in their careers, he said. "Even if they have been transferred to different jobs or jurisdictions, they will still be held to account over their past failures to safeguard the environment," Zhang said.

He added that officials could be prosecuted if they are found to have been derelict in overseeing the protection of the environment.

Zhang said that several central government agencies including the NDRC are also working on establishing specific punishments for local officials whose work leads to environmental damage. These punishments will range from warnings to handing cases to prosecutors so criminal charges can be pursued, he said.

China's economic development over the past three-plus decades is often seen by experts and many in the public as the blind pursuit of growth at the expense of air, water and soil quality. The public is becoming increasingly alarmed at the smog shrouding their cities and reports that heavy metals are poisoning the fruit and vegetables eaten every day.

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Science, Technology and Environment

Professor Jiayang Li was elected as Foreign Member of Royal Society

[Royal Society, 01-05-2015] Jiayang Li, ForMemRS, Vice Minister of Agriculture, The People's Republic of China, President, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, and Professor, Institute of Genetics and Development, Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Professor Jiayang Li has made seminal contributions to establishing forward genetics approaches in rice and in using them to understand rice growth habit. He has identified and characterized key transcription factors and hormonal signals that determine rice architecture, and he has demonstrated that this fundamental knowledge can contribute to the development of improved rice varieties through marker assisted breeding.

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First beef with the goodness of fish

[Science Daily, 11-05-2015] Chinese scientists have reared beef rich in the beneficial fatty acids associated with fish oils. The study also highlights the scientific challenges that remain.

The team from Northwest A&F University and the National Beef Cattle Improvement Centre, both in Yangling (Shaanxi), successfully introduced a gene into fetal cells from Luxi Yellow cattle, a Chinese breed with a high beef yield. The fat1 gene, isolated from a nematode worm, codes for desaturase enzymes that are involved in the conversion of n-6 to n-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids.

Introducing the fat1 gene to cattle increased the levels of beneficial oils by over five times. "We have provided the first evidence that it is possible to create a new breed of cattle with

higher nutritional value in terms of their fatty acid composition," says corresponding author Linsen Zan from the College of Animal Science and Technology at the university.

Of 14 calves that successfully received the fat1 gene, 11 died at less than four months old, mainly from inflammation and from an infection common to cattle, haemorrhagic septicaemia. Further research is needed to determine the causes. Abnormalities may result from the incomplete reprogramming of cells or from some genes being turned on and off during the generation of embryos.

"There is much to learn about the best scientific techniques and the best husbandry required to make beef a rich animal source of omega-3 oils for human nutrition, but we have taken the first step," says lead author Gong Cheng.

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MOA and OIE sign MOU on translation, publishing and distribution of OIE publications

[MOA, 29-05-2015] During the 83rd General Session of the World Assembly of the World Organization of Animal Health (OIE) Delegates, State Chief Veterinary Officer Zhang Zhongqiu and OIE Director General Bernard Vallat signed a new MOU on translation, publishing and distribution of OIE publications in Paris, France on May 27, 2015.

OIE publications mainly include international animal health standards, scientific literature, case study reports, and so on. As an intergovernmental organization on veterinary and animal health, OIE plays a crucial role in global animal health and food safety. Since OIE is designated by WTO as the only international organization responsible for setting international standards on animal health, all the countries should follow OIE standards in animal and animal product trade. The Chinese translation of OIE publications as well as their publishing and distribution are of great significance for China's veterinary workers to learn, extend and apply international animal health standards, and eventually promote China's veterinary service.

In order to ensure the authority of the Chinese version of OIE publications, OIE has authorized the Ministry of Agriculture of China (MOA) as the sole translator and publisher of the above standards. The MOU reaffirms that MOA has the priority in translating and publishing scientific literature of OIE. It is believed that the MOU will promote the extension and application of OIE's technologies and management expertise on veterinary service standards and rules.

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China scales back chemical fertilizer use

[Xinhua, 19-05-2015] China is scaling back use of chemical fertilizers to cut cost and improve efficiency.

Starting from this year, pilot fertilizer-reduction programs will include corn grown in the northeast and parts of north and central China, vegetables produced in north China's greenhouses and apples grown in the northwest and Bohai Bay area, an official with Ministry of Agriculture said.

The programs are part of China's effort to make its fertilizer use peak by 2020, he said, noting excess fertilization is an issue plaguing the country's high added-value produce such as vegetables and fruits.

The application of precision fertilization technologies and increased use of new types of fertilizers such as organic fertilizer will be some of the ways to reduce chemical fertilization, he said.

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South China city plans fly farm for garbage disposal

[Xinhua, 31-01-2015] The southern Chinese city of Guangzhou is planning a black soldier fly (*Hermetia illucens*) farm to help rid the city of its kitchen waste, local authorities told Xinhua.

The fly larvae raised at the farm are expected to eat 200 to 400 tonnes of rubbish each day, according to the urban management commission of Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong Province. The farm will mainly process garbage produced by the city's restaurants and household kitchens.

China's rapidly growing cities have faced a pile-up of household waste, and traditional disposal measures such as landfills and incineration have faced increasing concerns over air and soil pollution.

Researchers say the fly larvae have shown prowess in dealing with organic waste, including food leftovers and animal dung. The larvae are also rich in protein and can be made into medicine and animal feed.

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Technology can bring down dairy industry's cost

[China Daily, 12-05-2015] China's dairy industry must invest further into science and technologies to lower the cost of raw milk production to cope with the overproduction crisis, an official with the ministry of agriculture has said.

Ma Ying, deputy director of the dairy industry management office of the Ministry of Agriculture, said the contribution of science and technology only took up less than 50 percent of the country's dairy industry growth, far below the level of 70 to 80 percent in Western countries.

Ma said the large relatively large production input in the country's dairy industry has increased the costs, and thus reduce the profit margins for the farmers.

“The lack of science and technology investment has deterred the transformation of the dairy industry with the production of high-quality milk only took up a minor part of the country's dairy production. Meanwhile, the lack of technological input has also deterred the production of high-quality dairy products,” she said.

China's dairy industry is faced with an overproduction crisis starting from 2014, as farmers are forced to kill the cows and pour the raw milks due to sluggish market demand coupled with competition from imported milk products.

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Taste of growing e-commerce sweet for farmers

[China Daily, 08-05-2015] May is the time for fresh, sweet cherries, and also an occasion for cheering Wang Xiaojing, a part-time online retailer from Yantai city of east China's Shandong province.

Wang is one of the millions of Chinese taking to e-commerce to seek new business opportunities as total e-commerce transaction volume reached more than 13 trillion yuan, creating 10 million jobs.

The State Council, China's cabinet released a guideline on e-commerce development 7th May to foster new growth drivers amid the economic slowdown.

The government pledged to create a favorable environment for e-commerce by cutting redtape, easing market access and lowering taxation.

Efforts will be made to strengthen resource sharing, online security, financing, infrastructure and credit system services, according to the guideline.

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China vows hefty investment to improve Internet services

[Xinhua, 20-05-2014] China vowed to invest hundreds of billions of yuan in the coming years to boost Internet speed and expand broadband access in rural regions.

The country plans to spend more than 430 billion yuan (70.4 billion U.S. dollars) in 2015 and more than 700 billion yuan total in 2016 and 2017 to promote network construction, according to a guideline issued by the State Council, China's cabinet.

According to the guideline, China will accelerate building of the country's high-speed broadband networks and improve access in more than 14,000 villages by the end of 2015.

By the end of 2017, the average cable broadband speed for users in major cities will be increased to 30 megabytes per second (Mbps), more than triple the current speed, while that in smaller cities will be upgraded to 20 Mbps.

According to the guideline, the telecom market will continue to be opened and more competition will be encouraged, and a pilot scheme for broadband services will be expanded this year.

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Rural e-commerce portal is first to target domestic farmers

[China Daily, 21-05-2015] Compared with the rapidly spreading footprint of e-shopping in cities, China's rural areas remain e-commerce backwaters due to a lack of infrastructure, while market potential has stimulated new entrants.

Named Dian Dou, or diandou8.com, a new e-commerce website aiming to help rural residents purchase agricultural materials and sell agricultural products was launched at Beijing's Great Hall of the People on 21 May.

The e-commerce website will help residents in the countryside with costs of agricultural materials, broaden the entrepreneurial channels and ease financing difficulties.

The website will also build "smart agriculture" service warehouses in every single village that operate its service to assist pick-ups and last-minute deliveries.

By comparison, this online to offline business model will reduce more than 20 percent costs for rural residents in purchasing agricultural materials, such as seed, chemical fertilizer or farm machineries, said the company.

As China aims to foster new growth in the countryside, rural e-commerce development will be a top focus this year. E-commerce not only provides rural residents with much easier access to products, but has also become an important channel for the sale of produce, said the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) earlier this month.

The MOA pledged to build a unified, orderly rural e-commerce market and efforts will be made to strengthen resource sharing, financing and credit system services.

Rural online transactions reached more than 100 billion yuan last year and are expected to hit 460 billion yuan by 2016.

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China's 'migrant miracle' nears an end as cheap labour dwindles

[FT, 04-05-2015] China's labour force is shrinking and the "migrant miracle" that powered its industrial rise is mostly exhausted, removing the factors that propelled the country's meteoric development, according to leading economists.

Broad consensus has emerged that China has reached its "Lewis Turning Point" — the point at which the once-inexhaustible pool of surplus rural labour dries up and wages rise rapidly.

Cai Fang, vice-president of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, estimates that China's potential gross domestic product growth decreased from 9.8 per cent in 1995-2009 to 7.2 per cent in 2011-15 and 6.1 per cent from 2016-20.

A shrinking labour force is one of the main drivers. Since 1978, 278m migrant workers from rural villages have moved to work in the cities. But reallocating labour from farm to factory is now mostly complete.

The second trend is an ageing population and the effects of the one-child policy, which has started to influence the number of young workers entering the labour force. Ma Jiantang, director of China's National Bureau of Statistics, said the population aged 15 to 60 peaked in 2011.

Economists debate the precise date of the turning point based on inconsistent data and contrasting theoretical models. Some say that due to varying regional labour market conditions, it is more precise to speak of a "turning period" rather than a single point. But the basic measure is not in doubt.

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Trade and Business

Li invites Cameron to visit China

[China daily, 14-05-2015] Premier Li Keqiang telephoned British Prime Minister David Cameron on 14th May to congratulate him on his election victory and invite him to visit China within this year.

China-UK relations have continuously made new progress in recent years, Li said, adding that he and Cameron had several meetings and also communications on the phone.

Li said, the Chinese government attaches great importance to developing relations with the United Kingdom, is willing to work with the new British government led by Cameron to strengthen political mutual trust, implement the interaction and dialogue at all levels and in various fields, promote trade, investment and finance cooperation, and withstand challenges posed by the international economic downturn.

Cameron thanked Li for his congratulations and invitation, adding that the UK-China relations are in the golden period.

Cameron said that he cherished the close working relationships with the Chinese leaders and would love to strengthen the communication and cooperation with China, promote the bilateral relations in the next five years to achieve greater development.

He said he is looking forward to visiting China and holding the annual meeting, and he will deepen the bilateral pragmatic cooperation with China in all areas.

Britain is China's second-largest trade partner in the European Union and a main source of China's inbound investment.

Last year, the trade volume between the two countries reached \$80 billion. This figure is expected to reach \$100 billion this year despite structural readjustments to the Chinese economy.

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British entrepreneurs eye "golden age" opportunities for China-UK cooperation

[23-05-2015] A group of young British entrepreneurs are set to tap into the vast range of business opportunities for further cooperation with China, as the two nations are entering a "golden age" for deepening ties.

The Young Icebreakers, a leading and respected network for young business people in Britain and China, have gathered regularly in London in the past seven years to discuss opportunities for collaboration.

The organization was created to reflect and enhance the trailblazing heritage from the British 48 Group Club, a leading independent business network which has been committed to promoting positive links with China for more than six decades.

Liu Xiaoming, Chinese ambassador to Britain, said the young icebreakers have possessed two "valuable qualities": the audacity of the young, and the pioneering spirit of icebreaking.

"These qualities are essential if you are to meet the challenges of our time. This is a 'golden time' to further deepen China-UK relations," Liu said at the Young Icebreakers' 7th anniversary dinner.

Members of the network, mostly young entrepreneurs under the age of 40, said now they were looking for ways to further explore the rich opportunities underlying the "golden age" of China-UK partnership.

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Chinese agriculture gets full display at Milan Expo

[Xinhua, 04-05-2015] The theme of the China Pavilion is "The Land of Hope". Surrounding the pavilion is a field of what looks like 30,000 stalks of wheat - to remind visitors of Chinese farming culture - that are actually shafts of LED lighting.

The building features many Chinese characteristics throughout its wooden structure, such as the interior bamboo roof panels. According to Su, the design concept is loosely based on I Ching, also known as The Classic of Changes or Book of Changes.

At the world expo in Milan, visitors will also learn the name "Seeds of China" from the China Corporate United Pavilion, which interprets the dream of a group of Chinese companies that seek to live the values of conservation of natural resources and food security.

In the exhibition spaces of the pavilion, the themes on display are "The Origin of Life", "The Power of Growth", "The Dream of the Seeds", "Light of Life", "Cycle of Life", "The Culinary Arts" and others, showing the path of growth and the role of the business community within the rapid development that China has enjoyed.

It is the first time that Chinese companies unite to take part in a Universal Exposition with their own pavilion.

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Exports on the agenda in Minister's visit to China

[BBC, 30-05-2015] The agriculture minister is making a return trip to China on 30 May as efforts intensify to secure a market for Northern Ireland pork.

Michelle O'Neill will meet with Chinese officials with responsibility for food standards.

China is set to become the world's largest consumer of pork, surpassing the EU by 2022.

The minister said she would use the visit to build on an "important relationship" between both countries.

Inspectors from China made two trips to pork plants in Northern Ireland in April as part of the approval process.

Northern Ireland already exports dairy products and animal hides to China.

As well as a market for pork, it is hoped there could be opportunities for beef and chicken exports in the future.

The minister will also promote Northern Ireland's agri-food industry during the week-long trip.

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China's per capita dairy consumption remains low

[Xinhua, 09-05-2015] China has its per capita consumption of dairy products remain relatively low, despite being one of the world's largest producers and consumers of such products, the Dairy Association of China said on Saturday, 9th May.

The association put China's per capita dairy consumption at around half the average in Asia, and one third the world average.

Consumption of dairy products has become increasingly common in Chinese cities, but in rural areas it remains low.

An earlier report by the Ministry of Agriculture predicted that per capita dairy consumption would expand by an annualized 2.2 percent for the 2015-2024 period.

In 2014, China produced over 38 million tonnes of milk products, ranking third in the world, and it imported 1.8 million tonnes during the same period, according to the association.

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China's middle class turns to organics after food safety scares

[Guardian, 14-05-2015] In Beijing and Shanghai the number of specialist and boutique food shops selling organic food is growing, with many willing to pay a premium for good-quality, safe food.

Many urban residents seek out alternative food sources. Organic food and imported products have risen in popularity and are considered a safer option than the traditional "wet" markets where fresh vegetables, meat and fish are sold. In cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, the number of specialist and boutique food shops selling organic food is growing, especially among the Chinese middle class and expatriate community who have disposable income and are willing to pay a premium for good-quality, safe food.

Many city residents are buying directly from farmers they trust who grow vegetables without pesticides. Community-supported farms have become increasingly popular, along with farmers' markets. A small group of consumers has also begun to grow food themselves, sometimes renting land on the outskirts of the cities.

However, all of these options are relatively expensive and not open to most average-income families.

Click [here](#) for details

Cofco teams up with Chinese fund to create global grains trader

[FT, 14-05-2015] Cofco, the Chinese state-owned grains trader, took another step in consolidating its recently acquired international businesses, creating a new holding company with China Investment Corp, the sovereign wealth fund.

Cofco said it had signed an agreement with CIC to create Cofco International Holding Company.

The state-run grain buyer will place its shares in Noble Agri — the agriculture joint venture with Noble Group of Hong Kong set up last year — as well as its stake in Dutch grains trader Nidera into the holding group.

The holding company, in which Cofco will hold 80.1 per cent and CIC 19.9 per cent, will provide a platform for an integrated international agricultural trader, which will compete with the agricultural "ABCDs" — Archer Daniels Midland, Bunge, Cargill and Louis Dreyfus.

Integration of Cofco's international trading assets will enable China to secure more grain from overseas markets directly, reducing its reliance on global agricultural traders who currently dominate commodity flows.

CIC's investment in the holding company also belies the country's desire to have more control on its food imports as rising incomes, richer diets and a shortage of arable land and clean water are expected to push up China's agricultural imports in future.

Click [here](#) for details

Chinese beef giant wants \$100m of land

[Stock Journal, 04-05-2015] One of China's largest beef producers, Chongqing Hondo Agriculture Group, is looking to buy up to \$100 million worth of cattle stations in Australia within the next year.

The company's president, Qin Ya Liang, told *The Australian Financial Review* his company was looking for investments in farmland and abattoirs.

"We are here looking for investments in cattle farms - the bigger size is good," Mr Qin said.

"We will look to invest in partnership with corporate farmers but we will take percentage investments in medium and small enterprises as well."

Mr Qin, who operates three massive feedlots in China, producing about 110,000 head of cattle a year, is part of the growing beef business in China, whose overall volume accounts for over 10 per cent of global beef output.

"We have not made an investment yet. We are still looking. We think we will invest between \$50 million and \$100 million within one year."

The scale of Chinese investment looking to invest in Australian cattle stations and the beef supply chain is substantial and is beginning to build momentum.

Austrade's trade commissioner in Chengdu, Jeff Turner, said the line-up of Chinese interests was extensive, with as many as 300 Chinese cattle and cattle-related companies looking to invest in Australia.

"They are interested in everything from production and farms and the whole supply chain," Mr Turner said.

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Aussie farmers tour China's dairies

[The Land, 07-05-2015] A first-hand look at the Chinese dairy supply chain helped inspire 14 Victorian dairy farmers last month.

China boasts the largest dairy market in the world, and the week-long reconnaissance trip allowed these dairy producers to witness the local nuances and developments occurring within the Chinese dairy sector.

"We saw their retail shelves and they are stocked with so many international brands – whether you're looking at the infant formula aisle or the liquid milk aisle – there are brands from all over the world all competing for a piece of the 'China dairy pie'," "If Australia doesn't grow its production, then it won't grow with its customers. We'll be left behind because other countries' brands will build market share because they've got more product and volume to reliably supply to that market" a delegate said.

Click [here](#) for details

Ireland and China form agriculture committee

[Irish Farmers Journal, 18-05-2015] **Ireland and China established a working agriculture committee on Sunday evening following talks.**

The committee will officially be known as the Joint Committee on Agricultural Cooperation (JCAC). The aim of the committee will be to strengthen agricultural trading ties between Ireland and China.

The second in command with the Chinese government, Li Kieqiang, had talks with An Taoiseach Enda Kenny and Irish Agriculture Minister Simon Coveney following a visit to a farm in Co Mayo earlier on Sunday.

Speaking to the Irish Farmers Journal prior to the official announcement, Minister Coveney said the agreement would result in two meetings a year between the two countries.

"And now, we're signing this evening the setting up of a formal agricultural development committee between Ireland and China that'll meet twice a year every second time in China and then in Ireland. It'll be a very senior committee. We're very excited about the prospect of the committee," Minister Coveney confirmed.

Click [here](#) for details

Food safety agreement sets framework for World Food Center-China

[UCDavis, 22-05-2015] Officials from the city of Zhuhai, China, and the University of California, Davis, today signed a memorandum of understanding to establish the World Food Center-China.

The WFC-China will be the central office for coordinating research and training activities in food safety for various Sino-U.S. Joint Research Centers across the country. A facility for the center is being developed in a newly created economic zone in Zhuhai's Guangdong

province, a region known for its technology industry, economic vitality and proximity to Hong Kong.

The signing ceremony was held in Beijing, in conjunction with a separate agreement signed a few hours later with South China Agricultural University (SCAU) in the city of Guangzhou, less than 100 miles from Zhuhai.

This memorandum of understanding between UC Davis and SCAU will establish a new Joint Research Center for food safety, providing more opportunities for UC Davis and SCAU faculty to develop coordinated programs. SCAU is one of China's top agricultural universities and is a leader in food safety research and education.

The Joint Research Centers, led by the World Food Center-China, will identify challenges and set goals to establish and ensure food safety and sustainable food production in China and globally.

Click [here](#) for details

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