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## Policies

### **Land leases to be extended to protect farmers' rights**

[China daily, 31-10-2017] China plans to maintain long-term stability in rural land leasing by extending existing contracts by 30 years upon expiration, according to a draft amendment to the law.

A draft of the revised Rural Land Contracting Law was submitted to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the top legislature, for its first reading.

"The 30-year extension aims to keep rural land contracting stable and unchanged on a long-term basis, and its further goal is to protect farmers' rights," said a senior official on the NPC's Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee.

Some farmers have hesitated over renting more land due to concerns their business could suffer if the status of the land changes when their lease runs out, as the current law limits a farmer's leasing rights to 30 years.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China sets goals for green agriculture**

[China daily, 01-10-2017] China on 30 September released guidelines on green development in agriculture, setting goals for resource conservation and environmental protection.

The guidelines were published by the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council.

The country should maintain the area of arable land and prevent the land quality from worsening, according to the guidelines.

The government aims to prevent excessive exploitation of groundwater and improve the efficiency of irrigation.

The document set the target of zero growth in the amount of chemical fertilizers and pesticides used in major crops by 2020. Forest coverage is to exceed 23 percent.

Straw, animal waste and agricultural plastic film should be fully utilized, according to the guidelines.

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### **China's Pesticide Administration Bureau to be solely responsible for administration of pesticide industry**

[AgroNews, 13-10-2017] The Crop Farming Department of the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture has set up a Pesticide Administration Bureau, which will be fully and solely responsible for the administration of the pesticide industry. Its scope of work includes pesticide industry planning, the provision for industry guidance, administrative licensing, supervision and penalization.

The new issue of the Regulation on Pesticide Administration came into effect on June 1, after being approved by the State Council of China. The regulation stipulated that the functions of AQSIQ (General Administration of Quality Supervision) and MIIT (Ministry of Industry and Information Technology) for the grant of pesticide production permit are delegated to the Ministry of Agriculture. Pesticide registration, grant of production and marketing, as well as market supervision, are all placed under the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture.

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## **China to complete product quality traceability system by 2020**

[Xinhua, 24-10-2017] China will complete its product quality traceability system by 2020.

A recent guideline, jointly issued by the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) and nine other central departments, said the traceability system would target key products, including farm produce, food, medicine, special equipment, dangerous materials and rare earth.

By 2020, a standard and coordinated product quality traceability system will be implemented and social awareness on quality traceability will be increased, according to the guideline.

The traceability system will provide information regarding sources, destinations and accountable persons to reinforce product quality and safety.

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## **Government limit on number of baby formulas sets off stampede**

[13-10-2017] China's baby formula industry is undergoing a complete makeover after a shift in regulation last year that limits each manufacturer to owning three brands. Each company is allowed to have up to nine different products, all of which must be registered with the CFDA by the end of the year.

The policy, which analysts consider the "toughest" announced so far, is designed to stop some formula makers from repackaging the same recipe under two brands just to occupy shelf space. The food safety watchdog wants to limit the number of infant formula products in China to about 1,000.

Industry professionals estimate that there are more than 2,000 formula products being sold in China, which means more than half of them will have to bow out by the end of the year. This includes many brands from small overseas dairy producers that rely on independent stores.

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## **World Conference on Farm Animal Welfare opens in China**

[MoA, 17-10-2017] The World Conference on Farm Animal Welfare and the 5<sup>th</sup> China Animal Welfare Forum on Quality and Safety of Meat and Poultry Products was held in Hangzhou on 12 October 2017. The conference advocated the theme of "animal welfare, sustainable development and responsible consumption" and was attended and addressed by Vice Minister Yu Kangzhen, Director of Animal Production and Health Division of FAO Berhe Tekola and representatives of international organizations of animal welfare.

Vice Minister Yu put forward several suggestions to enhance animal welfare.

- establish technical standards and regulations of animal welfare as soon as possible and gradually improve inspection, evaluation and supervision systems;
- advocate the rule of law in promoting animal welfare;
- advance green and sustainable development of animal farming when addressing animal welfare;
- learn from other countries advanced philosophies and ideas conducive to green agricultural development in China through international exchanges and cooperation.

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## **China joins the movement to end cruel confinement of pigs**

[Pig Site, 24-10-2017] Qinglian Food Company commits to improve the quality of life for a million pigs on farm. One of China's leading food companies has partnered with international charity, World Animal Protection, to phase out the use of sow stalls on farms in China by

2025, giving pigs room to move, helping to reduce stress and improve health, and allowing the expression of natural behaviour.

In China, consumers are increasingly demanding higher welfare products. A 2016 survey by World Animal Protection found two thirds of Chinese people would be willing to pay more for higher welfare pork, and 90% would be willing to change their purchasing habits, to move to pork products from pigs that have lived better lives.

World Animal Protection is now calling on companies across the world to join the global movement and improve the lives of pigs in farming.

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### **China eyes rural tourism for poverty alleviation**

[Xinhua, 29-10-2017] China wants to develop tourism in rural areas to help lift more people out of poverty as the government has identified poverty eradication as the key task in the building of a moderately prosperous society by 2020.

China aims to lift 12 million people out of poverty through tourism from 2016 to 2020, according to the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA).

In southwest China's Guizhou Province, authorities have identified thousands of tourism resources and supported 14 impoverished counties to build tourist areas.

The projects have helped 70,000 villagers raise their incomes to above the provincial poverty line, according to the CNTA.

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### **China dashes hopes of GM boost after Syngenta deal**

[FT, 19-10-2017] The head of one of China's biggest chemicals companies has played down expectations the country will become more open to genetically modified crops in the aftermath of ChemChina's purchase of Swiss seeds and agrochemicals group Syngenta.

When the \$43bn ChemChina deal was announced in early 2016, many suspected it would result in the swift approval of GM plantings in China, since Syngenta specialises in developing and researching GM.

But the issue got little attention at the national congress of China's Communist Party, despite calls by President Xi Jinping for more modern agriculture to ensure China's food security.

Speaking on the sidelines of the gathering, Frank Ning, the head of ChemChina rival Sinochem, said the adoption of GM crops would only come "slowly, slowly". "I think you have to watch the actual development of Chinese agriculture," he told the FT.

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## **Science, Technology and Environment**

### **Chinese scientist wins food-production award**

[China daily, 20-10-2017] Cui Zhenling, a researcher and faculty member at China Agricultural University in Beijing, was awarded the Norman Borlaug Award for Field Research and Application at the World Food Prize awards ceremony in Des Moines, Iowa on Oct 18.

The prizes recognize individuals who increase the quality, quantity and availability of food on a global scale.

Cui was recognized for his scientific work in improving soil health and increasing crop production through innovative fertilizer management strategies. His work in China has led to improved nitrogen efficiency, resulting in higher maize and wheat yields and less soil degradation and water pollution.

Through 269 on-farm experiments, Cui's system significantly reduced nitrogen fertilizer application by as much as 60 percent for wheat and 40 percent for corn.

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### **China introduces two-meter high 'giant rice'**

[Xinhua, 16-10-2017] A new kind of rice that can grow to a height of 2.2 meters has been introduced to China, the Chinese Academy of Sciences institute of subtropical agriculture (ISA) announced 16 October.

With the average height of more than 1.8 meters, the yield of the 'giant' rice is expected to surpass 11.5 tonnes per ha, 15 to 20 percent more than ordinary rice, said the ISA.

"We will keep working to increase its yielded," said China's "Father of Hybrid Rice" Yuan Longping at an experimental field in Central China's Hunan Province. The rice also provides excellent habitat for frogs and fish, said Wu Jinshui, head of the ISA.

The ISA owns complete intellectual property rights to the rice which has been planted in cities of Shaoyang, Changde, Zhuzhou and Changsha in Hunan.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China develops new rice strain to avoid heavy metal pollution**

[Xinhua, 29-09-2017] China has developed a new kind of rice free from cadmium pollution.

The project led by Yuan Longping, known as China's "Father of Hybrid Rice," passed examination and evaluation by a panel from the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences and the Ministry of Agriculture.

Trial plantation of the new breed, low-cadmium Indica rice, was arranged in a township in Xiangtan County, central China's Hunan Province, in soil with 1.5 mg/kg of cadmium.

Sampling showed the cadmium in two samples at 0.06 mg/kg and 0.07 mg/kg, much lower than the national standard of 0.2 mg/kg.

In 2013, rice produced in Hunan Province was found to contain excessive levels of cadmium, a carcinogenic industrial chemical, which was largely believed to be caused by water and soil pollution.

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### **China breaks hybrid rice output record**

[GT, 16-10-2017] Chinese hybrid rice has set a new world record recently, according to the China National Hybrid Rice R&D Center, with Chinese scientists carrying out their tests on a pilot field in North China's Hebei Province.

The new hybrid strain had the world's highest yields of any variety, at 17.2 tons per hectare.

There were seven scientists taking part in the test conducted on three plots with mild saline soil, out of a total of 100, in Handan city, with their yields at 1,181 kilograms per mu (0.07 hectares), 1,129 kg/mu and 1,136 kg/mu, for an average of about 1,149 kg/mu.

China's agriculture ministry launched a hybrid rice breeding program in 1996 and, after four years, hit a first-phase target of 10.5 tons per hectare. It then hit the fourth-phase target of 15.4 tons per hectare in 2014, according to Xinhua.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Machines replace laborers in cotton fields**

[China daily, 24-10-2017] Machines are replacing hundreds of thousands of migrant workers who pick cotton in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, the nation's biggest cotton production base.

At this time of year, Xinjiang's growers usually begin hiring workers to pick the crop. However, 116,000 hectares of cotton fields in Shawan county have already been harvested using machines.

"In the past, the cotton harvest lasted at least 45 days from October to November. Now, the machines can harvest a 15-hectare cotton field in a day," said Lin Hongru, head of Caohu village.

One machine can do the work of 2,000 manual laborers every day, he said.

Xinjiang produced 3.59 million metric tons of cotton in 2016, accounting for 67.3 percent of China's cotton production, up from 62.5 percent in 2015, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

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### **Chinese farmers turn to crop-dusting drones**

[Caixin, 10-10-2017] Chinese farmers faced with labor shortages are turning to crop-dusting drones. But this newfound love for the cost-saving devices may not be good news for farmers and consumers as a lack of regulations and industry standards may lead to the abuse of pesticides and fertilizers, experts warned.

Demand from farmers has spawned an estimated multi-billion yuan business for the country's drone manufacturers who earlier focused on applications including aerial photography, pollution monitoring and assistance in search and rescue efforts.

The Chinese government has stepped up efforts to nurture this emerging sector with subsidies to drone-makers or companies that allow farmers to lease unmanned crop-dusting aircraft.

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### **China's major sugar producer tackle pests with biological measure**

[Xinhua, 13-10-2017] Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China's biggest producer of sugar, has reduced pesticide use by more than 30 tonnes since 2011 through biological pest control, local authorities said.

Guangxi has used an army of *Trichogramma chilonis*, a kind of wasp, to combat sugarcane borers, in around 3 million mu (200,000 hectares) of low-yield fields over the past seven years.

The biological measure has not only reduced the pesticide use, but also increased the sugarcane yield by 29 percent per mu compared with fields using pesticides.

Guangxi has 15 million mu of sugarcane fields, accounting for more than 60 percent of the total in China.

Click [here](#) for details

## **China set to see another bumper year for grain output**

[Xinhua, 16-10-2017] China's Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) 16 October estimated that the country's grain output will surpass 600 million tonnes in 2017, indicating another year of bumper harvest.

Earlier official data showed China's grain output dipped in 2016 as its planting area shrank and per unit yield edged down. National grain output stood at about 616 million tonnes last year, down 0.8 percent, compared with a year earlier.

Land for growing quality wheat, which has been in short supply, has been increased to 27.5 percent, 2.8 percentage points higher than the previous year, according to the official.

To work towards green development, China has further reduced the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Third national land survey to be launched**

[Gov.CN, 16-10-2017] China will launch the third national land survey this year, according to a circular issued by the State Council on Oct 16.

The purpose of the national survey is to thoroughly check on the status quo of land use, collect accurate land data, and improve the mechanism of land survey and statistics.

The survey will cover all the land in China. Survey items include cataloging the use of land resources, ownership, and natural and economic conditions. Permanent, basic farmland will be a focus in the survey.

It will begin in the fourth quarter of 2017 and the result should be made public in 2020.

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## **China makes hefty investment in water conservancy projects**

[Gov.CN, 10-10-2017] China has made hefty investment in water conservancy projects over the past five years, benefiting hundreds of millions of people in poor regions, a senior official said on Oct 10.

As part of the country's poverty-relief efforts, such investment from the central government reached a record high of 226.6 billion yuan (\$34.3 billion) between 2012 and 2016, Zhou Xuewen, deputy minister of water resources, told a forum.

The investment helped lift more than 300,000 rural people out of poverty, enabled 110 million rural residents to have safe drinking water, built water-saving irrigation systems on 34 million mu (about 2.3 million hectares) of farmland, and treated water and soil erosion on 41,000 square kilometers of land, Zhou said.

Zhou said the government will continue to increase investment in water conservancy projects in poor regions, and ensure that more than 80 percent of rural residents will enjoy centralized water supply by 2020.

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## **China diverts 10 billion cubic metres of water to arid north in massive project**

[Reuters, 04-10-2017] China has transferred 10 billion cubic meters of fresh water from the country's south to its drought-prone north in the few years since a massive water diversion project came on stream, authorities said.

In recent decades, water supplies in north have been challenged by protracted droughts, a surging population, agriculture, and unprecedented manufacturing growth.

China aims to ultimately supply 44.8 billion cubic meters annually to the north via the ambitious water diversion project. That would be about seven percent of the volume of water consumed by the entire country in 2015.

The project has supplied 2.7 billion cubic meters of water to Beijing, serving 11 million people.

Currently about 70 percent of Beijing's water supply comes from the project. Previously the city's water supply came mainly from underground water.

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### **New H7N9 bird flu strain in China has pandemic potential**

[Reuters, 19-10-2017] Lab experiments on a new strain of the H7N9 bird flu circulating in China suggest the virus can transmit easily among animals and can cause lethal disease, raising alarm that the virus has the potential to trigger a global human pandemic, researchers reported.

The H7N9 virus has been circulating in China since 2013, causing severe disease in people exposed to infected poultry. Last year, human cases spiked, and the virus split into two distinct strains that are so different they no longer succumb to existing vaccines.

One of these has also become highly pathogenic, meaning it has the ability to kill infected birds, posing a threat to the poultry industry.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China's national parks to spruce up**

[Caixin, 20-10-2017] Excess logging and road construction that have endangered giant pandas have pushed authorities to breathe new life into China's ailing nature reserves.

Part of the problem lies in the complex administration of eco-zones. Authorities in charge of agriculture, forestry, land use and environmental protection — all with competing interests and varying conservation standards — have at times undermined each other's efforts while trying to preserve national parks.

But a new development blueprint modeled after the management of Yellowstone National Park in the U.S. aims to cut red tape by centralizing park administration.

The policy paper titled "Overall Plan for Building a National Park System," also proposes to create 10 national parks from the heights of the Qinghai-Tibetan plateau to the foot of the Great Wall outside Beijing, by 2020.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China's food-delivery business is booming. So is waste**

[Economist, 19-10-2017] Such businesses first began to take off in student dormitories. These days young office-workers are by far the biggest market. But there is much hand-wringing about the consequences of their popularity. Officials say the couriers threaten road safety.

Another worry is the welfare of delivery people, many of whom are migrants from the countryside.



Most hotly debated of late is the impact the business is having on the environment. Each day about 65m meal-containers are discarded, by one estimate.

Click [here](#) for details

## Trade and Business

### **Britain, China should be natural partners for Belt and Road cooperation**

[Xinhua, 14-10-2017] Britain and China should be natural partners in taking forward the Belt and Road Initiative, Chief Executive of China-Britain Business Council Matthew Rous has told Xinhua in a recent conference on Belt and Road development held in Scotland.

He said he agreed with what British Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond mentioned during the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held in Beijing in May this year that "Britain, lying at the western end of the Belt and Road, is a natural partner in this endeavour".

"Because we have very complimentary skills and offerings when it commence to establishing new infrastructure between Europe and Asia," he explained.

The China-Britain Business Council (CBBC) is an important and active organization to help British and Chinese businesses and organizations work together in China, Britain and third markets around the world.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Govt to continue importing seeds, says ministry**

[China daily, 13-10-2017] The government will continue to introduce seeds from abroad to improve supply of agricultural products in the country, the Ministry of Agriculture said on 13 October.

Out of the 350 major agricultural products available in the market, about a third were introduced from abroad, Wu Xiaoling, deputy chief for seeds supervision at the ministry, said at a news conference.

For certain vegetables, such as some types of carrots and spinach, more than 80 percent of the seeds are imported, she said.

But in general, imported seeds or seeds bred abroad account for a small percentage of all seeds used in China, she said.

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### **Vilmorin sees GMO maize opening in China in wake of Syngenta**

[Reuters, 19-10-2017] Vilmorin expects China to end a ban on growing genetically modified crops after ChemChina's takeover of Syngenta, potentially benefiting Vilmorin due to a maize licensing deal it has with Syngenta.

The 20-year deal signed with Syngenta gives Vilmorin and Germany's KWS the right to use Syngenta's GMO maize (corn) traits, both through their U.S. joint venture AgReliant and separately in other countries.

Vilmorin, the world's fourth-largest seed maker, has a small presence in China, mainly focused on a joint venture in maize.

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## **China's beef, broiler meat imports projected to rise**

[Feedstuffs, 16-10-2017] China's beef and broiler meat imports are projected to rise 11% and 7%, respectively, in 2018, according to the latest "Livestock & Poultry: World Markets & Trade" report from the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. However, despite robust Chinese demand, coupled with stagnant or declining domestic production, the report said the opportunity for importing both beef and broiler meat from the U.S. is limited due to restrictions.

On the broiler side, the U.S. is currently not eligible to export broiler meat to China due to highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) restrictions, the report explained.

On the beef side, the U.S. regained access to China's beef market in May after 13 years, but USDA said market requirements will initially limit the ability of the U.S. to capitalize on trade opportunities.

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## **U.S. beef producers jumping to meet increased China demand with caution**

[Xinhua, 02-10-2017] Two months after China and the United States reached a deal to reopen Chinese markets for U.S. beef in July, as part of the 100-day action plan to boost economic cooperation, American beef was back on China's menu.

The year after the 2003 ban took place amid concerns over mad cow disease, American beef exports to China dropped from 3 billion U.S. dollars to 1.1 billion U.S. dollars.

By 2018 - market insiders predict beef sales will be 3.8 billion U.S. dollars to China alone - with no limit in sight.

Quality concerns and a consumer demand that exceeds domestic production by 25 percent in China give a good chance for U.S. President Donald Trump.

But some producers told Xinhua they will proceed with caution.

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## **Brie trade agreement: China lifts soft cheese ban**

[EURACTIV, 23-10-2017] Fans of soft cheeses in China have reason to celebrate after the country reversed a ban on mould-ripened cheeses, allowing imports of Camembert, Brie and Roquefort, European Union officials said on 23 October.

The ban was lifted following meetings between European Commission representatives and Chinese quarantine and health officials, the EU's China delegation said in a statement.

The National Health and Family Planning Commission issued a note to customs authorities clarifying that bacterial cultures used for the production of these cheeses were not harmful to consumers' health, thus allowing trade to resume, according to the delegation.

The statement added that China's cheese quality standards are "outdated," and the delegation and French embassy will organise a seminar with Chinese experts to "(limit) the risk of such events re-occurring in the future".

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## **Success in maintaining food security in China contributes to global economic stability**

[GT, 17-10-2017] China's grain production will likely remain above 600 million tons this year, news portal chinanews.com reported on Tuesday, 17 October, citing estimates from the Ministry of Agriculture.

For a country with 1.3 billion people, ensuring stable grain production and supply is not only essential for sound economic development and social stability; it is also an important basis for national security. Global grain trade is about 250 million tons a year, equivalent to merely half of China's annual food consumption. If China cannot achieve high levels of self-sufficiency, large-scale imports will cause a surge in global food prices, leaving aside the fact that the international market can't meet China's huge food demand. It would also make the country vulnerable to various risks in global competition.

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