



"Joy and peace are what happens to us when we allow ourselves to recognize how good things really are." - **Marianne Williamson**

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY, 21, 2018

Morning Summary: Stock markets reverse course, breaking a six-session winning streak that gave markets their biggest gains since 2013 just last week. Weakness in the retail sector seems to be the main culprit in the downturn, stemming from disappointing sales data out of WalMart. It's worth noting WalMart stock fell over -10% yesterday, its worst single day in over 30 years. Meaning perhaps stock market fears are not exclusive to rising inflation and interest rates, earnings and growth do matter. Today's main event will be the release of the "minutes" from the Federal Reserve's last policy meeting. Of particular interest is the central bankers' thoughts on inflation. Do members believe it may be heating up faster than anticipated and feel the need to head it off with a faster push up in interest rates? Keep in mind, investors started the year with the idea that the central bank would be slower in tightening monetary policy than what the Fed was indicating. Signs of rising inflation and soaring bond yields have since changed a lot of minds with most now thinking the Fed will end up raising rates more than markets are currently factoring in. Investors worry that higher interest rates will have a negative impact on earnings. A lot of Fed critics have blamed the central bank's loose policy and low interest rates for stock valuations that some believe are overpriced. Stock market bulls, however, argue that any negative impacts from higher rates will be more than offset by a strong global economy that looks set to continue expanding. Economic data today includes Flash PMI, MBA Mortgage Applications and Existing Home Sales. We'll also hear from two Fed officials - Philadelphia Fed President Patrick Harker and Minneapolis Fed President Neel Kashkari. In Washington, Congress continues to work out the details on the budget, which they need to have finalized by March 23 or risk another government shutdown. The last time the House and Senate passed all of the separate appropriation bills on time was more than two decades ago — in 1997, so there is the possibility that this issue is still not settled.

BP Forecasts A Transportation Revolution: *Self-driving electric vehicles will cause a revolution in transportation over the next two decades, leading global oil demand to peak by the late 2030s, according to the main scenario outlined in BP's latest annual energy outlook. The forecast marks the first time BP, one of the world's largest crude producers, has shown oil consumption peaking in its long-term forecasts but the UK group said it saw little risk of a precipitous decline in demand. BP said there were likely to be 300m electric vehicles on the world's roads by 2040, up from about 3m today. Many of them would be self-driving cars operating as part of Uber-style ride-sharing fleets, BP said, reducing private car ownership. EVs are projected to account for 15 per cent of about 2bn cars on the road in 2040, according to BP's main scenario. But they will make up 30 per cent of all passenger car transportation, measured by distance*

travelled, because so many of them will be shared vehicles. Despite this upheaval, the amount of oil used by cars was projected by BP to remain almost unchanged in 2040 from the 18.7m barrels a day in 2016. This was because reduced consumption because of electrification and increased fuel efficiency would be offset by a doubling in overall global demand for car travel. (Source: Financial Times)

When You Can Expect To Get Your Tax Refund: *If you're part of the group of Americans who've already filed their taxes, you can expect to get your refund in about three weeks, according to a report issued by the IRS. The report, which offers some basic tips to guide filers through tax season, says "the IRS issues more than nine out of 10 refunds in less than 21 days." However, there are some exceptions. If you've claimed an Earned Income Tax Credit — a benefit for working people with low to moderate income — or an Additional Child Tax Credit — you won't be eligible to have your refund issued before Feb. 27. That's also assuming there are no outstanding issues with your return, the report notes. The IRS encourages filers to use the official IRS website to check their refund status, which is typically updated once a day. Many online filing tools also allow you to track your refund. If you haven't yet filed your taxes, the quickest way to get your refund may be by filing online and opting for direct deposit versus a mailed paper refund. If you haven't yet filed your taxes, the quickest way to get your refund may be by filing online and opting for direct deposit versus a mailed paper refund. (Sources: IRS, CNBC)*

Gas Prices Trending Cheaper: *The national gas price average has been steadily decreasing for nearly two weeks dropping from the year-to-date high of \$2.61 (on February 5) to the current national average of \$2.53. Motorists in nearly every state are paying less on the week with Midwest and Southern states seeing the largest price drops at the pump. Hawaii (+2 cents) and Indiana (+1 cent) were the only states to see increases. However, it is questionable how long the price declines will last. A handful of major refineries are undergoing maintenance. If production slows at a high rate and/or if crude oil prices jump, these events could push pump prices back up in late February-early March. Prices are 4 cents less than last week at this time, but still 1 cent more than a month ago. Last week's EIA petroleum report revealed that U.S. oil production grew 332,000 barrels per day (b/d), putting total crude output at 10.271 million b/d. Likewise, U.S. crude inventories rose for a third straight week by 1.8 million billion barrels. Inventory levels now total 422.1 million bbl. Moreover, according to Baker Hughes, the U.S. added 7 oil rigs last week bringing the total rig count to 798. Increased U.S. production coupled with the fourth consecutive week of increases in the U.S. oil rig count has placed a spotlight on OPEC's restrained production agreement aimed at rebalancing the global oil supply. Market watchers will closely monitor to see how much a surge in U.S. production eats into OPEC's efforts to rebalance the market to determine the impact it has on crude oil prices. (Source: AAA)*



Note: Prices are per gallon for regular unleaded gasoline.

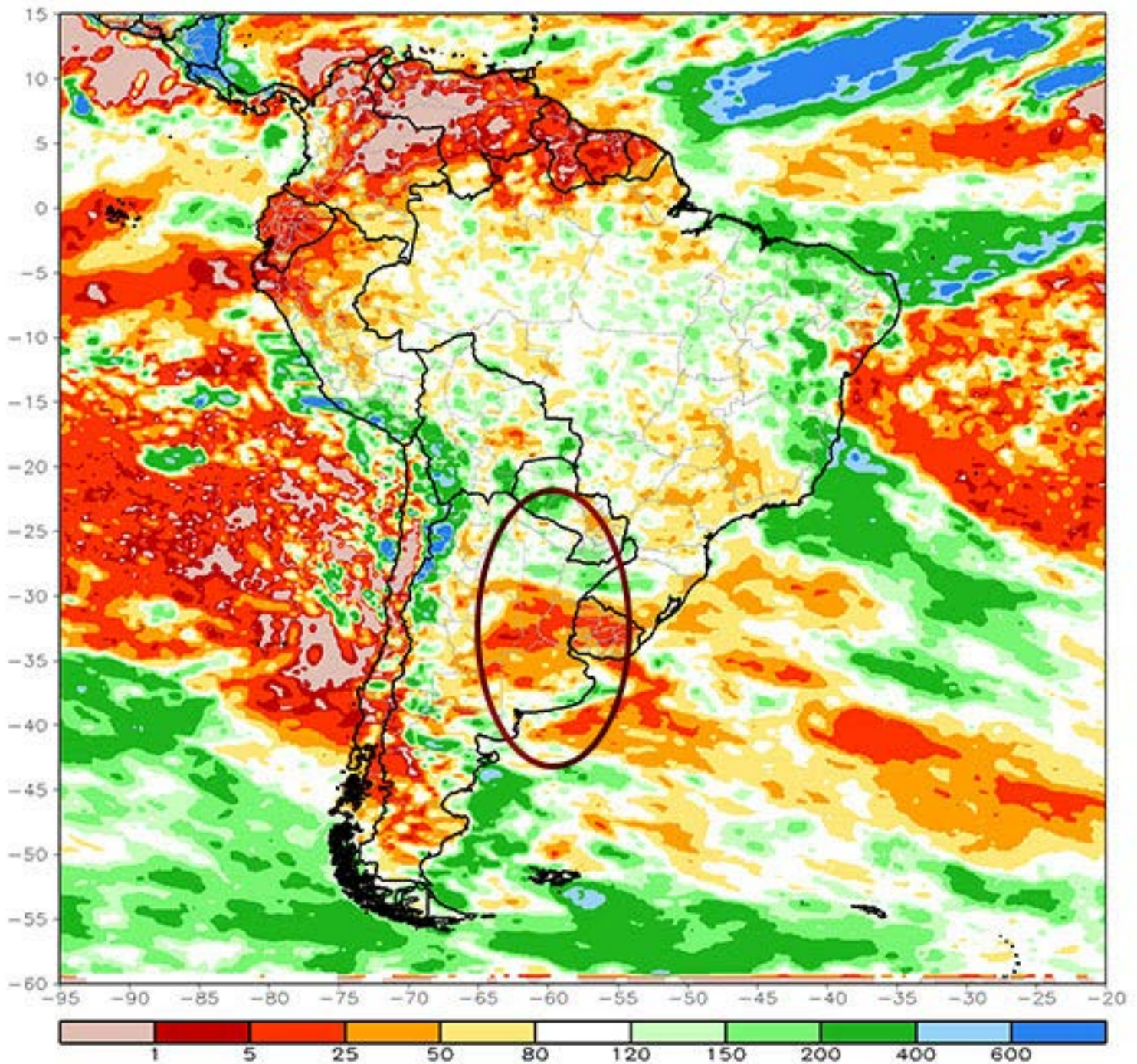
Source: AAA (GasPrices.AAA.com)



Weather calls for heavy rain across the southeastern Plains, Delta and southern and eastern Midwest through the week. By Sunday, amounts should reach 3 - 6" in these areas, with localized totals in excess of 8" possible. This could lead to flooding across the Ohio Valley and the lower Mississippi River Valley. Snow is expected in the north-central Plains and the northwestern Midwest this week, but dry weather will continue across the southwestern Plains. Extremely warm weather is expected across the eastern Midwest and the Delta this week. Recent showers led to some improvements in central and southeastern Buenos Aires, but improvements elsewhere were limited. Temperatures reached anywhere from 95 - 100 degrees F in many areas, adding stress to the corn and soybean crops. Temperatures will not be as hot this week, but dry weather is expected across most areas, maintaining significant stress on crops. Showers will remain limited next week and hotter will return. Below is % of normal precipitation for the last 30 days. You can see how dry northern Argentina has been compared to Brazil. Again, the limited rain and continued hot temps will continue to stress developing corn and soybeans.

CMORPH 30-Day Percent of Normal Rainfall (%)

Period: 20Jan2018 - 18Feb2018



Spring Crop Revenue Insurance Guarantees: Remember these prices will update daily during the month of February as the price average is determined.

- **Corn \$3.94⁴ (Avg. close of the DEC18 contract during Feb)**
- **Soybeans \$10.10² (Avg. close of the NOV18 contract during Feb)**

Corn bulls continue to talk about lack of rain in Argentina, fewer second-crop acres in Brazil, strong U.S. demand and improving Chinese demand. Bears on the other hand continue to point to burdensome domestic and global supplies. Saying the recent rally in

price might be more than enough risk-premium until more weather headlines are revealed regarding second-crop acres in Brazil and planting conditions here in the U.S. Bears simply believe it's tough to get overly excited when we have over +2.0 billion bushels of ending stock and are about to plant around 90 million acres of U.S. corn. They are also quick to point out that the U.S. corn crop has averaged right around 175 bushels per acre the past two years. Meaning if weather cooperates we could easily be adding to our surplus. As a producer and a spec, I'm still taking the opposite side of the bearish argument and saying what if weather does not cooperate? What if changes in Chinese policy pushes demand further to the upside? What if South America runs into further complications? What if the U.S. dollar continues to weaken? What if the macro funds take on a more bullish tone towards commodities and inflationary fears continue? Bottom-line, if I'm counting cards correctly, I believe there are more bullish cards in the deck than bearish. I feel like a lot of the bearish cards are already on the table. Not to say that the bears couldn't draw to a few cards that will improve their hands, I just feel like the deck has finally started to turn a bit. I'm not getting overly aggressive in regards to a bullish tilt, I just like the longer-term view to the upside. Staying a very patient bull...

Future Corn Imports to Mexico

Corn trade longterm projections

(in million metric tons)



Year	Imports (million metric tons)
2016/17	14.5
2027/28	23.5



Source: USDA, Longterm Projections for U.S. Agriculture to 2027

Soybean traders continue to debate problems in Argentina vs. perhaps another record crop in Brazil. As the Argentine production estimates continue to fall, several sources inside Brazil are forecasting an all-time record setting crop will be harvested. The question is, how much will the lack of crush in Argentina impact the front-end of the U.S. meal market? Many of my trading friends believe the meal market still has more room to the upside and the front-end of the trade or in this case old-crop prices could remain extremely hot and volatile as the trade tries to sort out all of the moving pieces. From a technical perspective, a few of the old-crop contracts have traded back to levels not seen since last July. Producers who feel they might have missed the boat now have another opportunity as the weather in Argentina has bailed out the bulls. As both a spec and a producer, I remain on the sideline. I was lucky to bank profits on my short positions down near the mid-January lows, but didn't have enough belief in the weather headlines to reverse ship and ride the wave back to the upside. Instead, I've been sitting on the sideline. I'm nervous about jumping on the bullish bandwagon this late in the game, especially considering the fact we are sitting on a ton of surplus and new crop planting intentions will soon show record soybean acres again in the U.S. I do however believe prices on the front-end could continue to push higher. I just don't feel comfortable navigating that ship. In my opinion, trading South American weather markets have always been difficult. Producers who feel they have been undersold have to be using the recent rally to get caught up. I am carefully monitoring new-crop contracts, hoping the front-end of the market can find enough bullish momentum to pull the deferred new-crop contracts higher. There's not a whole lot fresh or new in the headlines, so I suspect we could drift here a bit. Keep in mind the Argentine crop is still about 30 to 45 days from being harvested so still a lot of balls in the air.

Future Brazilian Soybean Exports

Soybean trade longterm projections

(in million metric tons)



Year	Exports (million metric tons)
2016/17	63.1
2027/28	96.4



Source: USDA, Longterm Projections for U.S. Agriculture to 2027

Wheat bulls are talking more heavily about potential winter-kill risk in portions of Europe and Russia as extremely cold temps could hit areas without adequate snow cover. This would add to crop complications and weather fears already brewing inside the U.S. As you can imagine, bears continue to point towards more than ample global and domestic supply. There's also talk of perhaps a nearby strengthening dollar creating a few headwinds and adding to an already troubled U.S. export business. Weekly U.S. export inspections were down compared to the previous week and are now down almost -5% compared to a year earlier. The good news is we are starting to see Russian prices firm a bit, so perhaps the dance steps are starting to change? From a traditional fundamental perspective, it's tough to be anything but bearish. However when you start factoring in the unknowns in weather and uncertainties in the macro and geopolitical space the puzzle becomes much more interesting. I continue to remain a longer-term bull, knowing full hand I might be a bit early to the party. Keep your eye on the European and Russian weather as well as the geopolitical headlines in that area that might soon start to increase.

Future Russian Wheat Exports

Wheat trade longterm projections

(in million metric tons)



Year	Projections (in million metric tons)
2016/17	27.8
2027/28	33.9



Source: USDA, Longterm Projections for U.S. Agriculture to 2027

Federal Reserve AgLetter

The Chicago Federal Reserve recently released their most updated AgLetter. I always find some very interesting comments and data within their report. I've included a few of the highlights below. The Seventh Federal Reserve District includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan and Wisconsin. I encourage you to read their report in full detail by Clicking [HERE](#) (Source: Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago)

Farmland Values: *Farmland values in the Seventh Federal Reserve District, showed an annual increase of +1% for 2017, following three consecutive yearly declines. With farmland values up slightly for 2017, the District avoided exceeding the three consecutive years of declines seen in 1984–86. In the fourth quarter of 2017, Indiana, Iowa, and Wisconsin had year-over-year increases in agricultural land values, while Illinois had a decrease. In real terms, there has been a -10% correction in the District's farmland values from their peak in 2013 to the end of 2017.*

Credit Conditions: *Agricultural credit conditions in the District deteriorated once again. Repayment rates on non-real-estate farm loans were lower in the October through December period of 2017 than in the same period of 2016, and rates of loan renewals and extensions were higher—which indicated greater stress in the credit environment. District states saw a continuation in the tightening of credit standards relative to a year ago, as 46 percent of the survey respondents reported their banks tightened credit standards for agricultural loans in the fourth quarter of 2017 relative to the fourth quarter of 2016. A Wisconsin banker provided an interesting take on this matter: "While credit standards are not tightening, we continue to be more disciplined in gathering quality financial information on a regular basis and monitoring accounts." Additionally, the share of the District farm loan portfolio deemed to have "major" or "severe" repayment problems edged up to 6.1 percent in the fourth quarter of 2017—the highest such share since the early 2000s.*

Interest Rates: *As of January 1, 2018, the average interest rates for farm operating loans was 5.34 percent and feeder cattle loans 5.44 percent were at their highest levels since the first quarter of 2012. The average interest rate for agricultural real estate loans was 4.93 percent.*

Corn & Soybean Acres: *Based on calculations using U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) data, the District states' corn yield set a record of 193 bushels per acre in 2017, edging up 1 percent from 2016. However, the District states' soybean yield dipped 5.7 percent in 2017 from 2016—to 54.8 bushels per acre (still the second-highest soybean yield ever). Farmers increased the acreage planted with soybeans by 5 percent, which compensated for the dip in yield. This allowed 2017's soybean production for the five District states to essentially match 2016's. In contrast, farmers opted to decrease the corn acreage harvested in the five District states by 5.1 percent in 2017, producing a corn harvest that was 4.2 percent below the 2016 level.*

Looking Forward: *Given the challenging times facing agriculture, it's not surprising that an Iowa respondent stated, "Several area banks are putting pressure on producers with tight margins to either sell land or refinance with another bank." Survey respondents indicated that 2.5 percent (a shade lower than a year ago) of their farm customers with operating lines of credit in 2017 were not likely to qualify for new operating credit*

in 2018; however, this proportion was 4.9 percent in Michigan and 3.2 percent in Wisconsin.



> EU Commission Reopens U.S. Ethanol Antidumping Case: *The European Commission announced Tuesday it will initiate an expiry review of the antidumping duty against US fuel ethanol imports, with the duty staying in the place for another 15 months while the investigation takes place. The duty of 9.5% has been in place since February 23, 2013 and was due to expire Friday. European ethanol producers submitted an appeal in November 2017, through the European Renewable Ethanol Association (ePURE). ePURE said that the removal of the duty would be damaging to the European ethanol industry, considering US ethanol overcapacity and increased exports, which have already resulted in retaliation measures from China and Brazil and a similar antidumping investigation case from Peru. (Source: Platts)*

> Russian Wheat Prices To Rise On High-Quality Shortage: *A growing shortage of high quality milling wheat and consistent demand will push Russian wheat prices higher, Russian logistics operator RusAgroTrans said in a report Tuesday. Export prices of Russian wheat for March delivery increased from \$197/mt to \$204/mt FOB over the first half of the month, with prices expected to increase further still to \$205-\$207/mt. RusAgroTrans raised its forecast for February exports to 3.5 million-3.7 million mt – up from its previous estimate of 3.1 million mt – citing the number of cargoes pushed back from January due to weather-related delays. Russia has exported 1.89 million mt of grain over the first half of February, more than double the volume it exported at the same stage last year, RusAgroTrans said in the report. (Source: AgriCensus)*

> Argentine Soybean Prospects Under 50 MMTs: *The drought afflicting Argentina since November has shriveled soy yields to the point that analysts and farmers have slashed harvest estimates by about 10 million tonnes, with final crop forecasts consolidating under the 50 million tonne mark. The dryness has walloped the heart of the normally fertile Pampas grains belt in Argentina, world's top exporter of soymeal livestock feed and No. 3 supplier of raw soybeans and corn. Rains fell in Argentina over the weekend, however, meteorologists still have concerns. World Weather stated, "The temporary improvement in crops across central Buenos Aires will last a few days this week, but most areas will become critically dry again by late this week or into the weekend. Temperatures will cool down for a while and that will help conserve soil moisture in Buenos Aires. Much greater rain is needed for all of Argentina and World Weather, Inc. believes March will be the earliest that greater rain may fall." (Sources: Reuters, World Weather)*

> Brazil's Soybean Crop Seen At Record: *Consultancy Safras & Mercado is pegging Brazil's 2017/18 soybean crop at 115.6 million metric tons, a new record that exceeds last year's record 114.2 million metric tons by +1.2%. Safras raised its previous estimate,*

released in December, by 1.7 million tonnes due to expectations of better yields in states such as Goiás, Mato Grosso do Sul, Minas Gerais and São Paulo. Conditions in Mato Grosso and Paraná, the two leading producers, are not as good. Heavy rains there have made harvest difficult and delayed field maturation. (Source: Reuters)

> EU Crops Avoid Frost Damage So Far: Cereal crops in the European Union have suffered very little frost damage this winter and no losses are expected during the second half of February, the EU's crop monitoring service said. The negligible damage reflected relatively mild weather, particularly in a swathe of central and eastern Europe including Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria with temperatures since January among the highest for the time of year in the past four decades, the MARS service said in a report. (Source: Reuters)

> Ukraine Crops Rated Mostly Good Or Satisfactory: Most of Ukraine's winter grain crops are in a good or satisfactory condition as of Feb. 19, thanks to favorable weather, agriculture minister Maksim Martyniuk said. The percentage of crops in good and satisfactory condition totaled 87%, while the share of crops in a poor state was just 13%. (Source: Reuters)

> EU Wheat Export Values Plummeted In 2017: The value of the EU's annual wheat exports dropped -27.5% in 2017, with exporters missing out on €1.52 billion of sales compared to the year before, data from the European Commission showed Tuesday. EU exporters received €4.03 billion during 2017, down from €5.55 billion in the 2016. December 2017 wheat exports totalled €347 million, -17.4% lower than during December 2016. The biggest drop off in sales was seen in some of the EU's major traditional wheat buyers, with total agriculture exports to Egypt dropping -25% year-on-year to EUR 1.35 billion and exports to Saudi Arabia falling -11.6% to 4.04 billion, as EU sellers struggle to compete with the likes of Russia and Argentina. (Source: AgriCensus)

> Monsanto's Dicamba Lawsuit Dismissed: Monsanto's attempt to block Arkansas' ban on the warm-weather use of the herbicide dicamba was thrown out by a Pulaski County Circuit Judge late last week. Scott Partridge, vice president of global strategy for Monsanto, said in a statement that the company was considering additional legal steps. (Source: Politico)

> Countries With The Top-Rated Work-Life Balance: People in the Netherlands enjoy the best work-life balance, according to recent findings by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Unsurprisingly, the most important aspect for a healthy work-life balance is the amount of time people spend away from work. The authors of the Better Life Index note that "evidence suggests that long work hours may impair personal health, jeopardise safety and increase stress." In the Netherlands, only 0.5 percent of employees work very long hours (50 or more hours a week), the lowest rate in the OECD, where the average is 13 percent. In comparison, some 11 percent of American employees work very long hours, so the United States doesn't make it in to the top ten ranking. It ranks 30th out of 38 considered countries. (Source: Statista)

Countries With the Best Work-Life Balance

Top ten countries ranked by quality of work-life balance



Index score on a scale of 0 to 10, based on indicators such as working hours, time for leisure and personal time, employment rate of mothers in the 35 OECD member states plus Russia, Brazil and South Africa



@StatistaCharts

Source: OECD

statista



Southeast South Dakota - We had tremendous crops this year but the pricing was equally as bad as the crops were good. We did get a few sales made today and only have a bit of beans left but as you can imagine we are sitting on a bit of corn still. July was especially challenging as the temps sky rocketed for three weeks with very little if any rain. We were sure pollination of corn was going to be a failure seeing that the silks were limp. Currently, we are doing some tiling work. It is definitely worth the investment and we hope to get a good amount finished before too long.

Northwest Indiana - It has been dry around here until the 4" of rain we received today. The little bit of snow we did have barely settled the dust. The guys digging septic and doing tile work said it was dry pretty far down. We farm some nominal ground and our corn yielded 185bpa average across all fields. The beans were in the 55-60bpa. We have

sold all our old crop beans and need to move the corn. We are already 20% sold in new crop beans and should have sold more today. Cash rents on average ground is between \$225 and \$250. In my opinion, the guys still paying \$300 are crazy.

Central Iowa - *We are getting a fair amount of ice and snow today and possibly into the night but we can use the moisture. We will be staying with the same rotation that we have been rolling with for the past ten or fifteen years. We will go again with a 70/30 corn to beans. We do not have great bean ground and if you can't raise 60bpa beans it is just tough to justify for our operation. We usually struggle to get to those yield levels but find it relatively easy to raise 50bpa to 55bpa beans. The thing is those 5bpa to 10bpa are huge and make it where beans just don't pencil. We will like to get in the field by the end of March for planting, so hopefully in the next 30 days. Our basis has hung in there due to having eight ethanol plants within a 50-mile radius, that have kept the bids firm.*



Ag Groups Fear Trade War If Steel Tariffs Imposed: *Leaders from the American Soybean Association and National Pork Producers Council expressed concern Friday about potential tit-for-tat trade retaliation against U.S. agricultural exports after the Trump administration proposed that aluminum and steel imports, particularly from China, are a threat to national security. It's a rare argument for the U.S. to build a case that trade of a certain product is a national security threat. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said the volume of metal coming into the country threaten American steel mills, and as such "threaten to impair the national security." Eighteen agricultural groups wrote Ross last July cautioning him not to place restrictions on aluminum and steel imports, declaring it would open a "Pandora's Box" that would be a disaster for global trade "and for U.S. agriculture in particular." The American Soybean Association cautioned Friday against the risk of retaliation by China. Read more [HERE](#).*

New Desalination Process Can Produce Drinkable Water And Lithium: *Seawater is a complex cocktail of useful minerals, but it's hard to separate out the specific ones we need. Now, a team of scientists from Australia and the US has developed a new water desalination technique that can not only make seawater fresh enough to drink, but recover lithium ions for use in batteries. Read more [HERE](#).*

How AI Can Help Save The Planet: *A report released during the recent Davos World Economic Forum meeting laid more than 80 potential environmental applications for AI, ranging from the mundane to the futuristic. We spoke with Celine Herweijer, a partner at consultants PwC and one of the authors of the report. She argues that AI is now going mainstream: Algorithms and supercomputers that once were limited to specialist researchers at universities and government labs are now open to startups and everyday corporations. Read more [HERE](#).*

Unhealthy Americans Threaten Trump's Defense Surge: *The Trump administration's ambitious new military buildup is at risk of being hobbled before it even starts — by a dwindling pool of young Americans who are fit to serve. Nearly three-quarters of Americans age 17 to 24 are now considered ineligible for the military due to obesity, other health problems, criminal backgrounds or lack of education, according to recent government data. That's a harsh reality check for the Pentagon's plan to recruit tens of thousands of new soldiers, sailors, pilots and cyber specialists over the next five years. That's on top of a more immediate obstacle that military leaders warned about last week: A relatively low unemployment rate is already making it harder to fill the ranks, particularly for the Army, which has historically benefited when full-time jobs are harder to find in the civilian economy. Read more [HERE](#).*

This Boat is Impossible to Capsize: *The Thunder Child is a high speed, wave-piercing boat that's built to be uncapsizable. The boat was designed by Safehaven Marine for use by Navy, law enforcement, and other groups who sail in high-pressure situations. The boat can fit 10 crew members on board and has a sleeping cabin. It's built to absorb shocks from rough seas. But by far the most impressive thing about the Thunder Child is its ability to right itself even if it is completely capsized. Click [HERE](#) to learn more and watch a video explaining how it works.*





South Korea A Key Ag Market For U.S. Exporters

South Korea has been in the headlines lately with the Winter Olympics. However, U.S. exporters are increasingly excited with the country as it is the fifth largest market reaching over \$6.8 billion in 2017 alone. With livestock, grains, and horticultural products leading the way, South Korea has also rebounded from a lean period, importing over \$200 million in soybean oil and \$600 million in all oilseeds and products. In particular, the soybean oil market has been a great success story for U.S. agriculture. South Korean imports of soybean oil have been largely supplied by price-competitive Argentina, followed by the U.S. and regional suppliers such as Vietnam and Thailand. Historically, the U.S. has maintained a relatively small market share, reaching 23% in 2015/16. In 2016/17 however, U.S. market share jumped to 45% which translates to an additional \$80 million increase in exports compared to 2015/16. One of the major reasons for this increase is because end users are becoming more appreciative of the qualitative characteristics of U.S. soybean oil, such as taste and color. Most notably, the golden color of U.S. soybean oil is a key factor in U.S. products being preferred over Argentine, which have a red tint. Additionally, due to the U.S. - South Korea Free Trade Agreement, U.S. producers have an increasing edge in tariffs over their Argentine counterparts, as Argentina faces a tariff rate of 5% compared to the 2.2% for U.S. imports. The promising first quarter of Marketing Year 2017/18 coupled with the above mentioned favorable micro and macro economic factors suggest another strong year for U.S. ag exports to South Korea. Many traders inside the markets, believe how leaders in Washington elect to handle relations with their North Korean neighbors could have a deep impact on U.S. - South Korean trade relations for years to come, so we have to continue paying close attention. (Source: USDA, FAS - [Oilseeds Report](#))



Apps To Help You Get A Better Night's Sleep

Americans are chronically sleep deprived with fewer than ever getting the daily recommended hours of shut-eye. On average, people in the U.S. get 6.8 hours of sleep a night. And 40% of those are getting less than six hours. Experts recommend seven to nine hours a night. Numerous medical studies have linked lack of sleep to a host of health problems including obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and even early mortality. Inadequate sleep can also affect judgment, mood, ability to learn and retain information, and may increase the risk of serious accidents and injury. Technology - in particular the blue light our devices emit - is a common blame for our poor sleeping habits. But there are actually some apps available that can turn your smartphone into a sleep-positive tool, aimed at helping you relax and get a better night's rest. Check out a few below:

Stop, Breathe, and Think: *Overall this is a meditation app, but it's perfect for beginners or those who want just a quick introduction. Stop, Breathe & Think features nearly 30 free sessions, many of which come in different lengths. Most of them are short, up to 11 minutes, and you can choose to work around themes like Breathe, Connect with Your Body, or Be Kind. Or, simply set a meditation timer and find calm amid the silence or relaxing forest sounds.*

Rain Rain Sleep Sounds: *Rain Rain is just what the name implies - a background rain sound simulator. The app has 26 loops to listen to and there are several additional sound packs available for purchase. You can also set a sleep timer for your sounds, and it has a sound-reactive, color-changing background option. You can even make a "mixtape" of your personal favorites.*

Noisli: *Noisli is a very popular white noise generator that can help you relax and calm down with your mobile phone or tablet. The mobile app comes with an offline soundboard of various types of white noise that you can mix, and then save for your own custom soothing sound combos or sleep aids. Noisli also has a nifty sleep/fade out timer.*

Pzizz: *This app helps users drift off to sleep using a combination of music, words, sound effects and binaural beats to help you de-stress and re-energize. Once users set a listening duration (10 minutes to 10 hours), pzizz generates a unique sleeping soundtrack for you every time from its library of built-in media. There are more than 10 billion possible combinations.*

SleepCycle: *Using the iPhone's accelerometer to record your sleeping habits, the app uses sleep cycle theory and aims to wake you at just the right time to ensure optimal rest. Users set a window of time (say a 30-minute stretch) instead of a traditional pinpoint alarm time, and when the app judges that your sleep movement is just right, it will ring the alarm to wake you. In addition to the smart alarm, Sleep Cycle records your sleeping habits for tracking sleep quality over time.*

Sleep Time+: *This is another sleep tracking-smart alarm combo, using your phone's sensors to measure the quality of your sleep and wake you up at the optimal time. In addition, the app comes with soundscapes to help you sleep and HealthKit integration.*

Digipill: *Digipill features a variety of purpose-built guided meditation sessions and soundscapes called "digipills", each designed for a variety of purposes, with the relaxing T-Break digipill coming free, and the rest as in-app purchases. Of particular interest to light sleepers and insomniacs is the Sleep Deeply module.*

Lucid Dreamer: *A bit different than the other apps on this list, Lucid Dreamer helps sleepers the lucid dreaming state by triggering an audio and visual cue onscreen that trains sleepers to make a reality check, triggering lucid dreaming. A built-in dream log then allows users to quickly jot down their dreams and store them, or share with the app's community.*

Sleep Genius: *Sleep Genius claims it is the most scientifically designed sound program for the world today," developed by neuroscience, sleep, and sound experts based on work helping NASA astronauts sleep. According to the developers, their customized music is superior to white noise. The app also features the "Revive Cycle Alarm", designed to gradually wake you up. (Sources: Lifehacker, Tom's Guide, Inverse)*



Ready To Get Back In The Fields

Our good friends and business partners out at Ormiston Farms recently posted this awesome

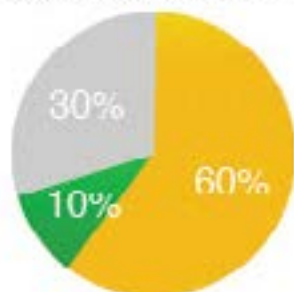
video. The video and drone footage are played to a song by one of their hometown country music stars Jerrod Niemann. As I sit hear in Kansas City enduring an end of winter ice storm, it provided a nice peaceful reprieve form the winter time blues. It's a great song and a fantastic video. Thanks again to the Ormiston family for sharing. I encourage to take a quick moment and enjoy! Click [HERE](#)



CASH SALES & HEDGING TOTALS

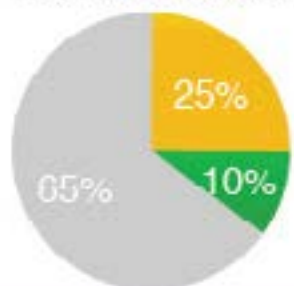
CORN 2017 CROP

60% SOLD
10% HEDGED
30% UNPROTECTED



CORN 2018 CROP

25% SOLD
10% HEDGED
65% UNPROTECTED



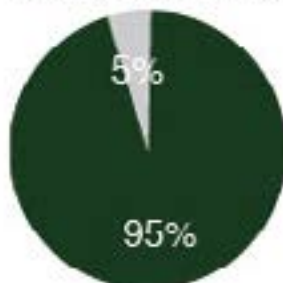
CORN 2019 CROP

0% SOLD
0% HEDGED
100% UNPROTECTED



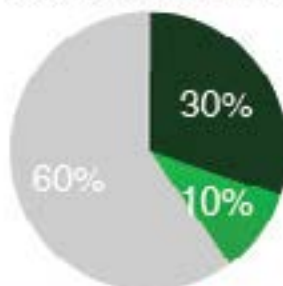
SOYBEANS 2017 CROP

95% SOLD
0% HEDGED
5% UNPROTECTED



SOYBEANS 2018 CROP

30% SOLD
10% HEDGED
60% UNPROTECTED



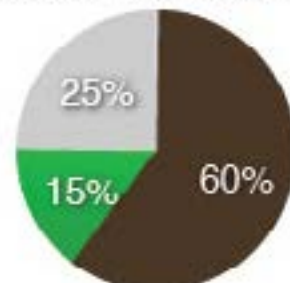
SOYBEANS 2019 CROP

0% SOLD
0% HEDGED
100% UNPROTECTED



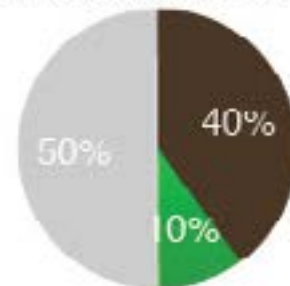
WHEAT 2017 CROP

60% SOLD
15% HEDGED
25% UNPROTECTED



WHEAT 2018 CROP

40% SOLD
10% HEDGED
50% UNPROTECTED



WHEAT 2019 CROP

10% SOLD
0% HEDGED
90% UNPROTECTED

