

GOOD MORNING: 04/16/18 Farm Direction - VanTrump Report

2 messages

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"The measure of intelligence is the ability to change." — **Albert Einstein**

MONDAY, APRIL 16, 2018

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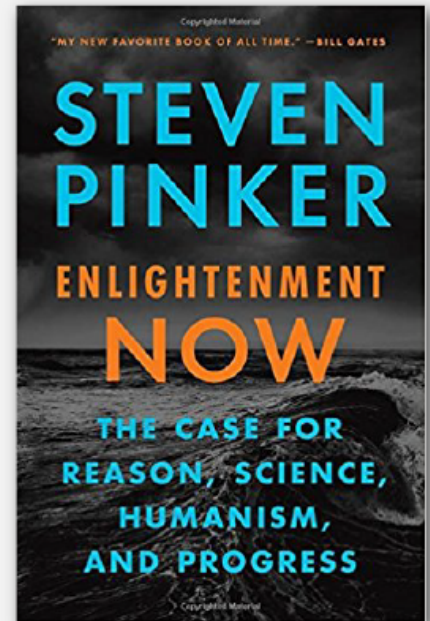
Morning Summary: Stock are set to open higher and crude oil is trading lower as tensions in the Middle East ease a bit. Friday night, a coalition of forces from the U.S., UK, and France led targeted strikes on bases in Syria. From what I heard, there were over 100 missiles fired from the Red Sea, Arabian Gulf and the Mediterranean. Reports from the Pentagon show that U.S. troops used Lockheed Martin JASSMs and several Raytheon made Tomahawk cruise missiles. The French fired SCALP-EGs and British Storm Shadow standoff missiles. Many investors thought there would be further strikes but that has not been the case. In fact, over the weekend, British foreign secretary Boris Johnson told the media that the UK has no current plans for more strikes, while President Trump tweeted "Mission Accomplished!" Bulls are also excited about seeing strong U.S. first quarter corporate earnings. There's a lot of talk inside the trade that current earnings estimates are too low and are going to surprise to the upside with better than expected gains coming from a weaker U.S. dollar and new tax reform. The question is, are strong earnings already baked into the current price? Bulls are also pointing to the fact many U.S. companies are sitting on a ton of cash and several reports show they are set to spend a record \$800 billion on share buybacks this year. Which is a ton of money that could soon start flowing into the market and help keep prices supported. As for today, the trade will be digesting U.S. retail sales, U.S. housing data and first quarter earnings from big names like Bank of America and Netflix. Tomorrow we will hear from five Fed speakers, digest more U.S. housing data and hear earnings reports from big names like Goldman Sachs, Johnson & Johnson and IBM. There will also be a ton of Chinese data out early this week as well. I suspect the market will also be keeping a very close eye on headlines or tweets out of Washington. There's still a ton geopolitical uncertainty in the air... trade negotiations with China? how or if Russia will respond to U.S. military retaliation in Syria? talks of denuclearize North Korea? immigration and movement of more U.S. troops to our southern border? the Iran nuclear deal?, etc... Bottom-line, there's a ton of headline risk this week, expect more extreme volatility!

Government Debt? *Brookings Institute recently released an interesting perspective on our rising government debt, "The fact that debt and deficits are rising under conditions of full employment suggests a deeper underlying fiscal problem." I never really gave it a ton of thought, but if we hit a rough period in the economy and people end up out of work the government will not be collecting nearly the current amount of taxes. There will also be more needing government help. All things that would quickly lead to additional government debt. It's tough to imagine we are arguably at full-employment yet our debt is growing larger? You can read more [HERE](#)*

Looking At Total Household Debt In America: *Total household debt—a category that includes mortgages, student loans, and car loans along with credit card and other debt—dipped in the wake of the Great Recession, but it has since steadily rebounded in the years since. Overall, Americans' debt hit a new high of \$13 trillion last year, surpassing the previous record set in 2008 by \$280 billion, according to the New York Fed. MONEY dug into data from the Federal Reserve's Survey of Consumer Finances to examine just how much debt—and of what types —Americans were carrying at every age. Read more [HERE](#).*

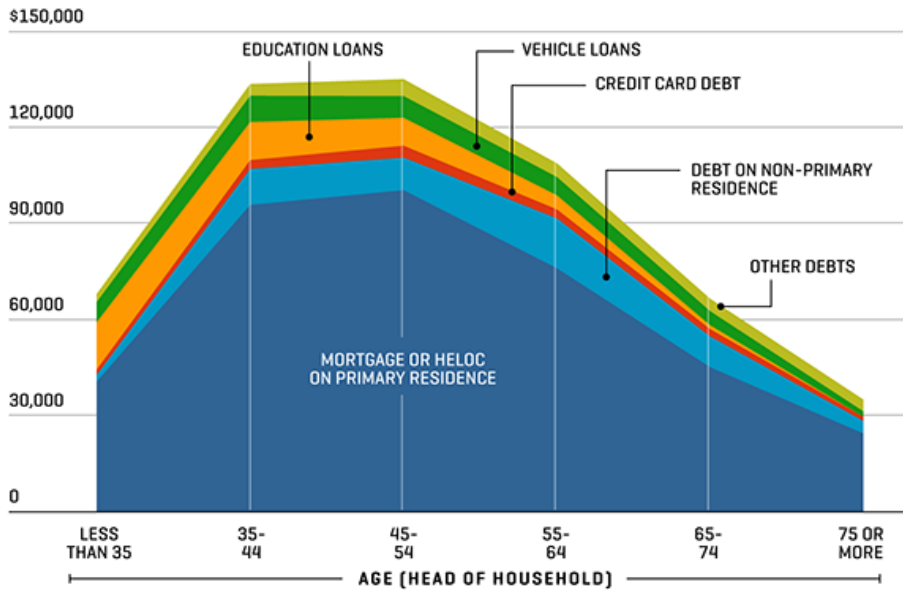


I will be passing along books I've read, gadgets, gift ideas and other cool things that I've come across and recommend to friends and family.



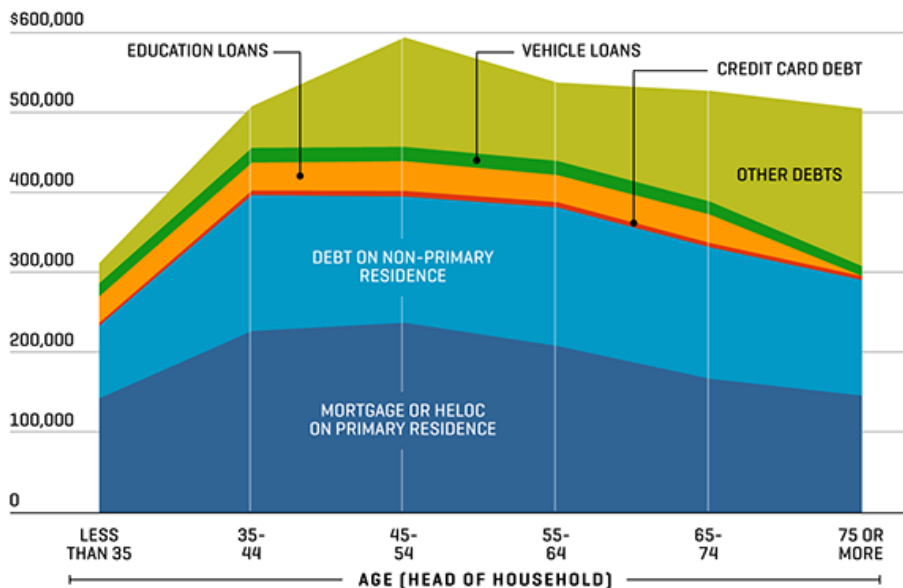
AVERAGE DEBT PER AGE (ENTIRE POPULATION)

Figures here are averaged across all households, whether they carry debt or not.



AVERAGE DEBT PER AGE (BORROWERS ONLY)

When you restrict the pool to debtors, you see much higher average amounts owed.



All things considered, do you think the world as a whole is getting better or worse, or neither getting better nor worse?

In Sweden just 10% thought things are getting better, in the US they were only 6%, and in Germany only 4%. Bottom-line, very few people think that the world is getting better and this makes moving forward much more difficult.

Unfortunately the media has become overly obsessed with reporting single events, specifically single events that have gone bad. The media does not pay nearly enough attention to the slower developments that reshape our world. Look at the news: plane crashes, terrorism attacks, natural disasters, election outcomes that we are not happy with. Positive developments on the other hand often happen very slowly and never make the headlines in the event-obsessed media. Look at what happens in our own day-to-day lives, then step back and look at what has happened when viewing the longer-term picture.

This book helps shed some light.

Great read and get gift ideal

Bill Gates is calling it his "New Favorite Book of All Time". That is a very strong statement considering how many books Gates reads each year.

LEARN MORE

Today In History



1746, Jacobite Rising - On April 16th, 1746, the final battle of the Jacobite rising would take place near Inverness Scotland. The

Jacobite rising was a series of rebellions and wars in Ireland, Scotland and Great Britain having to do with the succession of the British throne. The aim was to return the last Catholic British monarch and his descendants to the throne of Great Britain. The House of Stuart had been left without an heir after Queen Anne had died and ousted from the monarchy after the Glorious Revolution. Cousins of Anne would try to restore the House of Stuart, with the most successful attempts coming from Charles Stuart (the Young Pretender to the throne). Stuart would lead the Scottish Catholic Highlanders (Jacobite), with help from the Kingdom in France, to rise up against King George II. Invading England in 1745, Charles with France

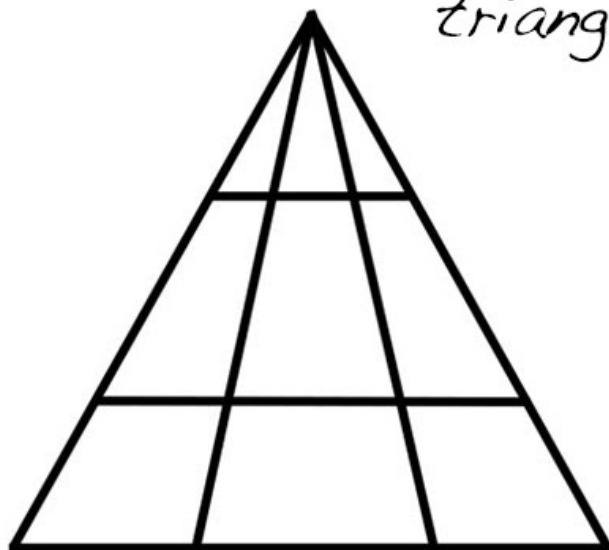
neuro mining



As we age, it gets harder and harder to create new neural pathways in the brain. It's the reason kids find it so easy to learn new things, but as adults it often gets more difficult. Doing brain teasers and solving riddles can be an important part of keeping our brain healthy. The more connections we can form, the better our brain will be. I hope

this helps provide a little daily fun and exercise. The answer to each riddle or puzzle will be located at the bottom of the report.

TODAY'S RIDDLE: How many triangles are there?



*How many
triangles are
there?*

Weather saw a winter storm move across the central U.S. over the weekend. Blizzard conditions moved across a swath of the north central Plains and northwestern Midwest and dropped large amounts of snow in South Dakota, Nebraska, southern Minnesota and Wisconsin. Temperatures also plummeted in the wake of this storm particularly across the northern and central Plains, which limited melting of the snowpack. It's noteworthy that in 2013, the last such cold and snowy April in the north central U.S., corn planting was 11 days behind the 5 year average nationally. Looking further out at the 8 - 14 day outlook, we see temperatures moving warmer across the Midwest, though they continue to be below normal. As for precipitation, it looks like the southern Plains and the HRW wheat belt could see some decent rains for a chance.

would make significant advances almost taking London. King George's forces would prevail in the defense of London and begin pushing the rebels back to Scotland. Where the Young Pretender's army would be re-provisioned and joined by a large Jacobite contingency. The two armies would meet on a moor called Culloden Moor, on the morning on April 16th. The Duke of Cumberland who led the British forces and was King George's third son would outmaneuver and outman the Jacobite rising. It is estimated that 2,000 Jacobites were killed on this day, and only a recorded fifty dead for the British. Charles Stuart would escape and be forever exiled to Italy. Cumberland would hunt down the fleeing Jacobites and hang or imprison them. Many of the Scottish rebels would be sent to the colonies in America, under the Traitors Transported Act of 1746.



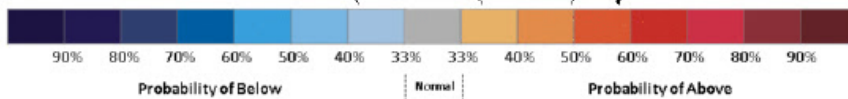
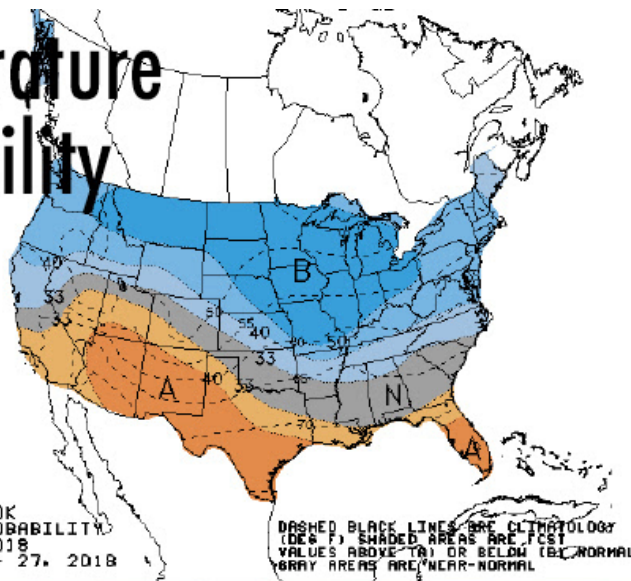
1867, Wilbur Wright - On this day in 1867, a son was born to Milton and Catherine Wright, his name would be Wilbur. One of seven children,

Wilbur and his brother Orville grew up near Millville, Indiana where his father worked as a bishop in the Church of United Brethren of Christ. His father would often travel and would bring the boys back toys, on one occasion he would bring back a toy helicopter made of cork, paper and bamboo, that was powered by a rubber band. This toy was the spark that would take both Wilbur and Orville on a lifelong adventure into aeronautics and flying. Wilbur also had a dream of attending Yale University and was a good student, this dream would meet a tragic end when Wilbur was injured badly in an ice hockey game. He suffered from a severe depression, did not finish high school, canceled his plans for college, and withdrew to his family's home. The two brothers would start their own newspaper in 1889 and then a bicycle repair shop where they fixed and built new bicycles. Both brothers retained their love of flight and aeronautics and were inspired by a German aviator Otto Lilienthal who had made several successful flights in a glider. Having an innate mechanical drive Wilbur and Orville would strive to take flight to the next level, making it safer after their friend Otto died in a glider crash. The Wright brothers would start by building gliders and engineering a rear rudder that controlled the yaw by the year 1902. It was in 1903 that Wilbur and Orville would build the Wright Flyer, the first successful powered aircraft. On December 17, 1903 the Wright brothers would take their greatest achievement, the heavier-than-air aircraft on her maiden flight near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. They were the first to achieve a controlled, sustained flight powered by an engine. Wilbur was the pilot of this first flight, he would take their airplane and fly it for 59 seconds and flying for over 800 feet. Wilbur and Orville would become very wealthy businessmen who took their dream and sold it to the world. Wilbur and his brother are considered the "fathers of modern aviation." Sadly, Wilbur would die of

Temperature Probability



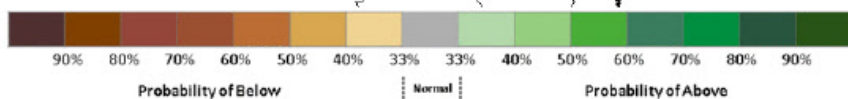
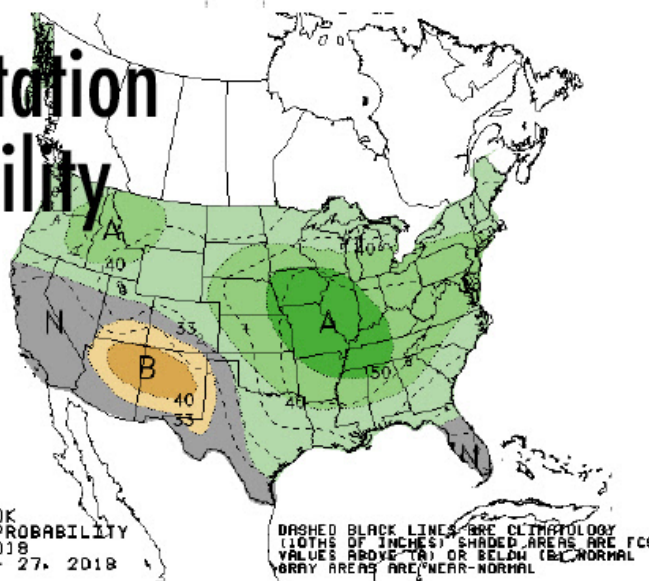
8-14 DAY OUTLOOK
TEMPERATURE PROBABILITY
MADE 13 APR 2018
VALID APR 21 - 27, 2018



Precipitation Probability



8-14 DAY OUTLOOK
PRECIPITATION PROBABILITY
MADE 13 APR 2018
VALID APR 21 - 27, 2018



typhoid fever in 1912 at his home in Dayton, Ohio.



1922, Annie Oakley - On this day in 1922, Annie Oakley would set the women's world record for shooting 100 clay targets in a row from sixteen yards away, in Pinehurst North Carolina. This American folk hero was born Phoebe Ann Moses in 1860 near Darke County Ohio. Her father died early in her childhood, and her mother turned her and her sister over to an Infirmary, where she would spend her childhood being schooled in sewing and caring for sick children. She would be indentured to local farmers when they need help caring for their families. It is during this time that Annie would learn the skill that would take her around the world. Annie was returned to her mother who was newly remarried for a third time at the age of twelve. Continuing to hunt she would become so adept at this skill, that not only did she provided food for her family, she would sell the extras to townspeople. By exploiting this talent, Annie would earn so much that she paid off her mother's home and in 1875 she was entered into her first shooting contest, where she beat the odds-on favorite Frank E. Butler on Thanksgiving day. Butler was part of a traveling shooting act who would place bets with people and challenge their marksmanship. A businessman from the area brought Annie to the show, and challenged Butler, he missed on his 25th shot and the five-foot-tall young lady would win the day. The two would later marry and travel together throughout the west where Annie would meet Sitting Bull in 1884, and he was so impressed by her that he adopted her into his family and gave her the name, "Little Sure Shot." Annie, her husband and Sitting Bull would join and travel with Buffalo Bill's Wild West show for fifteen years. While traveling with the show, Annie would wow the people with her marksmanship, she could shoot the end off a cigarette held in a person's mouth (usually her husband), hit a playing card thrown into the air (called punching the ticket), and famously hit targets at a distance, backwards using a mirror. Oakley would continue to perform for Buffalo Bill's show until 1913, when she and her husband would retire. Being a top earner from the show, she would share her fortune with her family and give donations to orphanages. During World War I, she would help raise money for the American Red Cross by putting on shows and exhibitions. Overcoming the adversity that life would deal Annie, she would break barriers for women, show compassion for children, and raise money for our country in a time of war. Annie Oakley is a true American Hero.

Upcoming Events

Fri. 4/20 - Cattle on Feed

Mon. 4/23 - Cold Storage

Corn prices have moved very little as of late. In fact, prices are very near where we started both the beginning of April and the beginning of March. In other words, we've had some headline movement but we really haven't gone anywhere. For what it's worth, the new-crop contract is about +15 cents higher this year than it was last year at this juncture. From a fundamental perspective, bulls still believe we are going to see strong demand in the weeks and months ahead. Meaning the USDA might ultimately be looking to increase exports as well as feed and residual estimates. Ethanol demand has eased a bit the past couple of weeks but still remains remarkably robust. There's also more talk circulating that delays in U.S. planting could ultimately push more acres towards "preventive plant". There's also the concern that delays could push the crop into more extreme heat during pollination or perhaps dangers associated with an early freeze. I suspect U.S. weather is going to start becoming more and more important. The combination of strong demand and fewer U.S. acres in play seems to be reason enough for the bulls to comfortably forecast lower ending stocks. In fact, I've heard several respected insiders throwing around ending-stock estimates sub-1.5 million bushels. Meaning perhaps longer-term there's a bit more bullish story. Bulls also argue the USDA still needs to lower their South American production estimates for both Argentina and Brazil. Many believe the Brazilian crop is ultimately sub-90 million vs. the current USDA estimate of 92.0 MMTs and the Argentine crop is ultimately closer to 30 MMTs vs. the current USDA estimate of 33 MMTs. The problem is everybody and their brother seems to have jumped on the same bandwagon, which makes me a bit nervous, especially up here at the higher-end of the recent price range. Longer-term, I

believe there's a story and potential for higher prices. Nearby however, bulls might have a hard time finding fresh new headlines to chew on. Looking for extended U.S. weather forecasts to become extremely important. Following this weekends blizzard like conditions to the North, it's hard for me to imagine the pace of planting will be anywhere near "normal".

Average Corn Planting Pace By End of April

5-Year Average Pace Last Year % Planted by April 30th

States Ahead of 5-Year Average Last Year by End of April

<i>Illinois.</i>	<i>47%</i>	<i>63%</i>
<i>Indiana</i>	<i>26%</i>	<i>45%</i>
<i>Missouri</i>	<i>56%</i>	<i>67%</i>
<i>Nebraska</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>34%</i>
<i>North Carolina</i>	<i>77%</i>	<i>79%</i>
<i>Ohio</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>42%</i>
<i>Tennessee</i>	<i>63%</i>	<i>66%</i>
<i>Texas</i>	<i>67%</i>	<i>71%</i>

States Behind 5-Year Average Last Year by End of April

<i>Colorado</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>16%</i>
<i>Iowa</i>	<i>35%</i>	<i>28%</i>
<i>Kansas</i>	<i>41%</i>	<i>38%</i>
<i>Kentucky</i>	<i>45%</i>	<i>42%</i>
<i>Michigan</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>5%</i>
<i>Minnesota</i>	<i>36%</i>	<i>12%</i>
<i>North Dakota</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>3%</i>
<i>Pennsylvania</i>	<i>17%</i>	<i>9%</i>
<i>South Dakota</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>7%</i>
<i>Wisconsin</i>	<i>14%</i>	<i>5%</i>

Tues.-Wed. 5/1-5/2 - FOMC Meeting

Thurs. 5/10 - USDA Supply and Demand

Thurs. 5/17 - Farm Labor

Tues. 5/22 - Cold Storage

Wed. 5/23 - Minutes From 5/2 FOMC Meeting Released

Fri. 5/25 - Cattle on Feed

Mon. 5/28 - Memorial Day - Markets Closed

Tues. 6/12 - USDA Supply and Demand

Tues.-Wed. 6/12-6/13 - FOMC Meeting

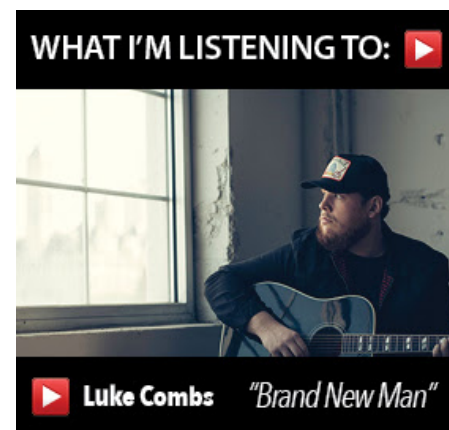
Fri. 6/22 - Cattle on Feed

Fri. 6/22 - Cold Storage

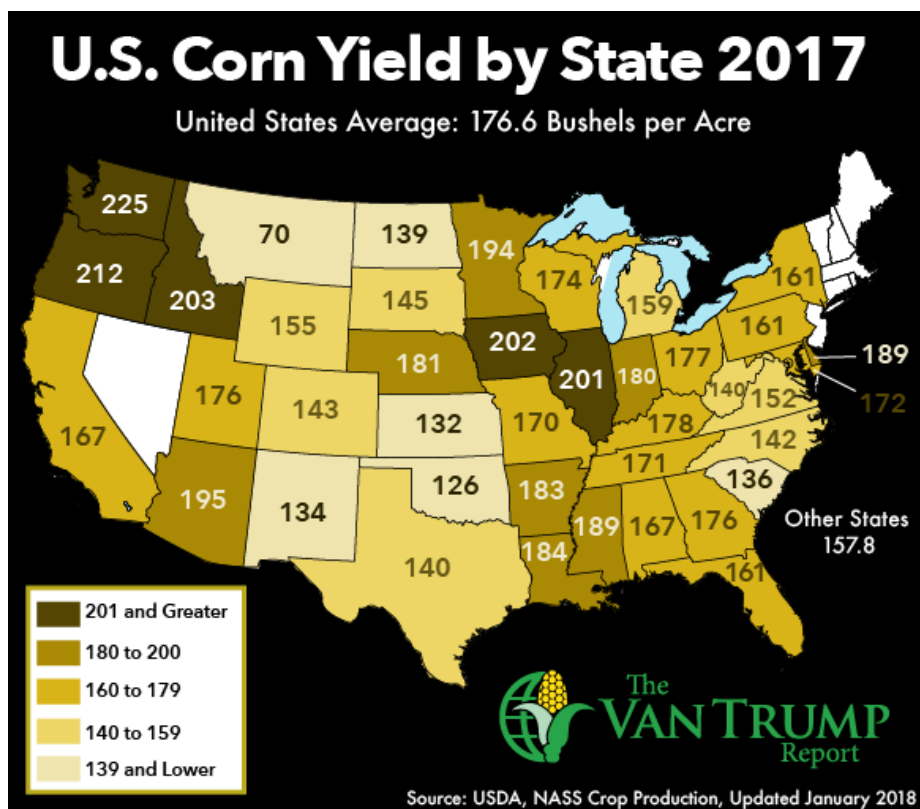
Thurs. 6/28 - Quarterly Hogs and Pigs

Fri. 6/29 - Quarterly Stocks and Acreage

Kevin's Song of the Week



Kevin's Song of the Week



NEXT level THINKING



My goal at "The Van Trump Report" is to help readers better identify the moving parts and dynamics associated with the financial markets, geopolitical events, economics, media and culture that is currently influencing and shaping the direction of the agricultural markets. I like to believe I "Challenge the Traditional" and encourage our readers to think outside the box.

I use story telling techniques that are written in an easy to read format to help convey my current thoughts about business, markets, technology, weather, sports and life. I also like to include links, filter the noise, and pass along in-depth research and information that I believe could challenge your current thought process and help you make more informed decisions. In addition I include valuable lessons I have learned from other traders, executives and investors, along with an occasional inspirational piece about life, family and faith.

What I do not do in "The Van Trump Report" is give specific financial advice or tell individuals how to invest or how to specifically hedge. Remember, this information is being read by hedge fund managers, bankers, CEO's, and Ag leaders around the globe, therefore it's NOT tailored to fit your specific individual needs. For specific investment or hedging advice please seek the help of a licensed representative that can better understand your particular situation, individual needs and overall risk tolerance. This information should ONLY be used for educational and entertainment purposes.

My family and I would like to thank you again for your support!

Kevin Van Trump

What Others Are Saying

"I am a recent subscriber to Kevin's newsletter, but I'm a long-time reader of many other high-profile marketing services. I am particularly impressed with the thorough manner in which Kevin evaluates every economic aspect, both nationally and internationally, that influences commodity prices. His analysis and conclusions are highly thought out and conveyed in layman's terms so that the reader can comprehend the numerous and often complex interrelationships that impact the markets. Kevin is a real attribute to the agricultural sector."

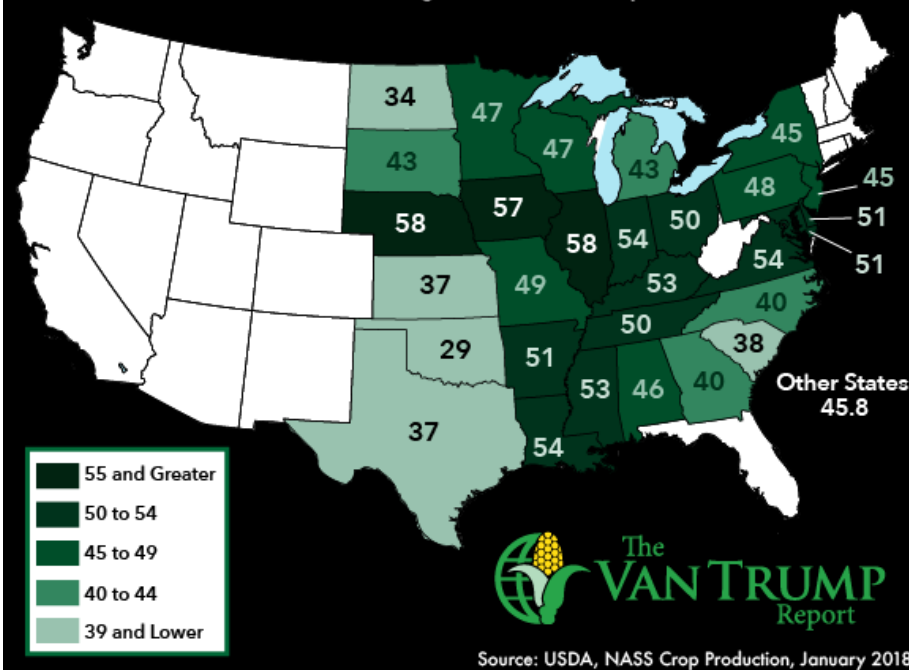
A.M., FDIC

"As a national federal farm policy administrator and commodity producer, I find it critical to keep updated with what is going on in the real world of agriculture and with the domestic and global markets. Of all the services I've have been privy to or have subscribed to over the past 20 years I've found in the past several months of engaging in your "Farm Direction" services to be the best perception and analysis of what is really

Soybean bulls are hoping to soon see a fresh new 52-week high. The JUL18 contract traded to \$10.78 late last week, while the recent high was posted in early-March just north of \$10.90 per bushel. The new-crop NOV18 contract is actually about +\$1.00 higher than the NOV17 contract at this time last year. Bulls continue to point to recent headlines indicating Argentina is a buyer of both Brazilian and U.S. soybeans. U.S. exports seem to be gaining a little momentum and the USDA has our domestic crush forecast record large at 1.97 billion bushels. Keep in mind, Argentine exports are now forecast by the USDA to be the smallest in some 18-years. A few bullish insiders are now saying U.S. ending-stocks have a very real chance of falling to sub-400 million bushels, especially if U.S. producers have to deal with any-type of wide-spread weather hiccup. Many larger bulls are trying to position themselves for possible fireworks in the market post-July. In other words, Sep-Oct-Nov could get extremely volatile if U.S. production waivers just slightly. On the flip-side, bears continue to point towards the Brazilian crop being record large and perhaps getting a bit larger as harvest progresses. There is also talk of U.S. producers perhaps ultimately planting more soybeans as weather complications delay corn planting and push more acres towards beans. We certainly agree that current prices also help provide the incentive. I truly respect the longer-term upside potential of this market as Argentine supply comes out of the equation. My question revolves more around nearby price action and if we can continue to find fresh new bullish news to offset the negative tweets and political headlines associated with trade wars and tariffs? It just feels like geopolitical news and headlines are trumping weather and traditional fundamentals from both South America and the U.S. Staying extremely patient, believing there is ultimately more upside, just not sure it happens any time soon?

U.S. Soybean Yield by State 2017

United States Average: 49.1 Bushels per Acre



happening in today's world. Not only here in the United States, but across the globe as well. US farmers need this type of help and information to assist them in their daily efforts. I commend you for a job well done. Please let me know if I can ever be of any help or assistance to you in the future..."

L.T., Assistant Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs USDA

My Own Personal Truisms

"Not To Trade, is often considered a good trading decision..."

"First Rule of HOLES: When you are in one stop digging..."

"Every loser in Vegas, always walks away from the table thinking he could have done better, the winners on the other hand leave while on top..."

"Bulls make money, Bears make money, but pigs get slaughtered..."

"The markets ability to remain irrational can often times last much longer than your ability to remain solvent..."

"I'm more of a long-term player, therefore you will not see me give many short-term suggestions or trade ideas. One of my most important rules is that I always follow my long-term direction. Therefore, as long as I am "bullish" a market I will only play that particular market in one of three ways.

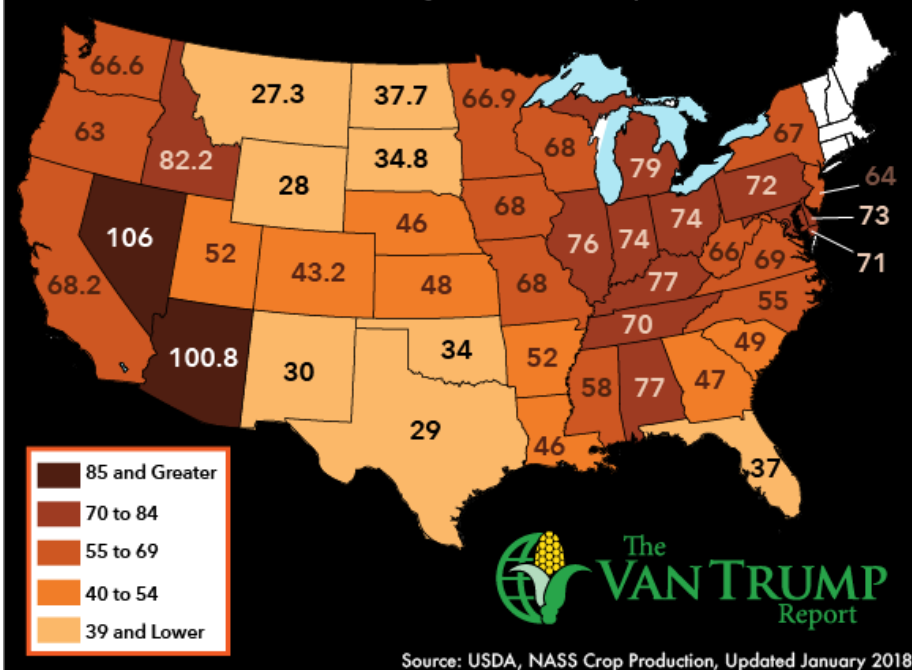
- Option #1 - Conservatively long.
- Option #2 - Aggressively long.
- Option #3 - Sitting on the sideline.

I never initiate a "short" position in a market that I am "bullish" longer-term, nor do I initiate a "long" position in a market I am "bearish" longer-term.

Wheat prices were mostly mixed last week with SRW contract trading near even, HRW prices down about -10 cents and Spring prices up about +10 cents. Bears continue to point to weak fundamentals and technical difficulties on the charts as reason enough to stay aggressively short. Bulls continue to talk about weather concerns in Australia, Canada and here at home in the U.S. The southern Plains are still battling dry conditions and areas to the north are seeing abnormally cold conditions and hard freezes. Keep in mind, many states to the north just dealt with blizzard like conditions this weekend. Meaning, today's USDA weekly crop-condition estimates should be interesting. Bulls are also thinking the recent round of difficult weather could add to concerns about "abandonment" and a reduction in planted Spring wheat acres. From a spec perspective, the bearish global supply-side fundamentals are tough to overcome and continue to keep a lid on most nearby rallies. On the flip side, I don't like the thought of being a bold short in this environment, simply because there are still too many possible weather "wild-cards" in the mix. Staying on the sideline fundamentally bearish but understanding some price spikes could occur in the coming days if fresh new weather headlines continue to evolve. As a producer, I like the thought of using any weather rallies as an opportunity to reduce more long-term price-risk.

U.S. Wheat Yield by State 2017

United States Average: 46.3 Bushels per Acre



Farm Direction
RECIPES

★ **FAMILY FAVORITES** ★
-SENT IN BY OUR READERS-

Bananas Foster French Toast

[CLICK TO SEE RECIPE](#)



> 200 Million Eggs Recalled On Salmonella Fears: *The eggs were distributed from a farm in Hyde County, North Carolina, which, Food Safety News said, produces 2.3 million eggs per day from 3 million laying hens. The eggs reached consumers in Florida, New York, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, New Jersey, Virginia, Colorado, South Carolina, and West Virginia. It is the largest recall of eggs in the United States since 2010, according to the report. They were sold under the brand names Country Daybreak; Crystal Farms; Coburn Farms; Sunshine Farms; Glenview; Great Value; as well as at Walmart and Food Lion stores. (Source: NY Times)*

> Old Electronics New Role: *In 2016, \$18.38bn worth of metals were extracted from recycled materials, meeting roughly 22% of South Korea's total metal demand, according to a report by the Korea Institute of Industrial Technology. Now it is part of a supply chain for some of the world's major battery makers, including Samsung SDI and LG Chem. As China's aggressive hunt for overseas cobalt and lithium for electric vehicles pushes up prices and causes a global shortage of the key metals, South Korea is increasingly turning to such 'urban mining' to recover cobalt, lithium and other scarce metals from electronic waste. (Source: independent)*

> Record U.S. Oil Production With Fewer Rigs: *U.S. oil production continues to break records. Output jumped above 10.5 mb/d last week. Yet all the output gains are occurring with just a fraction of the rigs from years ago. For instance, Texas is producing much more oil than it was in 2014, with 25 percent fewer rigs. (Source: OilandEnergyInsider)*

> Russian Wheat Export Duty To Remain Unchanged: *According to a statement made by Russia's vice premier, the fate of wheat export duty after July 1 is still being discussed at the government, but its rate will surely not be raised, reports UkrAgroConsult. The zero duty on Russian wheat exports expires on July 1. Then the duty may be either extended or abolished. Russia reduced its wheat export duty to zero for the period from September 23, 2016 until July 1, 2018. (Source: blackseagrains)*

> Walmart's \$477 Million Renovation: *Walmart plans to remodel 500 stores and open 20 new locations across more than two dozen states, a move that's part of its \$11 billion capital expenditure, according to a company release. The majority of the store*

remodels will be in Texas and Florida, where the retailer will spend \$477 million to revamp 82 locations and open 14 new ones. (Source:fooddive)

> Key To Stopping Waterhemp Could Be A Battle of the Sexes: *University of Illinois researchers are investigating genetic control of waterhemp and Palmer amaranth. Since water hemp and Palmer amaranth use sexual reproduction, requiring male and female plants, thinning populations to just males could drastically reduce the weed's effect on farm fields. If every mating only produces male offspring, in just a few generations every individual in the population will be male, ceasing reproduction, theoretically. It's an interesting strategy and similar to one used in mosquitos to help their populations and the spread of Zika. (AgWeb)*

> Insect Farming Continues To Grow: *The small but growing insect farming sector has captured attention and investments from some heavyweights in the \$400 billion-a-year animal feed business, including U.S. agricultural powerhouse Cargill Inc, feed supplier and farm products and services company Wilbur-Ellis Co and Swiss-based Buhler Group, which makes crop processing machinery. Fast food giant McDonald's is also studying using insects for chicken feed to reduce reliance on soy protein. We hear more about insects as protein in the news, so I suspect it's coming to a restaurant near you soon. Read more [HERE](#).*

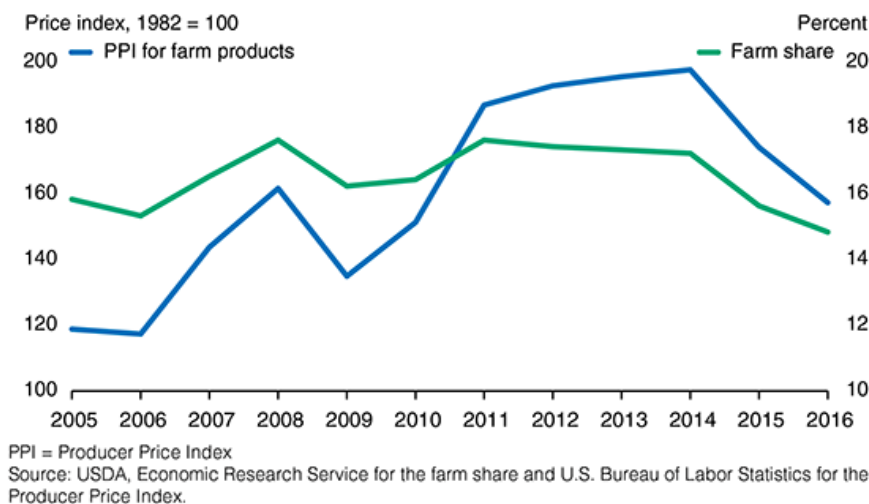
> How Good Is the Quality of U.S. Corn Going Out For Export? *The quality of corn assembled for export early in the 2017/18 marketing year was better or equal to U.S. No. 2 on all grade factors based on data reported in the recently released seventh edition of the U.S. Grains Council's Corn Export Cargo Quality Report. Test weights were the same as 2016/17, which was overall good. Similar protein content, lower starch and higher oil concentrations than 2016/17. Aflatoxin and vomitoxin were below U.S. FDA levels. See whole report [HERE](#).*

> U.S. To Export Pork to Argentina For First Time In 26 Years: *Argentina had blocked imports of U.S. pork for about 26 years, citing animal health concerns. The deal is expected to open up a potential \$10-million-per-year market for U.S. pork producers. The U.S. is the world's leading pork exporter and currently exports about 27% of its domestic pork production. Japan, Mexico and Canada are the top three destinations for U.S. pork. Read more at [Reuters](#).*

> Louisiana Issues Quarantine To Control Marsh-Killing Bug: *Near the mouth of the Mississippi River, roseau cane is everywhere and it's very important as the cane binds the soil so that the main navigation channel of the river doesn't wash away. But these marshes are in danger as 200,000 acres of cane have been destroyed by the invasive roseau cane mealy bug. Officials have issued a quarantine to make sure the bug doesn't spread further, worrying it could start affecting agricultural crops, like sugar cane. They are hoping the quarantine buys them time till they can figure out how to eradicate the bug. (NPR)*

> "Farm Share" of U.S. Dollar Falls Again: *On average, U.S. farmers received 14.8 cents for farm commodity sales from each dollar spent on domestically-produced food in 2016, down from 15.5 cents in 2015. Known as the farm share, this amount is at its lowest level for the period 1993 to 2016, and coincides with a steep drop in 2016 average prices received by U.S. farmers, as measured by the Producer Price Index for farm products. (USDA)*

2016 Food dollar (nominal): Marketing Bill



FROM THE FIELD

Southeast Kentucky - We have not started our planting for this year. The soil temps earlier this week were in the high 40's which is much better than we had been. I feel more comfortable with soil temps above 50 degrees before planting. We are all no-till so no worries there and we will leave our rotation the same being 50/50 corn to beans. We will double-crop beans behind the winter wheat. We do not have any full season beans just the double crop. Since the 2012 disastrous crop, we have seen very good production with steady increases in yields. Last years corn crop averaged 210bpa and it wasn't that many years ago that a 100bpa was good. The beans made 56bpa which works for us behind the wheat. We had a wet winter here which should put us in good shape for the row crops but the wheat has some drowned out spots.

Southern Manitoba - It has been a long cold winter with current temps hovering around 0 degrees F. We did have snow around here three or four days ago but for the most part, it has been a dry winter. With this current weather, I am thinking that we are a good three weeks off before the planters start to roll. I took a drive recently and the tree lines still have a lot snow in them that needs to melt. We will typically plant in May with a longer season variety bean. We are in the Red River Valley area and do seem to get a few more heat units than our neighbors. Our bean APH is 37bpa and last year we made 42bpa as we had better than expected rains in August. I think we are similar to the states as far as the beans needing to catch some late rains to finish. There are more guys adding soybean acres as the genetics improve to handle conditions that we have here. We do not grow any corn but a lot of guys do. The corn guys that have pretty good dirt can see 170bpa yields.

Southwest Wisconsin - We had 3" of rain recently as we are a ways off from hitting the fields. It's been a long winter and everyone is hoping it ends soon. I don't anticipate any changes to planting at this time but I will say the forecast doesn't paint a bright picture. We produce a lot a hay that goes to our cows and many dairies in the area. We own most of what we farm and are surviving the

environment just fine for now. There is some land moving at around \$8,600 and cash rents run between \$125-\$200.



Methane Tracking Satellite Will Improve Measurements: Tracking methane in the air is hard because it rises and spreads from the source. Meaning measurements taken on the ground and from planes vary all over the place. Steven Hamburg, a climate scientist at EDF says the satellite, called MethaneSAT, is the best thing yet for quantifying and tracking the gas: "It will be able to see where it's happening and how much, across the globe — not just the big sources, but all the sources collectively, and understand the scale of the problem. That's the kind of data we don't have anywhere in the world." I'm told, the satellite will be about the size of a beer keg and is due for launch in three years, with funding coming from wealthy philanthropists. Read more [HERE](#).

Google AI Can Pick Voices Out Of A Crowd: Humans are usually good at isolating a single voice in a crowd, but computers? Not so much -- just ask anyone trying to talk to a smart speaker at a house party. Google is currently working on a solution and "exploring opportunities" to use this feature in its products. I'm told some potential applications include: helping you understand someone talking in a crowded room, for speech enhancement in video recording, and there are big implications for accessibility meaning it could lead to camera-linked hearing aids that boost the sound of whoever's in front of you, and more effective closed captioning. Read more [HERE](#).

Sobering Truth On Alcohol: An international study has found that adults should not have more than one alcoholic drink per day. Adults, both men and women, should not drink more than 100 grams of alcohol per week, according to an international study published in the Lancet medical journal on Thursday. According to the study, those who consume more than that increase their risk of stroke and heart failure and can expect to die sooner than those who drink less. Find out more from the study [HERE](#).

Honesty As The Best Policy: Almost every company claims they promote values of honesty, transparency and trust. However, as recent scandals have shown, what an organization claims and how it behaves are not always aligned. The downsides of dishonesty would seem obvious, but the continued prevalence in the corporate world begs the question: Why are leaders and their employees engaging in it? Is honesty really the best policy? Read more [HERE](#) about what Dr. Robert Cialdini, author of *Influence and Pre-Suasion*, has concluded through his research.

150 Years Of Technological Innovations: The last 150 years have seen the most remarkable advancement of technology in history. Electric lighting, cars, plastic, the telephone, and television, while newer innovations such as the internet have spurred ever more rapid societal development. Technological advances have boosted productivity by allowing workers to get more done in a day and this helps to increase output and boosts economic growth. In its recent Equity Gilt Study, which is a massive annual report by Barclays chronicling the bank's thoughts on important topics in finance and economics, the bank focused heavily on new technologies and particularly on cryptocurrencies and artificial intelligence. Read more [HERE](#).

FIGURE 1

From the printing press to the global internet, technology has evolved, and human societies with it

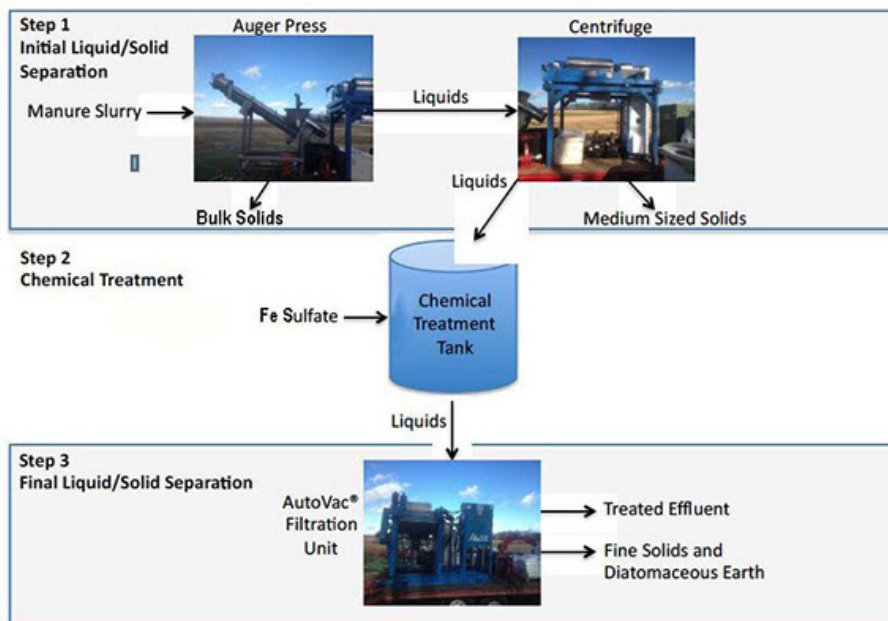


① 1890 and earlier 1440 Gutenberg Printing Press 1480 Sea astrolabe 1589 Mechanical knitting machine 1608 Telescope 1630 Slide rule 1765 Watt's steam engine 1790 Sewing machine 1816 Telegraph 1867 Dynamite 1879 Light bulb ② 1891–1910 1893 Diesel Engine 1895 X-ray 1898 Polyethylene / Plastic 1903 Gas turbine 1909 Television broadcast	③ 1911–1930 1911 Cloud chamber 1915 Tank 1928 Penicillin ④ 1931–1950 1931 Electron microscope 1933 FM radio 1935 Nylon 1938 Nuclear fission 1941 Polyester 1947 Hydraulic fracturing Transistor 1948 Atomic clock ⑤ 1951–1970 1953 Video tape recorder 1956 Hard disk drive	1957 IBM 610 Sputnik 1 1960 Laser 1967 ATM (Barclays) 1970 Pocket calculator ⑥ 1971–1990 1971 Email Intel 4004 1972 Magnavox Odyssey 1973 Capacitive touchscreen (CERN) 1975 Altair 8800 (Microcomputer revolution and Internet protocol suite) 1980 Flash memory 1982 CD-ROM 1984 Cell phone 1990 World Wide Web Hubble Space Telescope	⑦ 1991–present 1992 Text messaging 1993 Apple Newton Mosaic (Web browser) 1995 DVD Windows 95 1996 USB ports 1997 Netflix 1998 Google 2000 Bluetooth 2001 iPod 2003 iTunes Music Store 2004 Facebook 2005 YouTube 2006 Twitter 2009 Bitcoin 2013 Bitcoin ATM
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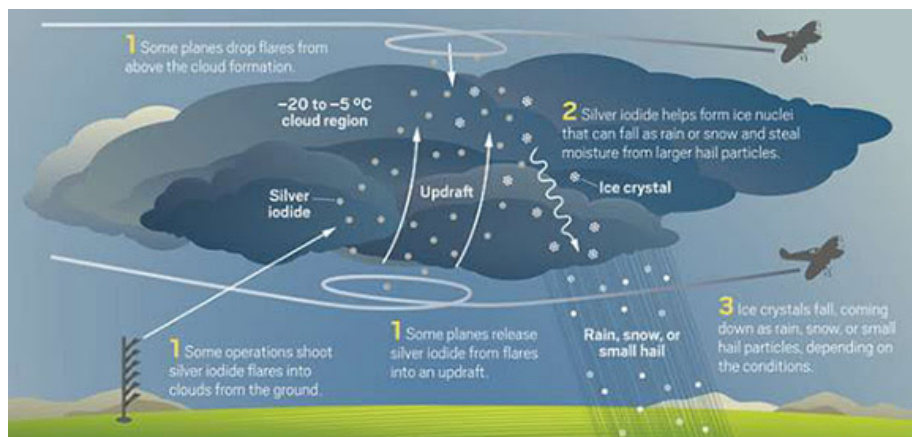
New Invention Helps Prevent Phosphorus Runoff

Researchers from Penn State and the USDA have developed a system capable of removing most all the phosphorus from stored livestock manure. Keep in mind that runoff from land application of manure is responsible for over 65% of the marred water conditions of U.S. rivers, which has left dead zones in not only the Chesapeake Bay but also the Gulf of Mexico. The development of MAPHEX or MANure PHosphorus EXtraction is a three-stage process which separates the liquid-solid with an auger press and centrifuge before chemically treating the slurry with the addition of iron sulfate. The third stage involves filtering the contents with diatomaceous earth. The idea is to process manure from storage tanks or pits on dairy farms. I'm told the technology could be a game changer if it can be modified to lower operating costs. Currently, the expense involved with stage three and diatomaceous earth is cost prohibitive in bringing MAPHEX to market. As it stands, the current process would cost approximately \$750 per head per year which no one will be paying when there are no current regulations on phosphorus runoff and no subsidies to help pay for it. It's worth noting that when tested at 150 and 2,700-cow dairies, nearly 98% of the phosphorus was removed from manure slurries, along with 93 percent of the solids. The benefits go beyond the removal of phosphorus from our rivers as researchers anticipate that refinement of the process will create beneficial uses of the solids removed from the manure—such as for plant bedding, compost and fertilizer. Which will also assist in bringing down the costs. From what I understand, there may be an opportunity for someone as both Penn State and the USDA are not looking to enter into a business arrangement but rather are looking to license the technology. Considering the technology could be adapted to swine manure as well, it might be worth looking into for diversification. (Source: phys.org)



China Is Building A Massive Rain-Making System

China is planning the implementation of a large-scale weather changing project to ensure a consistent rain supply. Once in place, the system has the potential to increase rainfall in the region by up to 25 trillion gallons per year. This is supposedly the world's biggest single weather changing project ever attempted. The system is created from a network of solid fuel burning chambers that produce silver iodide, a compound with a structure much like ice that can be used in cloud seeding. From what I understand, tens of thousands of the small burning chambers will be installed across the Tibetan Plateau in an attempt to increase rainfall in an area three times as big as Spain (620,000 square miles). The system relies on small low-tech chambers which burns solid fuel that produces silver iodide. As wind sweeps up the mountain, the particles are swept up into the air where they form rain clouds. The system has been developed by China's state-owned Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation. What the Chinese are hoping to do is to intercept Indian Monsoon rain clouds coming over the region. Officials in China have spoken about this project saying it is critical to solving China's water shortage problem. However, there are many other uses China has for cloud seeding. If you remember, China has used weather altering technology before to keep the opening ceremony of the 2008 Olympic Games free from rainfall. There's also a more sinister use for this technology as the system was originally developed by the corporation as part of China's defense program. China, the U.S., and Russia have all reportedly developed weather changing technology to possibly hinder opposition in times of warfare by causing drought, flood or other natural disaster. Ultimately, with their air pollution problems and acute water shortage, China appears to be a natural for becoming the world's leading cloud-seeder. (Source: [Interesting Engineering](#))



The 122nd Boston Marathon

Today is the 122nd running of the Boston Marathon, the world's oldest and one of the best-known road racing events. It is also one of six World Marathon Majors. Along with the 30,000 participants that are registered to compete in the 26.2 mile run, event organizers expect over one million cheering spectators. There are so many cool and inspiring stories and traditions surrounding the event, I thought I would share a few:

From Baseball Fans To Race Fans: Every year since 1903, the Boston Red Sox play a morning home game on Marathon Monday. When the game ends, the crowd empties into Kenmore Square to cheer on the runners as they reach the final line, making for a great day for both competitors and spectators.

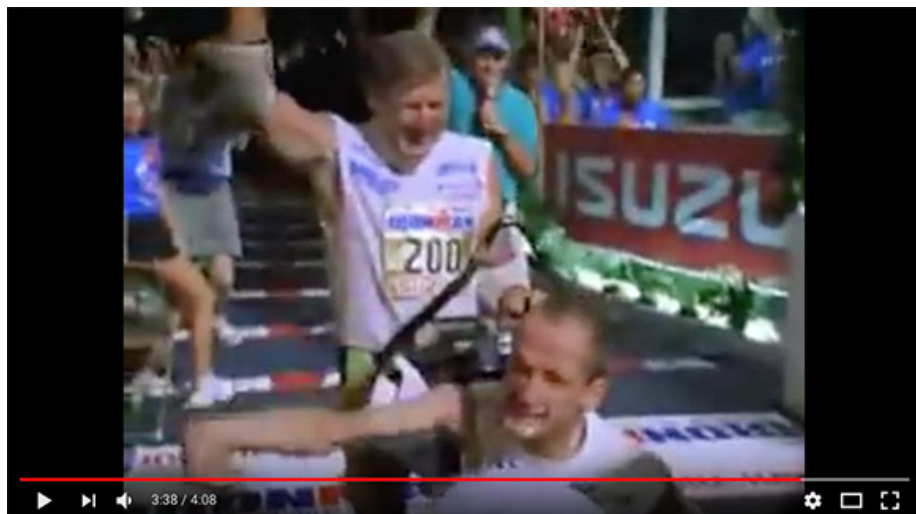
A Look Back At The First Race: The first Boston Marathon was run on April 19, 1897. At that time, it was known as The American Marathon, with a course that measured 24.5 miles. John J. McDermott of New York finished first out of a 15-man field in 2:55:10. Boston's now iconic course from Hopkinton to Boylston Street was set in 1924, when it was changed to 26.2 miles to match the Olympic standard.

How Fast Do They Run Today? The men's course record belongs to Geoffrey Mutai, who in 2011 ran a then world record time of just over 2-hours (2:03:02) all sub-5 minute miles. Buzunesh Deba holds the women's record at 2 hours 19 minutes and 56 seconds, set in 2014.

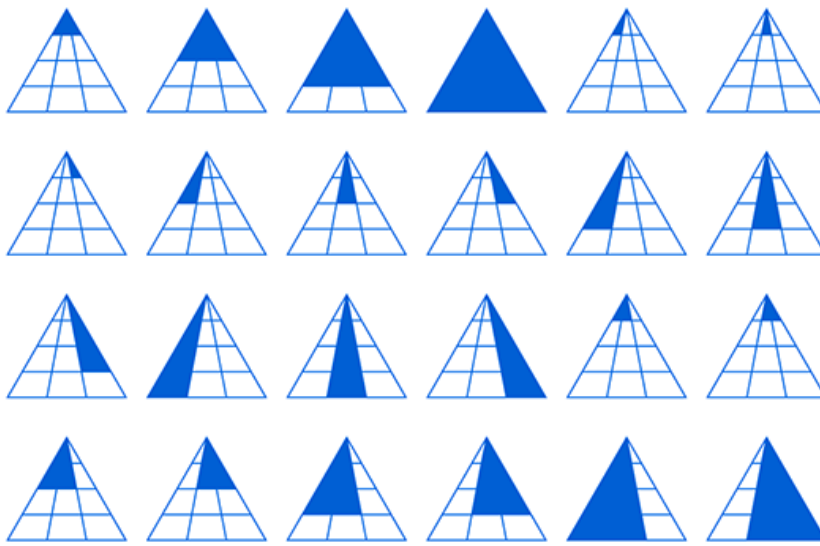
Fifth Anniversary Of Boston Bombing: This year marks the fifth anniversary of the bombing which killed three and injured over 250 people. I'm told a Massachusetts museum will commemorate the anniversary by displaying hundreds of running shoes left at the finish line. The memorial will be a part of an exhibit at the Attleboro Arts Museum entitled 'A Long-Distance Relationship: The 26.2 Mile Journey'.

Father-Son Dream Team: Nobody elicits cheers like Dick and Rick Hoyt, a father-son dream team from Boston, who between 1977 and 2014 regularly participated in grueling athletic endeavors such as marathon races and triathlon competitions together, even though (due to complications at birth) Rick cannot walk or talk. The 78-year-old Dick and 57-year-old Rick completed 32 Boston Marathons together. The pair has since completed over 1,100 races, including six Ironman competitions. They also biked and ran across the U.S. over a 45-day span in 1992. Their well-documented story is both legendary and inspirational to people all over the world. The years of competition and travel certainly took a toll on Dick's body. Due in large part to his increasing back pain, he decided 2014 would be his last marathon pushing Rick. The original plan was for the 2013 Boston Marathon to be Dick and Rick's last together, but they were not able to finish the race due to the bombings. They then decided to come back again in 2014 to complete the course one final time. This year family friend Bryan Lyons will be running with 53-year-old Rick.

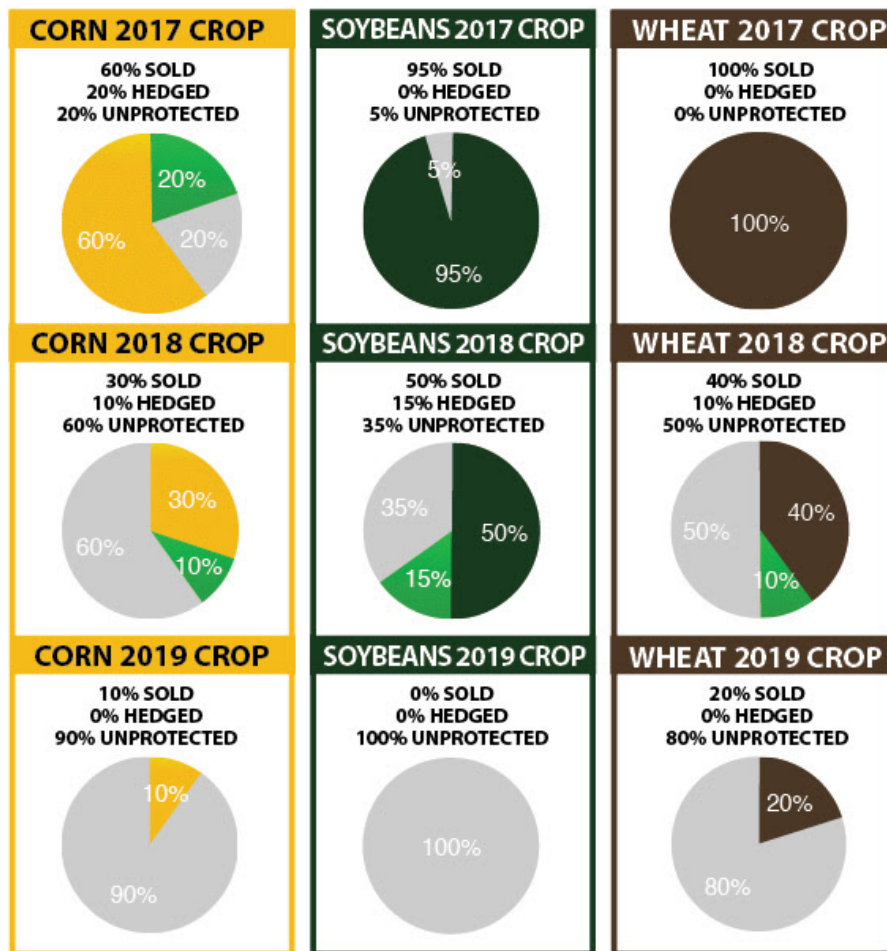
Below is a tribute video to Dick & Rick Hoyt Click [HERE](#)



ANSWER to riddle: There are 24 triangles.



CASH SALES & HEDGING TOTALS



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