

GOOD MORNING: 05/23/18 Farm Direction - VanTrump Report

2 messages

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Wed, May 23, 2018 at 6:39 AM



"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us." - Charles Dickens "A Tale of Two Cities"

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2018

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Morning Summary: Stock traders are now wondering if the U.S. will actually ink a new trade deal with China, and if the schedule upcoming Summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on June 12 will actually take place. There was some talk and uncertainty late yesterday about both items mentioned above. President Trump is saying he is not fully satisfied with the Chinese trade negotiations and that we still have a long ways to go. I suspect we will learn a lot more next week after Wilbur Ross and a few other senior U.S. officials again travel to China in an attempt to work out the details. President Trump also made some comments about the upcoming meeting with North Korea and the fact there's still a chance it might not happen. I'm also hearing some rumors and talk out of Washington that a longtime business partner of Michael Cohen, President Donald Trump's personal lawyer, has agreed to cooperate with prosecutors. As for more traditional economic data, the trade today will be digesting the "minutes" from the Fed's most recent meeting as well as the latest U.S. new homes sales data. Both reports are expected to confirm a somewhat robust U.S. economy. Crude Oil prices pushed to another fresh nearby high yesterday as declining Venezuelan output and the prospect of renewed U.S. sanctions on Iran continue to apply pressure and keep prices supported. There are some reports circulating this morning that OPEC may decide to increase crude production as soon as next month due to worries that Iranian and Venezuelan supply could fall drastically. This certainly something I will be monitoring closely. For what it's worth, the S&P 500 is now nearly +75% higher than its 2007 peak before the Global Financial Crisis. A few big well known names have helped the U.S. market in a big way. In fact during the past five years, Facebook is up nearly +700%, Amazon up nearly +500%, Apple up nearly +200%, Google and Microsoft up +150%. Bottom-line, I still like the stocks I own, which are all of those mentioned above, better than I do the overall market. I'm staying a conservative long-term bull but have clearly become more selective and less diversified in my portfolio. Don't forget, the market will probably start thinning out during the next couple of days as traders leave early for the extended Memorial Day holiday weekend. Position yourself accordingly...

Banks Post Best Returns In 10 Years: *U.S. banks notched a record quarterly profit to start 2018, newly released data show, a result of the new tax law, rising interest rates and an improving economy. The industry, spanning banks from global giants such as JPMorgan Chase, to tiny community lenders, reported +\$56 billion in net income in the first quarter, up +27.5% from the prior year's quarter, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. recently reported. The new U.S. tax law gave banks a boost, but profits still would have been \$49.4 billion without it, the FDIC said. The previous record was the second-quarter profit of \$48.1 billion last year. That profit surge, driven by dual jumps in trading revenue and lending income, have helped banks comfortably exceed their cost of capital for the first time in over a decade. (Source: Wall Street Journal)*

U.S. Employment Continues To Impress: *For those who might not be familiar, "Initial Jobless Claims" refers to a report that measures the number of jobless claims filed by individuals seeking to receive jobless benefits. In other words,*

Today In History

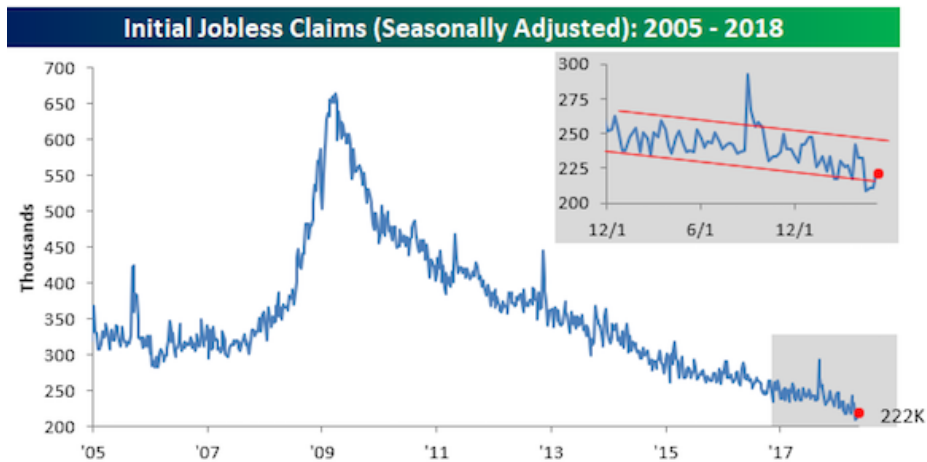


1701, Captain Kidd - At London's Execution Dock, British privateer William Kidd, popularly known as Captain Kidd, is hanged for piracy and murder. Born in Strathclyde, Scotland, Kidd established himself as a sea captain before settling in New York in 1690, where he bought property and married. At various times he was commissioned by New York and other American colonies to rid the coast of enemy privateers. In 1695, while on a trip to London, the recently appointed governor of New York commissioned him to defend English ships from pirates in the Red Sea. In 1696, Kidd sailed to New York aboard the Adventure Galley, enlisted men for the mission, and set sail for the Indian Ocean. The expedition met with little success and failed to capture a major prize until February 1698, when the Quedah Merchant, an Indian vessel allegedly sailing under a French pass, was taken. Word of Kidd's capture of the boat, which was loaded with gold, jewels, silk, sugar, and guns, aroused significant controversy in Britain, as the ship had an English captain. Suspicions that he had turned to piracy were apparently confirmed when he sailed to St. Mary's, Madagascar, an infamous pirate haven. From there, he traveled to the West Indies on the Quedah Merchant, where he learned of the piracy charges against him. Intending to clear his name, he sailed to New York and delivered himself to the colonial authorities, claiming that the vessels he had attacked were lawful prizes. He was arrested and taken to London, charged, found guilty and hanged for piracy and murder. In later years, a colorful legend grew up around the story of William Kidd, including reports of lost buried treasure that fortune seekers have pursued for centuries.



1934, Bonnie & Clyde - It was this day in 1934 that notorious criminals Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow are

those who are heading to the unemployment office. Many people don't realize how amazing the current run in U.S. employment has been. Bespoke Investment Group ran an article this week that really puts it into perspective. Last week was the fourth straight week that jobless claims have been below 225K, it was the 32nd straight week that claims have been below 250K, and the 167th straight week that claims have been below 300K. In fact, the four-week moving average dropped to sub-214K. That's a new low for the cycle, dating all the way back to December 1969! I think the picture tells the story. Just look at how many initial jobless claims were being filed in 2009 compared to today. (Source: Bespoke Investment Group)



shot to death by Texas and Louisiana state police while driving a stolen car near Sailes, Louisiana. Beginning in early 1932, Parker and Barrow set off on a two-year crime spree, evading local police in rural Texas, Louisiana and New Mexico before drawing the attention of federal authorities at the Bureau of Investigation (as the FBI was then known). Though the couple was believed to have been responsible for 13 murders by the time they were killed, along with several bank robberies and burglaries, the only charge the Bureau could chase them on was a violation of the National Motor Vehicle Act, which gave federal agents the authority to pursue suspects accused of interstate transportation of a stolen automobile. The car in question was a Ford, stolen in Illinois and found abandoned in Pawhuska, Oklahoma. Inside, agents discovered a prescription bottle later traced to the Texas home of Clyde Barrow's aunt. As authorities stepped up the pressure to catch the outlaw couple, the heavily armed Barrow and Parker were joined at various times by the convicted murderer Raymond Hamilton (whom they helped break out of jail in 1934), William Daniel Jones and Clyde's brother Ivan "Buck" Barrow and his wife, Blanche. In the spring of 1934, federal agents traced the Barrow-Parker gang to a remote county in southwest Louisiana, where the Methvin family was said to have been aiding and abetting the outlaws for over a year. Bonnie and Clyde, along with some of the Methvins, had staged a party at Black Lake, Louisiana, on the night of May 21. Two days later, just before dawn, a posse of police officers from Texas and Louisiana laid an ambush along the highway near Sailes, Louisiana. When Parker and Barrow appeared, going some 85 mph in another stolen Ford—a four-door 1934 Deluxe with a V-8 engine, the officers let loose with a hail of bullets, leaving the couple no chance of survival despite the small arsenal of weapons they had with them.

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: I'm a rare case where today comes before yesterday. What am I?

Weather in the Corn Belt has seen warmth favor a rapid pace of corn and soybean emergence and early-season growth. During the week ending May 20, more than one-third of the intended corn acreage was planted in South Dakota and Minnesota. Minnesota producers were also able to plant 37% of their soybeans, with overall progress advancing from 11 to 48% between May 13 and 20. On the Plains, warm weather is promoting crop emergence and development. A few showers and thunderstorms are developing across the northern Plains, while overnight rain locally boosted topsoil moisture on the southern Plains. On May 20, topsoil moisture was rated 63% short to very short in Texas. In the South, locally heavy showers have occurred in a few areas primarily east of the Mississippi River this week. During the week ending May 20, topsoil moisture rated short to very short plunged more than 50% points in Georgia (from 76% to 18%) and South Carolina (from 73% to 20%). Numerous disturbances will maintain unsettled, showery conditions. Specifically, showers over the eastern U.S. will shift southward as the week progresses, becoming more concentrated over the Southeast. Meanwhile, scattered showers will affect areas from the interior Northwest into the upper Midwest. As the week progresses, heat will build across much of the country, starting in the North. Exceptions will include the lower Southeast, which will be cloudy and rainy and California and the Great Basin which will experience a cool surge.

Are We Skipping Spring? This weekend ushers in the unofficial start to summer with the Memorial Day holiday. This year, that will also mean some summer like



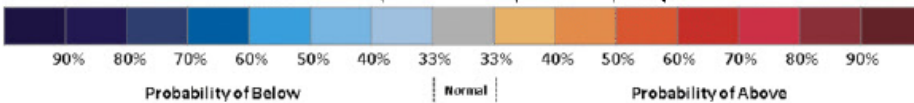
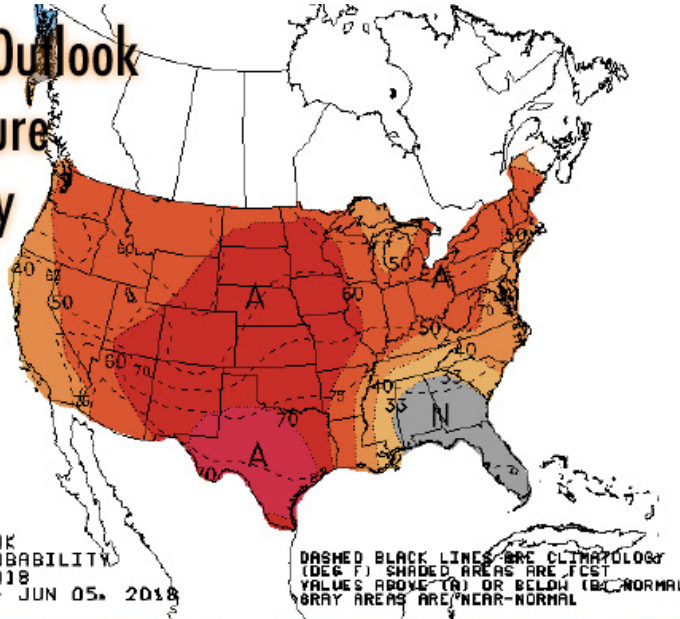
1960 - Adolf Eichmann - Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion announces to the world that Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann has been captured and will stand trial in Israel. Eichmann, the Nazi SS officer who organized Adolf Hitler's "final solution of the Jewish question," was seized by Israeli agents in Argentina on May 11 and smuggled to Israel nine days later. Eichmann was born in Solingen, Germany, in 1906. In November 1932, he joined the Nazi's elite SS (Schutzstaffel) organization, whose members came to have broad responsibilities in Nazi Germany, including policing, intelligence, and the enforcement of Adolf Hitler's anti-Semitic policies. Eichmann steadily rose in the SS hierarchy, and with the German annexation of Austria in 1938, he was sent to Vienna with the mission of ridding the city of Jews. He set up an efficient Jewish deportment center and in 1939 was sent to Prague on a similar mission.

conditions. If you look at the forecast for the next two weeks, it looks like that pattern will continue with much warmer temperatures across the entire Midwest Plains and South. Across the Corn Belt, daytime highs should be well into the 80s over the next two weeks, including the holiday weekend. This will also be a relatively dry period as well if you look at the next 14 days. We are and have been in a dryer trend. The warmer than average weather this month has been a significant contrast with April, which was one of the coldest on record across the nation. In fact, if the forecast holds up next week, we will close out with this being the warmest May since 1981. Looking at the month-to-date map, you can see daily temperatures have averaged anywhere 5 to 10 degrees F higher than normal all across the southern Plains, and the Corn Belt.

8-14 day Outlook Temperature Probability



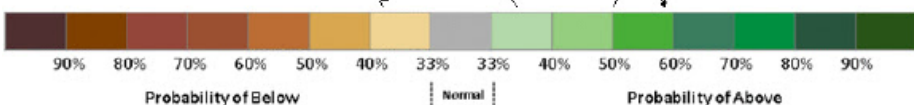
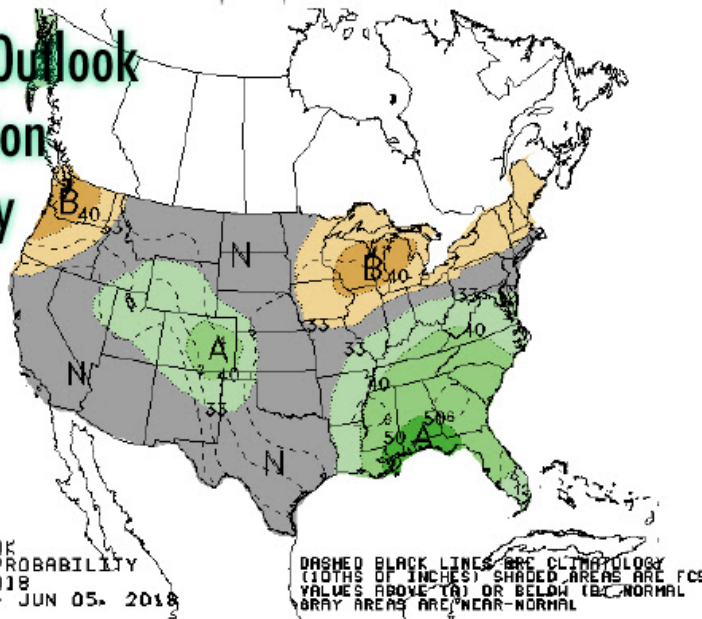
8-14 DAY OUTLOOK
TEMPERATURE PROBABILITY
MADE 22 MAY 2018
VALID MAY 30 - JUN 05, 2018



8-14 day Outlook Precipitation Probability



8-14 DAY OUTLOOK
PRECIPITATION PROBABILITY
MADE 22 MAY 2018
VALID MAY 30 - JUN 05, 2018



That year, Eichmann was appointed to the Jewish section of the SS central security office in Berlin. In January 1942, Eichmann met with top Nazi officials at the Wannsee Conference near Berlin for the purpose of planning a "final solution of the Jewish question," as Nazi leader Hermann Goring put it. The Nazis decided to exterminate Europe's Jewish population. Eichmann was appointed to coordinate the identification, assembly, and transportation of millions of Jews from occupied Europe to the Nazi death camps, where Jews were gassed or worked to death. He carried this duty out with horrifying efficiency, and between three to four million Jews perished in the extermination camps before the end of World War II. Following the war, Eichmann was captured by U.S. troops, but he escaped the prison camp in 1946 before having to face the Nuremberg International War Crimes Tribunal. Eichmann traveled under an assumed identity between Europe and the Middle East and in 1950 arrived in Argentina, which maintained lax immigration policies and was a safe haven for many Nazi war criminals. In May 1960, Argentina was celebrating the 150th anniversary of its revolution against Spain, and many tourists were traveling to Argentina from abroad to attend the festivities. The Mossad used the opportunity to smuggle more agents into the country. Israel, knowing that Argentina might never extradite Eichmann for trial, had decided to abduct him and take him to Israel illegally. On May 11, Mossad operatives descended on Garibaldi Street in San Fernando and snatched Eichmann away as he was walking from the bus to his home. On April 11, 1961, Eichmann's trial began in Jerusalem. It was the first trial to be televised in history. Eichmann faced 15 charges, including crimes against humanity, crimes against the Jewish people, and war crimes. He claimed he was just following orders, but the judges disagreed, finding him guilty on all counts on December 15 and sentencing him to die. On May 31, 1962, he was hanged near Tel Aviv.

Upcoming Events

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

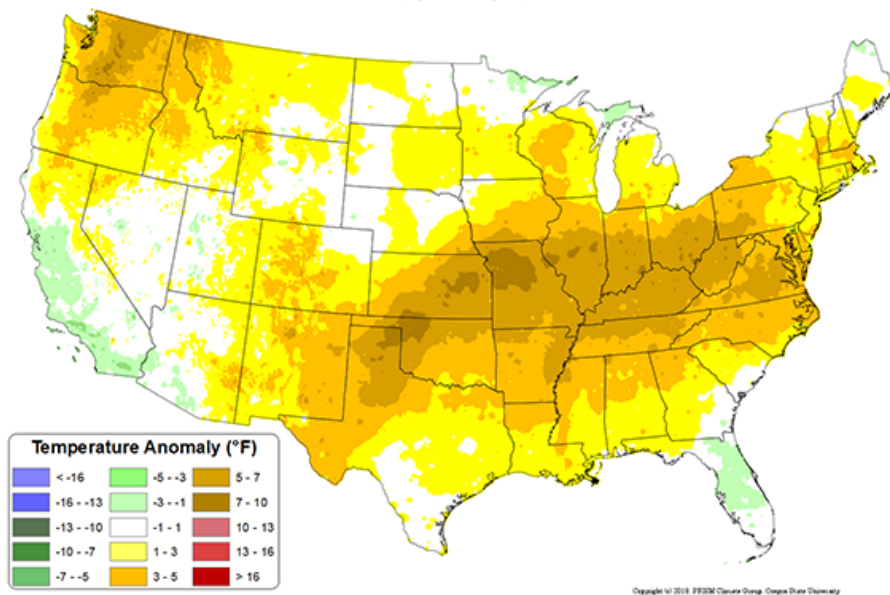
Fri. 6/22 - Cattle on Feed

Fri. 6/22 - Cold Storage

Thurs. 6/28 - Quarterly Hogs and Pigs

Fri. 6/29 - Quarterly Stocks and Acreage

Daily Mean Temperature Anomaly: 01 May 2018 - 21 May 2018
 Period ending 7 AM EDT 31 May 2018
 Base period: 1981-2010
 (Map created 22 May 2018)



Corn prices are steady this morning after pushing to a fresh multi-month high, trading to \$4.25 per bushel vs. the DEC18 contract, the MAR19 contract traded to \$4.33 per contract. As a producer, I pulled the trigger and reduced a bit more longer-term risk. If you are not getting our real-time marketing signals and special reports, make certain you call the office at (816) 322-5300 and we will get you added to the list. It's not that I'm turning bearish, but with the market hitting levels we haven't seen in 10-months and me wanting to get another 30% of my estimated new-crop production price risk reduced during the next 90 to 120-days, I decided this would be a good place to start. It's certainly not a home run or even a double, but the numbers do pencil and will keep me in the game for another at bat. At the moment I'm still a longer-term bull, I'm just a bit apprehensive nearby. It seems like everybody and their brother has now decided to jump on the bullish bandwagon. I've never had a lot of luck playing this game as a team sport. I'm just wondering where the new bullish money-flow is going to come from? I certainly understand the longer-term fundamental picture and the what-if's surrounding the U.S. crop. I understand that South American corn production is probably down by -20 MMTs, and that China is chewing through more of their domestic corn than most in the market had forecast. I also see ethanol demand increasing globally as several countries opening more corn based plants and work towards increasing blend ratios. I also believe the USDA is currently underestimating corn used for U.S. feed and export demand. I also recognize the political unrest and uncertainty brewing in Argentina and Brazil and the raging inflation that could keep some supply held back and on the farm, meaning less available to the exporters. The issue is most of the other bulls in the marketplace also see similar bullish cards in play. Again, my question is what headlines are we going to see nearby that will bring in new bulls and outweigh the fears and uncertainties that might arise causing some liquidation of length? Hence, the reason I wanted to reward the recent rally and reduce a bit more risk. The planting pace here in the U.S. is basically back to our historical average. Yes, there are some delays and problems up in Minnesota and the Dakotas that the trade will continue to monitor the next couple of weeks. But we have seen some fairly good rainfall totals as a whole and soil moisture levels seem adequate for many important growing regions. In other words, not perfect conditions by any means, but good enough to currently avoid a major wide-spread worry. Weather for late-June and into July will obviously be a "wild-card," but that's still a ways off on the horizon. Recent rains in Brazil seem as if they've stopped the bleeding in regard to crop losses. It seems like a couple of weeks back we were hearing talk from boots on the ground that the Brazilian crop could be sub-80 MMTs, now it seems I'm hearing more talk about 81 to 83 MMTs, which is still less than the current USDA estimate, but not as low as the trade was once thinking. I also don't think the dry conditions in southern Russia and parts of Ukraine are as significant as some thought a few sessions back. I hope I'm dead wrong and the market just keeps ripping higher, ultimately providing me with easier opportunities to feather in additional sales at higher prices. We've basically rallied +50 cents from the mid-December lows to the recent highs, I just want to make sure I grab a little... From a technical perspective, old-crop support still looks to be down in the \$3.80 to \$3.90 area, with heavier resistance up between \$4.20 and \$4.40 per bushel. New-crop support is still thought to be around the psychotically strong \$4.00 level with heavier resistance up in the \$4.40 to \$4.50 range.

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!

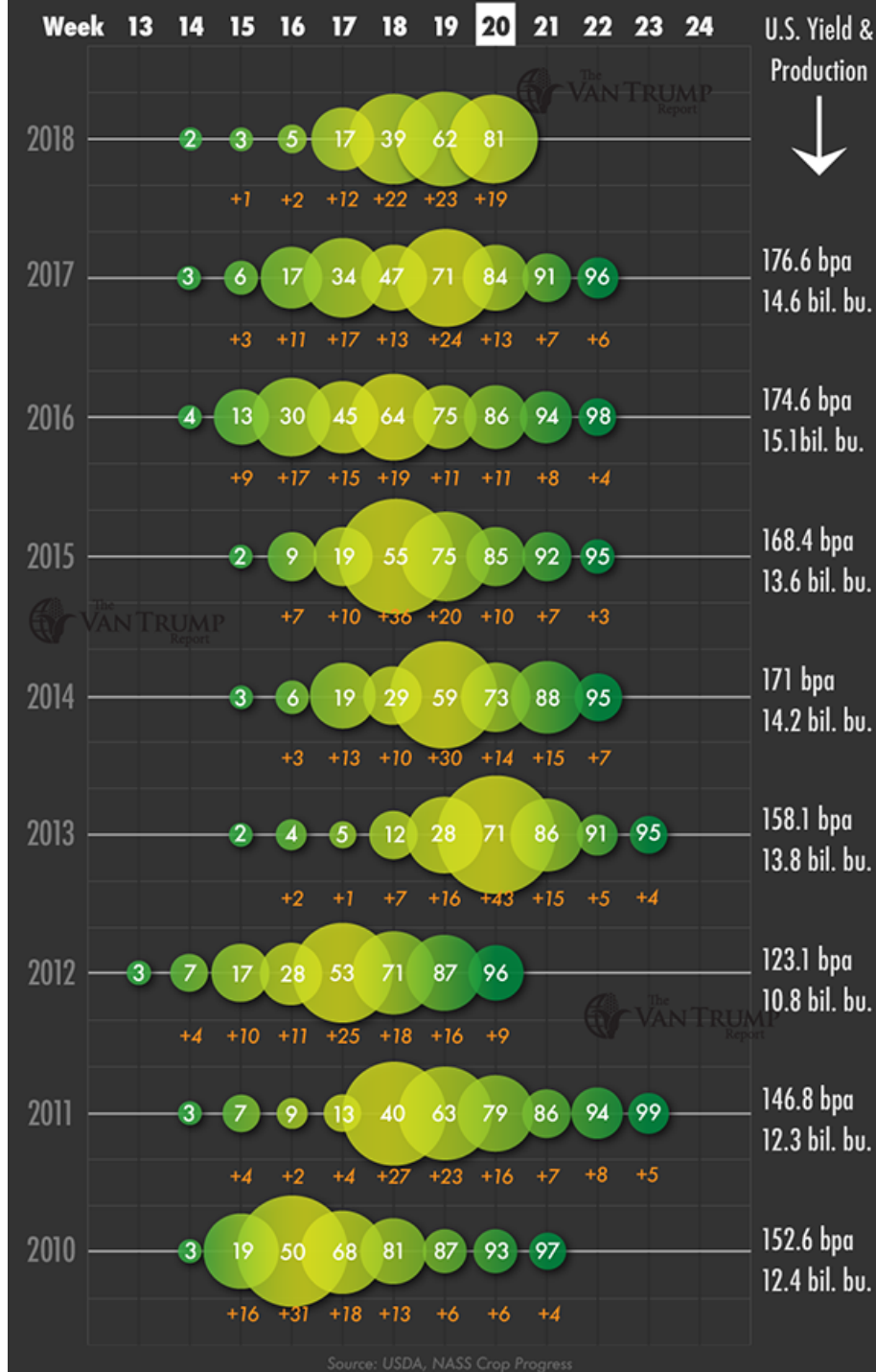
Kevin Van Trump

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

U.S. Corn Planting Pace 2010 - 2018

includes Weekly Rating and Week-over-Week Change



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 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 looser 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..."

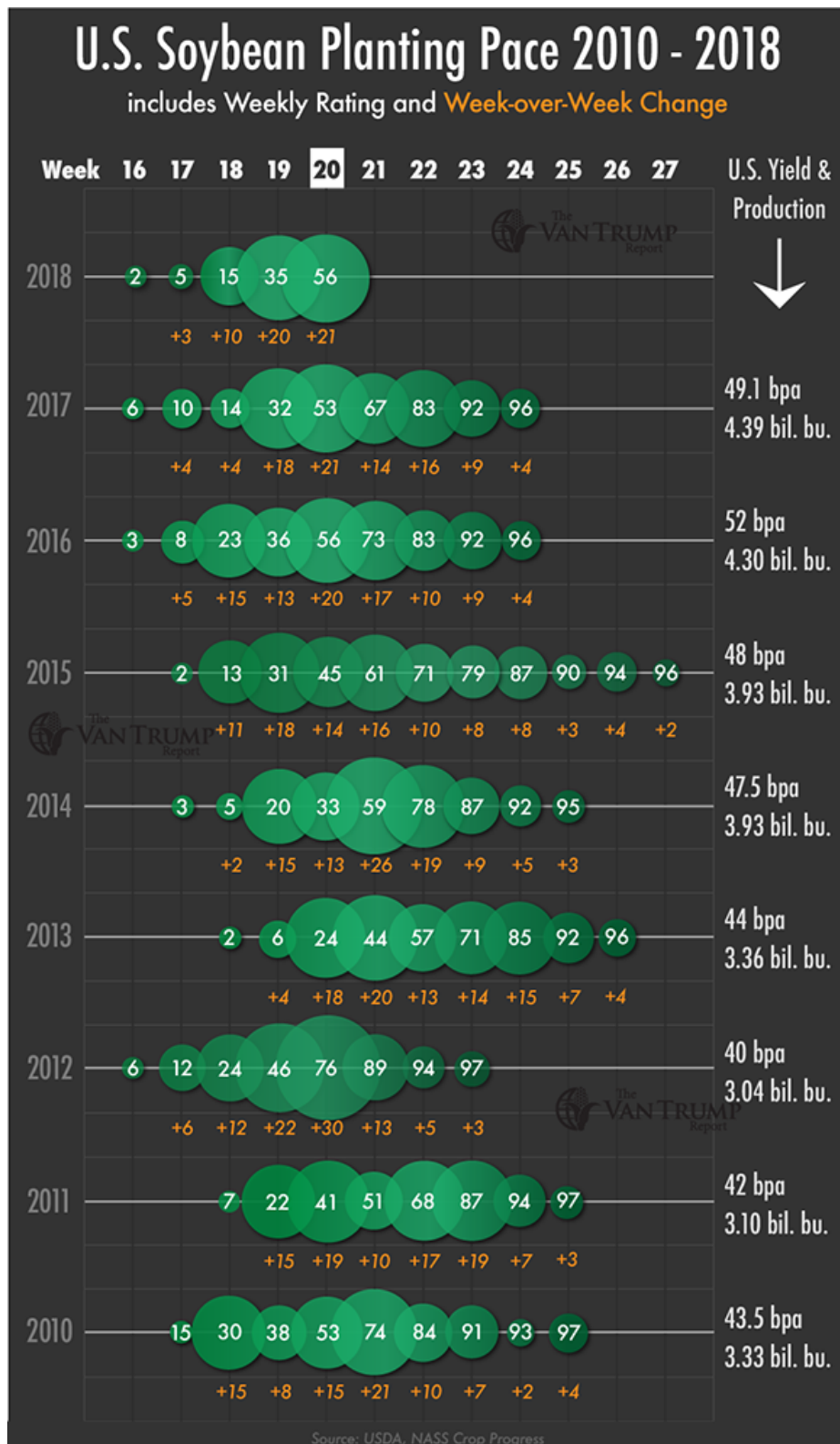
I'm more of a long-term player, therefore you will not see me give many short-term suggestions or trade ideas. One of my most important rules is that I always follow my long-term direction. Therefore, as long as I am "bullish" a market I will only play that particular market in one of three ways.

- 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.

Soybean prices have been trying to claw their way back from the tumble, but despite the recent bounce we are still -50 cents from the highs set back in early-March and mid-June. The optimism surrounding a potential trade deal with China and the lifting of agricultural tariffs created a slightly tailwind but now it seems like the trade might be getting cold feet and walking it back a bit. Bulls are hoping the recent deterioration in the Brazilian and Argentine currency has stabilized and the U.S. dollar might actually start to weaken bit, all of which would provide a boost for U.S. exporters. I'm not sure I'm 100% in line with this thinking or the fact it will play itself out, but it's certainly a theory for the bulls. It's just hard to envision as many large traders inside the macro space are thinking the U.S. Fed is becoming ever more hawkish. Bulls are also pointing to the fact soybean charts have become a bit more bullish the past few days as a few moving-average hurdles have recently been cleared. Bears say, who cares, as price really haven't done much of anything in the past couple of weeks. In fact, we are

trading right around the same level we were trading at back on May 7th. The Chinese still aren't buying U.S. soybeans as their crush margins are clearly nothing to right home about. They also generally tend to buy South American beans during this period, so I see no real harm or foul being committed. South American production estimates have stabilized, and if anything the record Brazilian crop might actually be getting a bit larger. Here at home, the crop is going in the ground well ahead of schedule and might actually gain a few more acres. I'm still just worried it could be a bit too early to jump on board the bull train. As a producer, I've been a really aggressive seller on the previous rallies, so I want to remain patient. As a spec, I still prefer buying the deeper breaks in price.



Wheat bulls are talking about warmer temps here in the U.S. that could eventually add more stress to an already poor crop and in turn add more weather premium to price. Bulls also continue to keep a close eye on weather uncertainties in parts of Australia,

Farm Direction

RECIPES

★ **FAMILY** ★

FAVORITES

-SENT IN BY OUR READERS-

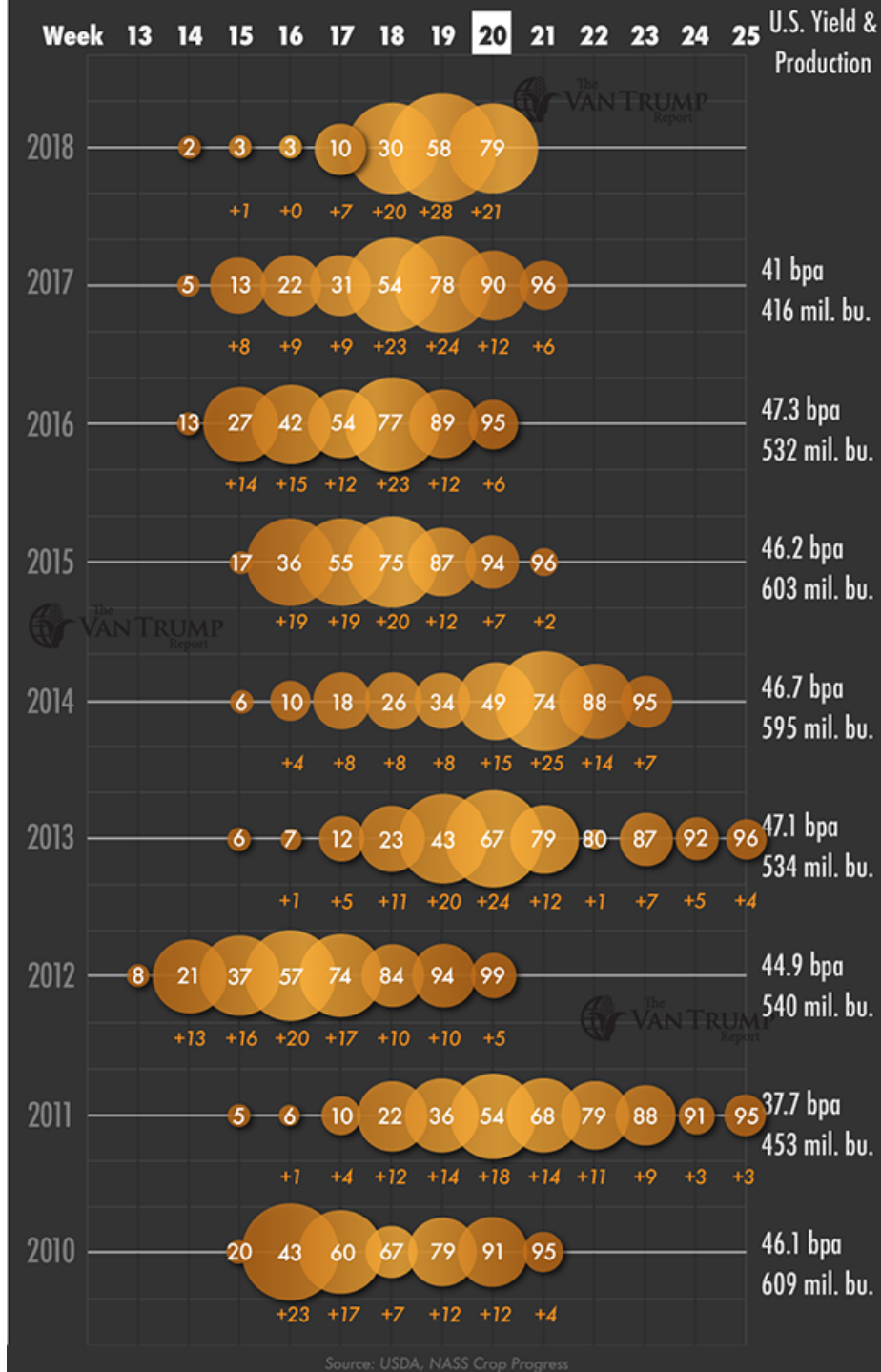
**Chicken Bacon
Ranch Pasta Recipe**

CLICK TO SEE RECIPE

Canada, Europe, Russia and Ukraine. As a producer, I've made a few more sales on the recent run higher. I'm close to having reduced most all of my estimated new-crop price risk. I also now have about 30% of my estimated 2019 production priced at what I believe to be very good levels. Keep in mind, JUL19 HRW wheat traded up to \$6.27 yesterday, tough to argue against making some early sales and locking in profit. Certainly we could go higher based on weather forecasts in the days ahead, but I like the thought of reducing some of my longer-term risk and market exposure. Also make certain you are paying attention to spring wheat prices, where the SEP18 contract traded back above \$6.45 yesterday. This market hasn't traded above \$6.60 since last July. As a spec, I have clearly missed this last run higher in the wheat market, electing to remain on the sideline rather than jumping on the bull weather bandwagon. I honestly thought prices were going to test their recent lows at the end of April and or beginning of May. I wanted to be a buyer on that break at or around those lows. Instead the market dipped into mid to late-April but never fully buckled to provide my opportunity. I'm kicking myself a bit, but certainly not wanting to chase this weather market higher. Prices in Russia have firmed substantially in the past couple of weeks as global buyers try and jump ahead of any potential weather related hiccups in the Black Sea region. Again, if you are not getting our real-time marketing signals and special reports, make certain you call the office at (816) 322-5300 and we will get you added to the list.

U.S. Spring Wheat Planting Pace 2010 - 2018

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> **USDA Grants Large Subsidy Payment In 2015:** According to a new Government Accountability Office report, carried out by requests Senator Chuck Grassley, a rice, soybean and corn farm scored big in 2015 when it collected \$3.7 million in subsidies — the largest of the \$2.7 billion in support payments USDA made to farmers that year. Grassley has gone after the Farm Service Agency's rule

for containing loopholes that hinder the government's ability to detect fraud. Expect to see an effort from Grassley to implement further reforms in the Senate farm bill set to be released in the coming weeks. (Source: Politico)

> Visualizing the Farm Bill Voting: I came across an interesting [graphic](#) from Vox comparing the geography of 2018 farm bill support vs. prior years. Last week when the farm bill failed, most members from urban districts voted on the opposite side of most members from rural districts. The analysis points to the fact that there used to be common ground between rural and urban areas in America, but that is no longer the case. (Source: Vox)

> Whole Foods Halts GMO Label: We are hearing that Amazon's Whole Foods is pausing its GMO labeling requirements, set to go into effect September 1 to wait for USDA to finalize their own GMO rules dictating that food companies disclose the presence of genetically modified ingredients on food packages. The USDA rules are currently open for public comment and will be finalized in the next few months. (Source: NewFoodEconomy)

> Brazilian Trucker Strikes Threaten Grain Exports: Truck drivers partially blocked roads and ports across Brazil as the strike which started early this week threatens to slow delivery of grain and other goods to domestic and export markets. Strikers are protesting a steep rise in diesel prices. Thousands of trucks obstructed major roads affecting access to the country's two main export ports, Santos and Parangua. A toll road operator in Brazil's largest grain producing state, Mato Grosso, is reporting that blockades have been set up at numerous points along the key BR0163 highway, which carries grains to northern and southern ports for exports. (Source: Reuters)

> Organic Grain Trading Increasing: Trading of food-grade organic grains and soybeans picked up and prices increased during the March-April period, according to Mercaris, the organic and non-GMO trading platform and market information company. Senior economist at Mercaris, Ryan Koory says that contracting increased in March and has grown to seasonal levels in April and so far in May comparable to past years. Food-grade organic hard red winter wheat averaged \$13.64 a bushel in March-April, up 7¢ from the prior two-month period, and up \$2.77 from January-February. (Source: World Grain)

> GE To Give-Up Rail Business: GE intends to divest itself of the company's transportation division, one of its smaller units. It spun off its big oil division last year and is exploring separating other businesses, in what would amount to a breakup of the conglomerate. GE agreed to merge its railroad business with Wabtec Corp. in a deal valued at roughly \$11 billion, letting GE raise some cash to fund its turnaround and shed one of its oldest operations. (Source: Wall Street Journal)

> Are Hedge Funds Getting Out Of Long Oil Bets? Hedge funds and other money managers reportedly trimmed their net long positions on oil futures for a fifth week in a row, which represents the longest consecutive weekly declines since November 2016. "Positioning was long coming into the year, and you have the June 22nd OPEC event on the horizon," Chris Kettenmann, chief energy strategist at Macro Risk Advisors LLC, told Bloomberg.

> Consumer Reports Finds Flaws with Tesla Model 3: The Tesla 3 is billed as Tesla's mass-market, affordable electric sedan and has had some great fanfare. However, Consumer Reports found some issues with it that kept it from earning their recommendation. In its report, they found "flaws — big flaws" in the Model 3's braking distance, controls and ride quality. According to the testing, Model 3's braking distance from 60mph was 152 feet which the outlet claimed is far worse than any contemporary it has tested and nearly seven feet longer than the braking distance for a Ford F-150. This is an unexpected outcome for such highly important and extremely hyped vehicle that Tesla needs to do well. Consumer Reports says it will re-test the Tesla Model 3's braking distance if Tesla is able to fix the problem via a software update (Source: Consumer Reports)

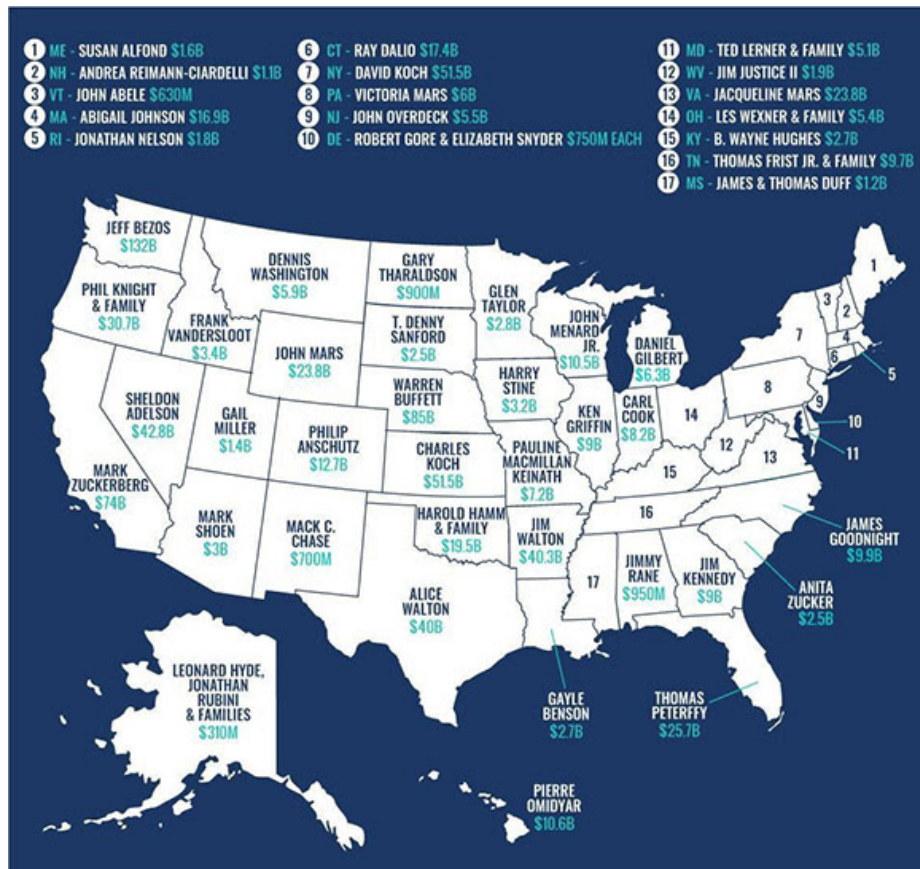
> Exotic Tick Threat in West Virginia: The West Virginia Department of agriculture is warning the public to be on the lookout for a new tick threat in the Mountain State. On May 14, the National Veterinary Service Laboratory confirmed that a long horned tick, also known as the East Asian tick, was found on a calf at a beef farm in Albemarle County, Va. (Source: WVAH Fox 11)

> Is There A "Unicorn Bubble" Brewing? According to Keith Wright, a professor at the Villanova School of Business, the tech bubble is more inflated now than it ever was during the dot-com heyday. Wright believes that the land of unicorns (Privately held companies valued over \$1 billion) are in trouble, and it may spread outside of Silicon Valley. From what I understand, the academic says massive losses are coming in venture capital-funded startups, which he believes are as much as 50% overvalued. Buzzfeed and Vice Media are examples cited as missing year-end revenue targets and leading to rifts among their results-driven investors. Even Uber, the highest-valued unicorn, is still heading in the wrong direction, losing \$4.5 billion last year, after posting a \$2.8 billion loss in 2016. Read more [HERE](#)

> First Female President of New York Stock Exchange: The NYSE is going to have a female president for the first time in its 226 year history. Stacy Cunningham, is making history by becoming the first woman to become president. Cunningham will take over for Thomas Farley this Friday. Farley will leave to become head of Third Point LLC, which is a hedge-fund firm backed by Daniel Loeb. Cunningham's promotion comes around a year and a half after the Nasdaq named Adena Friedman the first woman CEO in their history, which means two of the world's biggest stock exchanges and an industry that has always been known as being male-dominated, will now be ran by two women. Cunningham started with the NYSE in 1994 as a summer intern while she was studying industrial engineering. Two years after serving as an intern she started working on the floor of the NYSE. During this time, she became one of a few dozen women working on the floor. In 2005, Cunningham decided to leave the NYSE because she was upset with the slow pace of change. She felt the floor wasn't transitioning to the "new technology" becoming available at the time. She left and enrolled in a 9-month culinary school. The life of a cook didn't last long, she missed the challenges and excitement so returned to the trading floor in 2007 working with Nasdaq. She then returned back

to her original home on the NYSE in 2012. In a period of a year she was promoted to head of sales and within three years she was named the COO. I recently watched her participate in an interview and I'm confident she will do a great job. She recently posted a tweet that said, "Since the moment I stepped onto the trading floor, the @NYSE has always held a special place in my heart. I am humbled and honored to have the opportunity to lead this organization."

> How They Became Richest In Each State: Forbes just published a list of the Richest Person In Every State, a group of 53 people (due to ties) whose combined net worth is \$832 billion. List members made their money from 14 different industries, with finance and investing accounting for fortunes in 10 of the 50 states. These financiers include Warren Buffett of Berkshire Hathaway, who has a net worth of \$85 billion; Florida's Thomas Peterffy of digital trading firm Interactive Brokers, with \$25.7 billion, and Connecticut's Ray Dalio of hedge fund firm Bridgewater Associates, with a \$17.4 billion fortune. Read more [HERE](#).



Southcentral Texas - Things are really hot down here and our area hasn't had precipitation for a while. We can tell the corn is suffering and I suspect we are looking at a 20-30bpa drag on yield at this point. And the sorghum, which we will start harvesting in two weeks is taking a hit as well. There is some that looks good, with a nice red hue, but even that portion is shorter than normal. The rest is showing the signs of heat stress. We own an elevator down here and have offered a unique contract on acres versus bushels for the guys who just are not certain what production will be. We haven't offered this since 2012. I just returned from Minnesota to investigate some edible dry beans as we continue to stay diversified. We have contracts across the border and it definitely offsets the corn income. All the elevators are fighting like heck for their bushels now as there just doesn't look to be that much available.

Southcentral Michigan - We have been out of the fields for nearly 2 weeks today. I don't see us getting back in the field for another 2 weeks at the pace it's raining. My electronic rain gauge outside my house shows 20.56 inches of moisture on the year and I would bet that it's actually more than that because I don't think rain gauges are very accurate at all when it snows or when the rain isn't coming down vertically. We have a pond near our house and it's busting at the seams. All the corn that's planted which is very little is very light green as all the nitrogen is pushed through the dirt and

down the streams I assume. The cost of raising corn just went up another nitrogen application for our early planted fields. I'm sure we will be complaining about too much heat in just a few months but right now I would sure take a little sun and wind at this moment.

Southwest Ohio - I had my custom applicator spray a burn down mix on some of my ground on May 12th. I then drilled beans on the 13th. The applicator must have had a boom issue, because now I have stripes in my fields. They are going to respray everything with roundup once it is dry enough to do so. One of my fields was a failed wheat crop. It is variable in thickness from "good enough to combine" to "bare dirt." I was actually kind of excited to drill right into the green wheat as an opportunity to experiment with "planting green" which is usually impossible here. The beans are just emerging and looking okay, so far. The other two fields were bean stubble, and an old hay field that I am rotating into beans. We have received over 4 inches of rain in the last few days on already saturated ground, and it looks to continue. This was the earliest I have EVER been able to get beans in, we had a very rare stint of drying weather in mid May. If this year is like most, it will be early to mid-June before a sprayer can get back across my ground. I'm also worried about the lack of residual chemical on these field areas. I fall spray all my ground with 2,4-D and Dicamba, so I started with clean fields, for what that's worth. But Mares tail takes every advantage. I'm not mad at the applicator service, things happen, and they have offered to respray what they can.



China Continues Innovations In Solar Panels: In a truly remarkable feat of innovation, scientists have figured out how to create "hybrid" solar cells that generate power not just from sunlight but also from raindrops. This means we may soon see all-weather solar panels that work when it is cloudy and even at night, if it's raining. Solar has soared in recent years, as panel prices have dropped so fast that solar keeps crushing its own record for the cheapest power "ever, anywhere, by any technology" — even without a subsidy. Behind much of the innovation is China, the world leader in both manufacturing and deployment of solar energy. [Read more HERE.](#)

Cord Cutter Or Cable User? After years of chronicling cable TV's dismal customer satisfaction rates, the American Consumer Satisfaction Index has started measuring streaming video services for the first time, and the results aren't surprising: In a new survey of more than 45,000 people, streaming video earned an average satisfaction score of 75, compared to 62 points for cable, satellite, and telecom TV providers. Netflix, Sony's PlayStation Vue, and Amazon's Twitch tied for first place among streaming services with 78 points, while AT&T U-Verse was the top-scoring traditional TV provider with 70 points. Can cable compete into the future? [Read more HERE.](#)

Nanoparticles...New Attack On Lung Cancer: A new study has shown that lung cancer cells can be destroyed using nanoparticles derived from tea leaves. These tiny particles, called "quantum dots," are 400 times thinner than a human hair, and producing them from tea leaves is safe and non-toxic. From what I understand, "nanoprobes" can be used to spot micro tumors to placing them inside cancer drugs for delivery. For instance, a recent study demonstrated that endometrial cancer can be targeted much more effectively if anti-cancer drugs are loaded into nanoparticles and delivered straight to the tumors. Interesting stuff...[read more HERE.](#)

Obamas Ink Netflix Production Deal: Former President Barack Obama formally announced on Monday a multiyear production deal with Netflix in which he and the former first lady, Michelle Obama, will produce television shows and films for the streaming service. The deal will give Mr. Obama an international television platform during his post-presidency, allowing him to reach millions of people in the United States and internationally. I'm told the Obamas have no intention of using the platform to battle his successor or more conservative issues. [Read more HERE.](#)

Check Out The Age Of All The Fortune 500 Companies: In 1784, just after the end of the Revolutionary War, Hamilton was the founding father of what is today the Bank of New York Mellon — the oldest company on this year's Fortune 500, and one of four that can trace their roots to the 18th century. The oldest member of the household products industry, Colgate-Palmolive, dates to 1806. While a majority of the 500—360 companies to be exact—were started in the 20th century, 136 launched since Jan. 1, 1980, and 26 in this century. [Check out the graphic below and click HERE](#) for some interactive information.

EACH CIRCLE REPRESENTS A FORTUNE 500 COMPANY.



Finding A Way Around The Labor Shortage In Agriculture

It's no longer a matter of if ag businesses will be forced to add more "technology" to their operations

but more a matter of how quickly they can make it happen. Japanese dairy farmer Kenichi Kato, knew investing in technology was his only hope to keep his 90 head operation functioning. But sinking \$2 million into modernizing his dairy farm was no small decision. The human labor shortages and the need for efficiency forced Kato to explore more automated options. For some time now, Japan has been dealing with its declining population and I'm told that the current workforce on average is only two-thirds as productive as American workers. Meaning, sectors like the dairy industry struggle to get by. But there is one answer to the labor shortage and it has doubled its presence in the last three years, robotics. Kato's \$2 million dollar investment bought him a shed that relies on a pair of \$230,000 robots to milk some 90 cows and an \$18,000 robot to help feed them. Fortunately, the government is absorbing some of the pain of investment as they have seen fit to reimburse farmers up to 50%. The milking robot is only the size of a small truck and will extend under the cow before milking in order to clean the udder. Then the robot shoots out four arms and attaches a suction tube to each teat while she enjoys some feed. Within 10 minutes, it is the next cow's turn. Milk is carried by tubes into a refrigerator while the machine checks the cow's identity from tags on her ears and stores data on each cow's production. The tech revolution is moving fast in Japan as businesses all across the country are investing in robotics and information technology to speed up everyday tasks and hopefully reduce the extreme working conditions found in the country. From what I understand, much of the motivation is due to a rash of suicides linked to work pressure and work hours. I suspect we might soon see a lots more innovation coming from Japan as they find themselves without a qualified and willing workforce... Remember, necessity is the mother of all invention! You can watch a video of the Kato's operations [HERE](#). (Source: Wall Stree Journal)



Grillers... Have You Considered Wood Pellet Grills?

Everyone has their favorite grills, but do you prefer old school charcoal, modern propane, electric or the growing segment of wood pellet fired. As with everything these days, consumers are looking for new experiences to go with their everyday activities. So, as outdoor enthusiasts are no longer content with just grilling burgers and chicken, they have begun venturing into the realm of smoking. Having enjoyed some smoked meat from grilling connoisseur friends of mine, it's definitely an option

worth exploring. If you have never worked with pellet grills, they are powered by electricity with "augers" that heat up the grill with flavored wood pellets, while a digital control panel monitors the heat and temperature of the food. Meaning you fire the unit up, set the temperature and walk away. I'm told there are even some models that can cook you a "no flip" burger! In my opinion, the subtle blanket of smoke that layers the meal provides a different level of enjoyment for your favorite meat. Put another way, pellet grills offer a different taste compared to some of our more traditional grills. Interestingly, when the patent of the pellet grill auger expired in 2007, many players jumped into the game, but the rate of growth has been stagnant...until now. From what I understand, leading manufacturers are saying it is now the "fastest growing" segment of the BBQ industry. Now I know many of my friends out there believe they are professional BBQ'ers:) but this might be a fun grill to have in your arsenal? Below are a few of the industry's top choices for pellet grills and their links. Be sure to click them to get insights on pellet choices, flavors and other great tips from industry experts. And don't forget, this might make for a great Father's Day gift! (Source: [Forbes](#))

Grilla Grills - out of Holland, Michigan is part of a 40-year-old, family-owned, metal stamping business, whose background provides a competitive advantage in the growing pellet grill market. Grilla Wood Pellet Grill features convection grilling airflow for Pro-Smoke barbecue smoke flavor. The company also offers EvenTemp Chamber, Keep Heat Swing Lid and Never Flare Flavor Disk that produces a consistent heat and smoke level in the cooking chamber. Grilla dropped dealers and retailers to sell their products and now focuses on e-commerce, which allowed them to add more value to their grills. One piece of value is their Pro Cart, an all-terrain cart with 8-inch mag wheels that allows users to tow around their Grilla Grill Silverbac more easily at competitions and elsewhere. Prices range from \$700-\$800.

Green Mountain Grills - (GMG) jumped into the wood pellet market and immediately observed ways to build a better mousetrap by adding features that included a two-fan system to help cool down the unit more quickly. Additionally, they created a peaked lid to provide more room inside the grill. Embracing technology, CMG integrated a wi-fi chip into the board of its grills, expanding the flexibility of the remote that comes with the purchase. Interestingly, CMG avoids big-box retailers as they have watched the high return rate of grills at those locations, citing the lack of expert help with the initial purchase. Because of that, the company uses traditional brick-and-mortar, staffed with a highly trained staff who are passionate about pellet grilling. CMG is expecting 25-30% growth in the foreseeable future. Prices start at \$374 and run to \$999.

Traeger - has created an extremely loyal, cult-like following over the last 30 years, with 70% market share of the pellet grill market. Traeger has a simple formula for success which includes taste, versatility, ease-of-use, consistency and community. Conquering the intimidation factor for consumers was a goal set and reached by Traeger, as all you need to do is flip a switch and turn a dial to set the temperature - just like an oven. Believing that wood-fired food just tastes better, Traeger has a team of chefs creating thousands of recipes for their community. They have also launched a WiFi connected grill allowing users to grill anywhere, directly from their Traeger app. Prices match the mac daddy status that Traeger enjoys, starting at \$799 and heading north to \$1,999.





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Easily program your grill to cook your favorite recipes automatically!

The advertisement features three GMG pellet grills of different sizes on a wooden deck. A hand holds a smartphone displaying the GMG app interface, which shows a temperature of 365°F. Green Wi-Fi signal icons are shown above the grills, indicating their connectivity.

PREMIUM PELLET BLENDS

YOU'VE NEVER HAD IT
THIS GOOD

The advertisement shows three bags of GMG Premium Pellet Blends: Premium Texas Blend, Premium Gold Blend, and Gourmet Blend. The bags are filled with wood pellets and are set against a background of a wooden fence and a pile of wood chips.



How A 96 Year Old Secretary Amassed Millions

Sylvia Bloom was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY by parents who were Eastern European immigrants. Bloom grew up during the Great Depression and attended public schooling. Bloom went on to earn a college degree from Hunter College in New York, which she paid for herself by attending night classes while working a day job. She had to drop out after the first year because couldn't afford it, but eventually went back and finished. Bloom always wished she could have afford to get a law degree, but it just never was a reality. In 1947, shortly after going to college, Bloom became a legal secretary at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton, which is a Wall Street law firm. She worked with this firm for 67 years, until she just recently retired at the age of 96. Interestingly, during this time period she was able to amass over +\$9 million. You may be thinking, how could a secretary build this much wealth? One might think that since Bloom worked for a long period of time, 67 years as a secretary, it gave her an easy advantage. That really wasn't the case. If you add up all the years and all her pay, it comes no where close. The fact is, she gained all this wealth by investing in stocks. She didn't know a lot about the stock market, but the lawyers and bosses she worked for did. Bloom's secret to gaining all this wealth throughout her lifetime is she simply did what other successful people did. When Bloom's boss would buy stocks, Bloom would buy the exact same stock, but on a much smaller scale due to her secretary's salary. During the era Bloom worked, secretaries would do everything for their bosses, like balancing their checkbooks, writing their checks, taking their clothes to the dry cleaners, and even dealing with their personal investments. Bloom was very low key about her investment strategy, and no one knew she had accumulated this type of wealth. Some people have said they saw her going to work on the subway during a snowstorm while in her mid-90's. She kept this wealth on the down low by using three different brokerage firms and eleven different bank accounts. Bloom is now giving almost all of the wealth she built to charities. From what I understand, about \$6.25 million is going to "The Henry Street Settlement," a non-profit social service in lower east Manhattan that aids disadvantaged students. Her donation was the largest to this group in the

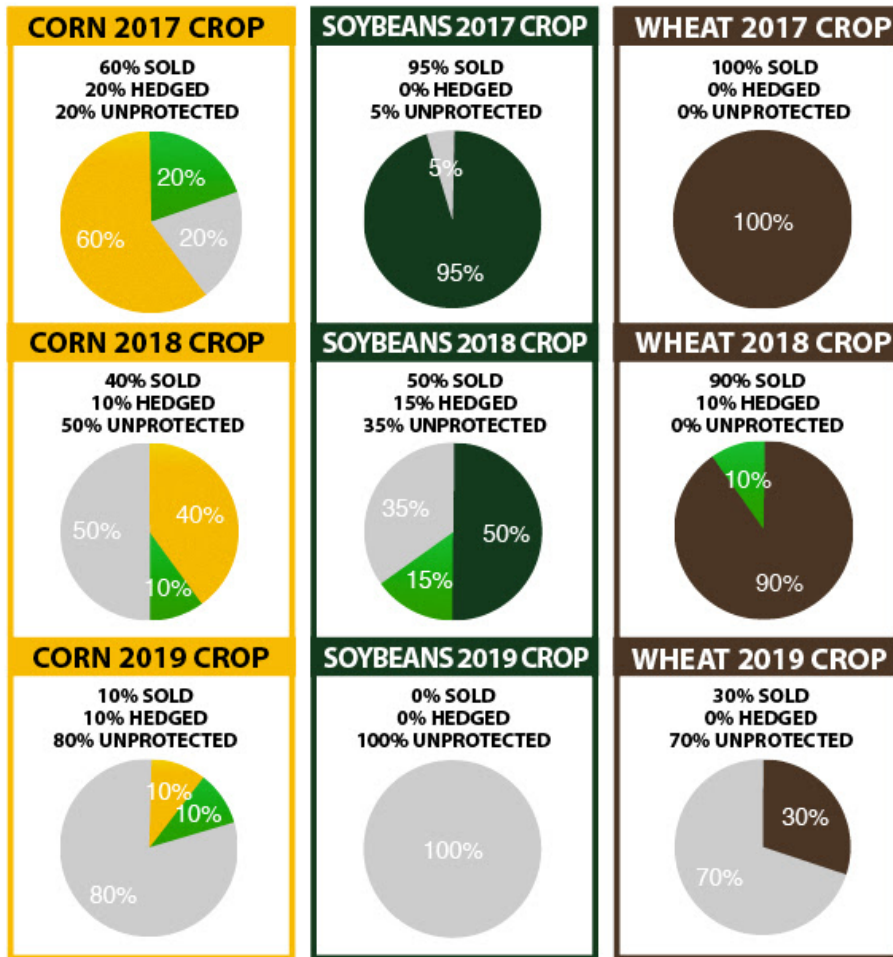
past 125 years. The \$2 million remaining will be split between Hunter college and a third scholarship fund. She left \$800,000 to be split between her family. This is truly an amazing story!





ANSWER to riddle: A dictionary

CASH SALES & HEDGING TOTALS



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