

## GOOD MORNING: 05/25/18 Farm Direction - Van Trump Report

2 messages

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Fri, May 25, 2018 at 6:11 AM



*"As we express our gratitude we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them. May your Memorial Day be reflective of those have done this very thing."* - John Fitzgerald Kennedy

**FRIDAY, MAY 25, 2018**  
[Printable Copy](#) or [Audio Version](#)

**Morning Summary:** Stocks are steady as traders try to position themselves ahead of an extended Memorial Day holiday weekend. Traditional economic data will be fairly light today, including the latest Michigan Confidence, Durable Goods data and speeches from four Fed officials (Powell, Bostic, Kaplan and Evans). Next week we will be digesting the latest U.S. inflation data, GDP and updated U.S. employment numbers. If inflation appears under control and jobs remain strong, I suspect the bulls will continue to run, especially if we hear some additional confirmation regarding improved trade relations between the U.S. and the Chinese. From what I'm understanding, NAFTA talks have stalled out and will have to once again be addressed in the near future. Perhaps the biggest geopolitical news currently circulating is the fact President Trump canceled the highly anticipated meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, citing Kim's "open hostility." Several political insiders are saying the chances for the "summit" dimmed considerably after Kim Jong Un attended a surprise meeting this month with Chinese President Xi Jinping. We don't know for sure what was discussed, but leaders are saying Kim Jong Un's attitude immediately changed after the meeting and he became more standoffish. Thoughts are the Chinese weren't real thrilled about not being on the invitation list and took a more direct approach with the North Korean leader. They may have felt marginalized as the U.S. started to carve out a more direct path to the Korean peninsula. This probably made the Chinese a bit nervous and was reason enough to call in Kim Jong Un for a little pep talk. Thoughts are the Chinese will probably be involved in some capacity with the next attempted summit. It's still not clear however where we go from here. Will the North Korean's once again go back to trying to flex their military muscles? Will the U.S. have to show we are serious about our threats? In energy news, oil prices continue to pullback as it appears Russia and Saudi Arabia will ramp up production in an effort to offset disruptions in Venezuela and an expected drop in Iranian exports. It's tough to get a steady read on oil, as I fundamentals want to talk myself into the market being "oversupplied", especially as U.S. crude oil production has jumped by more than a quarter in the past two years to +10.7 million barrels per day, and now we are behind only Russia as the world's top producer. Yet global supply is actually fairly tight, and the geopolitical headlines are shifting and changing by the minute, which keeps the bulls engaged. In the housing sector, existing home sales fell for the first time in the last three-months. The median home price continued to increase by +5.3% from one year ago to \$257,900. This marks the 74th straight month of year-on-year price gains for the median U.S. home. Stay tuned, the long extended weekend could make the trade a bit uneasy and make for an extremely interesting open when we return. Have a safe and happy Memorial Day holiday weekend!

**How Much Could You Have Made?** *It's been 16-years ago this week that Netflix stock went public. In roundabout numbers a \$1,000 investment placed back on May 22, 2002 would now be worth close to \$300,000. After initially offering its stock at \$15 per share, Netflix closed its first day of trading at \$16.75, or \$1.20 per present-day share after adjusting for stock splits. At one point yesterday, the stock was trading for just over \$350 per share. (Source: [Yahoo Finance](#))*

**Now See Where All Your Amazon Packages Are:** *Amazon said its Map Tracking feature is now available for all packages delivered in the US, which "provides an*

### Today In History



**1861, Civil War** - John Merryman, a state legislator from Maryland, is arrested for attempting to hinder Union troops from moving from Baltimore to Washington during the Civil War and is held at Fort McHenry by Union military officials. His attorney immediately sought a writ of habeas corpus so that a civilian federal court could examine the charges. However, President Abraham Lincoln decided to suspend the right of habeas corpus, and the general in command of Fort McHenry refused to turn Merryman over to the authorities. Federal judge Roger Taney, the chief justice of the Supreme Court (and also the author of the infamous Dred Scott decision), issued a ruling that President Lincoln did not have the authority to suspend habeas corpus. Lincoln didn't respond, appeal, or order the release of Merryman. But during a July 4 speech, Lincoln was defiant, insisting that he needed to suspend the rules in order to put down the rebellion in the South. Five years later, a new Supreme Court essentially backed Justice Taney's ruling: In an unrelated case, the court held that only Congress could suspend habeas corpus and that civilians were not subject to military courts, even in times of war.



**1935, Jesse Owens** - 21-year-old Owens would leave the 10,000 fans with a memory they would never forget as he averaged a world record every nine minutes at the Big Ten Championships in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Five world records and one tie were set in under an hour while competing with an injury that nearly knocked him out of the event. Five days before the Big Ten Championships, Owens fell down the stairs of his dormitory at Ohio State University. Badly bruising his lower back in the fall, and there was not much improvement by the morning of the 25th. According to reports at the time, the sprint star had to be helped in and out of the car in which some of the team had traveled to Ann Arbor. Once onsite, Owens could barely bend enough to touch his knees. He even took a 30-minute hot bath as a final attempt to loosen his limbs. With the final call in the hands of Larry Snyder, the Ohio State coach, he would give the go-ahead, which proved to be a very astute move. Beginning with the 100-yard dash, Owens would equal the world record at 9.4 seconds though half of the stopwatches from the officials clocked Owens at

estimate on when the package will arrive, how many stops away the driver is and a map showing the delivery truck's proximity to your home." (Source: [CNET](#))

**Could Fed Soon Put It In Neutral?** According to Philadelphia Fed President Patrick Harker, interest rate hikes could come to an end for this cycle in 2019. Understand that Harker is one of the more hawkish central bankers when it comes to monetary policy. Harker said he envisions a scenario where the Federal Reserve increases its benchmark overnight rate three times total in 2018 and three more times next year, then stops as the economy hits equilibrium. Speaking from Dallas, Harker told CNBC that he felt we were getting close to neutral and if the Fed saw inflation start to accelerate, he'd be open to a fourth increase this year. If you are placing bets on a fourth rate hike, traders are currently saying it has a 39% chance. Read more [HERE](#).

**Russia's Secret Missile Launch:** Russia quietly conducted the world's longest surface-to-air missile test, according to sources with direct knowledge of U.S. intelligence concerning the weapons program. From what I understand, the S-500 surface-to-air missile system successfully struck a target 299 miles away, which the U.S. assessed is 50 miles further than any known test. I'm told that Russia claims the ground-based missile system is capable of intercepting hypersonic missiles, drones, aircraft as well as stealth warplanes like the F-22 and the F-35. The S-500 system would expand the Kremlin's capabilities to engage multiple targets with precision strikes. Russia also claims the system has a range capable of destroying objects flying at near-space ranges or 62 miles above the Earth's surface. You can read more [HERE](#).



9.3, which no one would reach for another 13 years. Interestingly, Owens would face challenges to get to the long jump and only have one attempt. One proved enough as he soared 8.13 meters and became the first man to surpass the 8-meter mark. His record stood for 25 years and some 81 years later his mark would have landed him in 6th place at the Olympics in Rio in 2016. Moving to the 220-yard dash, Owens would finish in 20.3 seconds and pick up two world records as back then time was clocked at the 200-yard line as well as the finish. Finally, Owens would compete in the 220 yard low hurdles and save his best for last. Exactly 22.6 seconds later he was the holder of two hurdling world records. The first man to break 23 seconds, Owens was almost 5m ahead of his nearest rival. I cannot imagine any crowd was every treated to that level of performance in under an hour. Jesse Owens was truly a special athlete and man.



**1977, Star Wars** - George Lucas' epic intergalactic saga "Star Wars" opens on this Memorial Day weekend. Star Wars would go on to receive seven Oscars and earn \$461 million in U.S. ticket sales and a gross of nearly \$800 million worldwide. Interestingly, Lucas would not go about promoting his movie in traditional manners. According to actress Carrie Fisher who played rebel leader Princess Leia, later told Time magazine. "It was like an earthquake." Beginning with-in Fisher's words—"a new order of geeks, enthusiastic young people with sleeping bags," the anticipation of a revolutionary movie-watching experience spread like wildfire, causing long lines in front of movie theaters across the country and around the world. Once the crowds hit the seats, they were mesmerized by the groundbreaking special effects that would change the future of what movie fans would expect. Instantaneously, the three stars, Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford and Carrie Fisher would become overnight stars. Star Wars was soon a bona-fide pop culture phenomenon. Over the years it has spawned five more feature films, five TV series and an entire industry's worth of comic books, toys, video games and other products. Two big-screen sequels, The Empire Strikes Back (1980) and The Return of the Jedi (1983), featured much of the original cast and enjoyed the same success—both critical and commercial—as the first film. In 1999, Lucas stretched back in time for the fourth installment, Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace, chronologically a prequel to the original movie. Two other prequels, Attack of the Clones (2002) and Revenge of the Sith (2005) followed. The latter Star Wars movies featured a new cast—including Ewan McGregor, Liam Neeson, Natalie Portman and Hayden Christensen—and have generally failed to earn the same amount of critical praise as the first three films. They continue to score at the box office, however, with Revenge of the Sith becoming the top-grossing film of 2005 in the United States and the second worldwide.

#### Upcoming Events

**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

## 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.

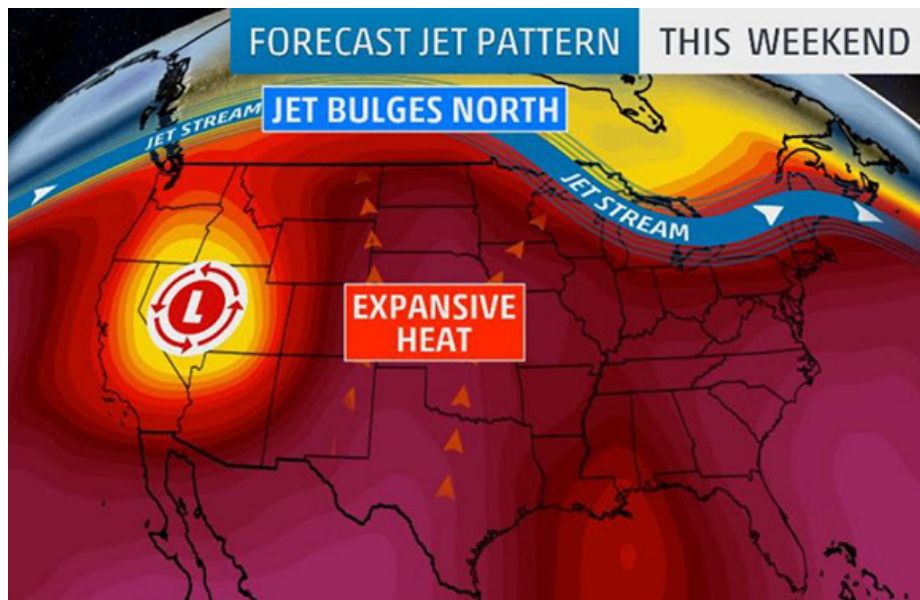
**TODAY'S RIDDLE:** A boy is walking down the road with a doctor. While the boy is the doctor's son, the doctor isn't the boy's father. Then who is the doctor?

**Weather** in the Corn Belt saw more showers and thunderstorms cross the upper Midwest yesterday, causing local planting delays. However, warm, dry weather in the central and eastern Corn Belt favors fieldwork and crop development. On the Plains,



scattered showers — stretching mainly from the Dakotas to northern Texas — are slowly shifting eastward. Despite recent and ongoing showers across the southern half of the High Plains, much more rain is needed to fully eradicate drought. ON the latest U.S. Drought Monitor, dated May 22, nearly one-third of Oklahoma was in extreme to exceptional drought along with 16% of Kansas and 9% of Texas. In the South, locally heavy showers persist in areas. Throughout the South, warm, humid weather is promoting a rapid crop development pace, despite local fieldwork delays. The probability of a tropical storm developing over the Gulf of Mexico continues to increase. Regardless of the degree of tropical development, heavy showers (2 to 5 inches or more) can be expected in the Southeast during the next several days. Occasional showers will affect other areas of the country, except for dry weather across the PNW and the nation's southwestern quadrant. Late-week precipitation could become heavy across northern sections of the Rockies and Plains. Warmth will continue to dominate the country, except in the Far West and portions of the Atlantic Coast States.

**It's Going To Be A Hot Memorial Day:** *Over the holiday weekend, we are expecting expansive Plains heat to blast much of the U.S. This will potentially become one of the earliest 90-degree streaks on record in parts of Minnesota and North Dakota. Over the next several days, the jet stream will bulge northward into Canada and allow heat and humidity to expand northward into the northern Plains, northern Rockies, Midwest and Northwest. We will likely see some daily record highs this weekend from the northern Plains to the Texas coast. While 90 degree F heat in May isn't that unusual in the northern Plains and upper Midwest, the consecutive day streaks of 90s are unusual. According to the NOAA, Fargo, North Dakota is four straight days (May 28 - 31, 1988) and Minneapolis/St. Paul is five straight days through June 1, 1988.*



**Corn** bulls continue to point towards strong demand and continued complications in South America. Old-crop export sales here in the U.S. remain robust, and it seems like the USDA export estimate could ultimately be bump a bit higher. As for production in South America, it still feels like both the Argentine and Brazilian crops are going to disappoint. There's also the political issues circulating inside both Argentina and Brazil. There's rumors that the Argentine government might slap a 10% tariff on corn and wheat exports in order to help slow their nations fiscal deficits. I am also hearing that the Brazilian second-crop is still somewhat of a "wild-card" and will be heavily monitored in the next couple of weeks. Here at home, there seems to be a lot of debate about total corn acres in the northwestern portion of the belt (including parts of the Dakotas, parts of Minnesota and a small portion of Iowa), and how many actual acres will get "switched" or bumped into "preventive plant". I personally don't see this as a major issue, but when combined with the fewer corn acres in other parts of the U.S., I still believe the USDA will need to lower their acreage estimate. As a producer, I've made a couple of sales this week on the big rally and now want to stay extremely patient. I would like to reduce the risk on another 20% of my new-crop production between now and harvest, so I feel like I have plenty of time and an entire U.S. growing season of headlines ahead of me. As a producer, I'm sticking with my current bullish positions. Technically, the old-crop JUL18 contract continues to find stiff nearby resistance on the charts up at its previous late-July high of \$4.12<sup>4</sup>. Nearby support seems to be in the \$3.95 to \$4.05 range.

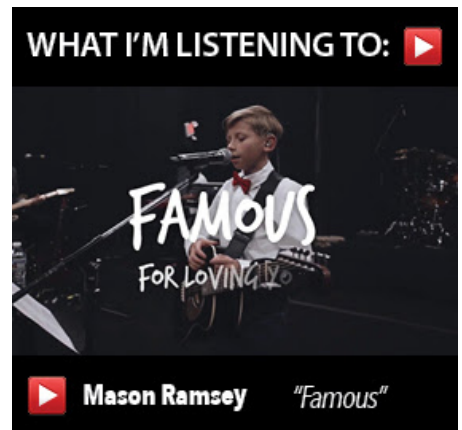
**Fri. 6/22** - Cattle on Feed

**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.

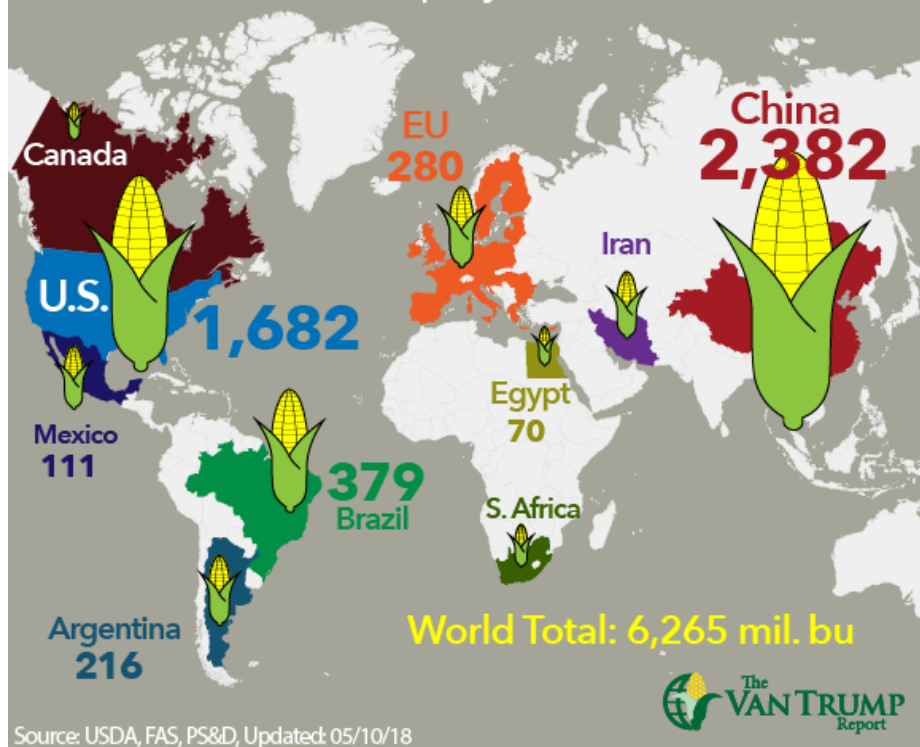
I use story telling techniques that are written in an easy to read format to help convey my current thoughts about business, markets, technology, weather, sports and life. I also like to include links, filter the noise, and pass along in-depth research and information that I believe could challenge your 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

# Global Ending Stocks Corn 2018/19 proj. (in million bushels)



**Soybean** bulls continue to talk about the possibility of improved U.S. / Chinese trade relations. Nobody seems to really know all of the specifics, but it certainly seems like U.S. agriculture and energy are going to be a couple of the beneficiaries. There's also the continued talk of complications in South America. Not only does it seem like the Argentine crop is getting smaller but so is the crop in Uruguay. The soybean crop in Brazil is record large, but logistical issues along with the recent trucker strike has made access to supply a bit complicated. Here at home, bulls continue to point towards the USDA underestimating crush demand and a possible increase in Chinese demand for U.S. soybeans, depending on how quickly a new trade deal is put in place. The trade is also eager to see what new ideas the Argentine government comes up with. There's talk they could be backpedaling on promises to further reduce their soybean export tariff. As you can imagine, this doesn't seem to be going over real well with the farmers in Argentina. If this proves to be true, it could easily keep more Argentine soybeans out of the export market and discourage additional acres for next season. It's certainly worth keeping on the radar... Chinese trade negotiations and U.S. weather will also remain of primary concerns. Technically, the new-crop NOV18 contract ran into stiff resistance on the charts up near \$10.60 per bushel, which pressures the current nearby high. Old-crop resistance is in the \$10.50 to \$10.60 range vs. the JUL18 contract.

## 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 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..."

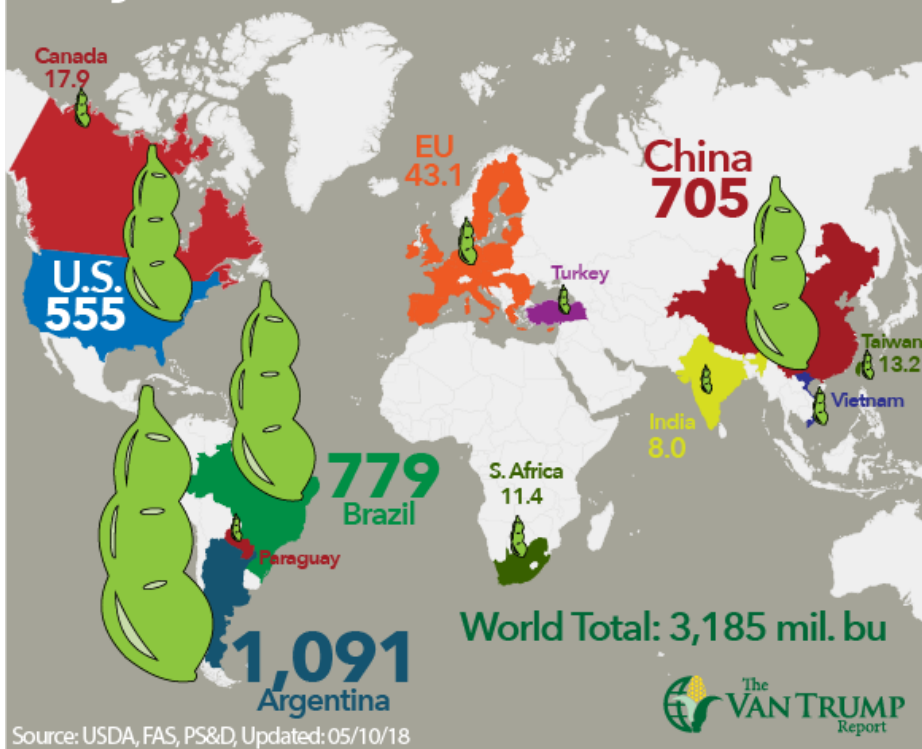
"Bulls make money, Bears make money, but pigs get slaughtered..."

"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.

# Global Ending Stocks Soybean 2018/19 proj. (in million bushels)



*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.*

*Farm Direction*  
RECIPES

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

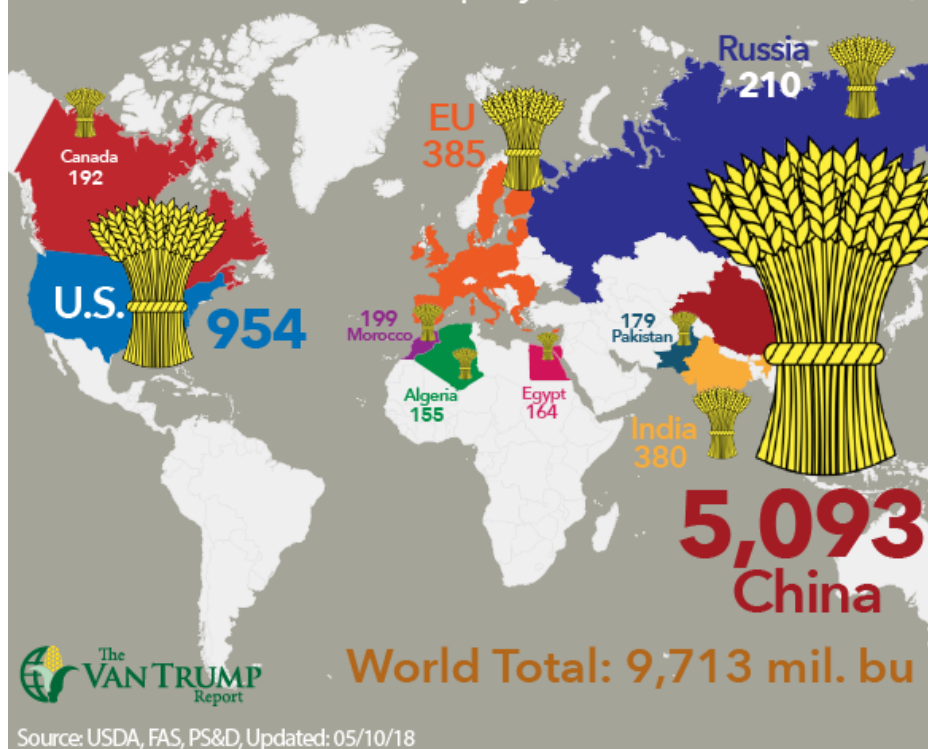
**Chicken Bacon Ranch Pasta Recipe**

[CLICK TO SEE RECIPE](#)

**Wheat** prices in the SRW and HRW contracts have hit multi-month highs and rallied by over +\$1.00 per bushel since mid-December. I remember sitting at my conference in Kansas City arguing with prominent traders about this markets upside potential despite its traditional bearish fundamentals, now here we are... We have weather uncertainties still brewing here in the U.S. as well as hiccups in portions of Australia, Canada, Europe, Russia, and Ukraine. Bears still believe the USDA's current U.S. export estimate is still overstated and will need to be further reduced. Bears also aren't giving much credence to the talk about lack of supply. There's also talk that Russian exporters are wanting to extend their 0% export duty that had been placed on wheat since September of 2016. The 0% export duty has been in place for a few years and is set to expire at the beginning of July. I suspect the trade will be watching this closely. June weather is also shaping up to be extremely important... stay tuned!



# Global Ending Stocks Wheat 2018/19 proj. (in million bushels)



> **Brazil's Corn Production Reduced:** The country's largest crop of corn, is now expected to be 10 million tonnes lower than last season, consultancy Agroconsult said on Thursday. The firm, which is leading a crop tour of Brazil's top producing areas, forecast the second corn crop will likely fall to around 57 million tonnes, reducing its previous view by more than 3 million tonnes. Brazil's second corn, which is planted after soybeans, accounts for roughly 70 percent of the country's entire production and make it the world's third-largest producer after the United States and China. (Source: Reuters)

> **Brazil Truckers Strike Continues:** As legislative efforts to cut diesel taxes stalled yesterday, the trucker protest paralyzing large swathes of the Brazilian economy stretch on another day. Now it looks as if the highway and port blockades will continue into next week. Reports indicate nearly a million truck drivers have joined the movement, creating 330 blockades in 23 of 26 Brazilian states. This strike is now affecting numerous industries including automating, meat processing, aviation and agribusiness. (Source: Reuters)

> **EU Safety Group Reaffirms Pesticide Concerns:** EFSA, the EU's food safety authority, has again expressed concern about the effects of diquat, a pesticide manufactured by Syngenta, on farm workers. Syngenta has long argued that EFSA has used every conservative parameter when reviewing human exposure to the weedkiller. However, diquat's license which is currently temporarily extended in the EU, will expire on June 30. It looks as if the EU will likely not renew the weedkiller's license, but we will have to wait and see. (Source: Politico)

> **Making Exemptions for Livestock Haulers:** A group of Senators has introduced legislation to reduce regulations that would require livestock haulers to take mandatory rest time that senators say could put livestock at risk, particularly during summer and winter. The transporting Livestock Across America Safely Act would exempt livestock haulers from certain "hours of service" rules required by all other truck drivers by the Transportation Department.

> **Apple Teams Up With Volkswagen:** After reportedly being rebuffed by BMW and Mercedes in its quest for a partner to co-develop a self-driving vehicle, Apple will team up with VW to turn T6 Transporter vans into autonomous shuttles for Apple staff. It's still unclear whether Apple's goal is to build its own self-driving vehicles or just the software inside. (Source: New York Times)

> **U.S. DoJ & CFTC Probe Crypto Market Manipulation:** The U.S. Department of Justice has launched a criminal investigation into cryptocurrency traders who may have manipulated the market using old-school tactics. Anonymous sources familiar with the problem says the investigation — in conjunction with the CFTC — is looking at so-called spoofing. This is a technique that has been used in traditional financial markets to affect price movements by making large volumes of fake orders — that possibly influenced trades of bitcoin and ethereum. The DoJ is also probing crypto traders who may have cheated by sending themselves large volumes of orders to create a mirage of increasing demand in order to tip other investors into making a move. (Source: Bloomberg)

> **Kroger Adds Home Chef To The Line Up:** Kroger Co. on Wednesday announced it has reached an agreement to acquire Chicago-based meal kit company, Home Chef, in a deal that could total \$700 million. The Cincinnati-based grocery giant would pay an initial purchase price of \$200 million and up to an additional \$500 million in "earnout" payments to Home Chef for meeting certain sales and other performance goals. (Source: USAToday)

> **One Of Biggest Drug Bust Ever In Nebraska:** Police stopped a New Jersey car traveling through Nebraska late last month near the city of Kearney. During the stop, a trooper "became suspicious of criminal activity" and searched the vehicle and discovered 42 foil-wrapped packages containing 118lbs of fentanyl. State troopers initially thought they had discovered a mix of narcotics and cocaine, but in yesterday's announcement officials said testing proved the drugs were "entirely fentanyl". In the US, it is approved as an anesthetic and for pain relief, but because of its high profit margin for traffickers, it has become a large part of America's opioid crisis. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reported that between 2015 and 2016, the rate of drug overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids such as fentanyl had doubled. Medical examiners ruled in 2016 that US musician Prince died from an accidental overdose of the drug. Just 2mg of fentanyl - or a few grains of table salt - is a lethal dosage for most people, and even exposure can cause a fatal reaction. According to DEA estimates, the 118lbs could kill about 26 million people! (Source: BBC)

> **U.S. Sorghum Vessels Make Two Hard U-Turns:** Back in April, we reported about a vessel carrying U.S. sorghum to China had been diverted after the Chinese government hit exporters with a big antidumping tariff. After the news broke, the vessel made a hard U-turn and headed back to make a rare stop in Spain. It's unclear whether the ship left some grain there or if it then made another U-turn and headed back to the island of Las Palmas which is considered a gateway into both Europe and Africa. It's not clear if the grain has been sold, but basically, they found a cheap spot to park that is close major markets where the grain could be stored until a later date. The map below shows the ship, RB Eden, and its unusual journey it has had over the last few months or so. (Source: Bloomberg)





# FROM THE FIELD

Westcentral Iowa - things are very hot up here now but the all the crops are in and emerged. Forty miles north I hear there are still guys working hard to get caught up. We had a good production last year and just a small amount of corn left in the bins and that will go for some feed. Looking down the pipe we have been exploring protein alternatives in the form of bugs. With having Costco and Walmart in our vicinity we believe we should be ready for the definite changes coming in the space. We are doing some trials with different biologics for the first time and will let you know how it turns out. Our guys are out working on equipment preparing for some tile work as well as getting ready to spray.

Eastern Virginia - It's been crazy on the east coast with our corn crop. We have wind all the time, (like rip trees down wind) it has rained and rained the last two weeks. We have never had this much wind growing up. My corn is being eaten by weeds and it's too wet to go spray. It also needs another shot of nitrogen so it's looking a little yellow now. I'm hoping this weekend will be good and dry so we are able to get some work done, I just need three or so dry days for that to happen. It's going to be a rough growing season if we can't get these weeds sprayed down... right now they are taking the moisture away from the corn but at least we have plenty of moisture to go around.

Southeast Nebraska - It's drier than 2012, 50 miles north there are ponds in the fields and crops drowning on the bottoms. The Missouri is nearly at flood stage and was high all winter due to crop releases and expected high snow melts yet the Dakota boys talk about how dry it is. Michigan and Wisconsin can't plant because it's too wet. Extremes everywhere and they are very close together and completely opposites. We're in serious trouble, have corn that has already fired near tree lines. Ponds are empty, grass is very short and some areas turning brown, alfalfa being cut and less than half of normal cutting, beans sprouted and now setting in dry dirt. Oh yea and it is not even memorial day.



## CROSSING WIRES

A place to share intelligent thoughts...

Milking It For All It's Worth: First came soy, then almonds, cashews and coconuts. Now, dairy companies are milking everything from peas and quinoa to flax, oats and hemp amid surging demand for plant-based alternative drinks. The growth in demand for non-dairy choices is surging as consumers increasingly seek healthier plant-based alternatives for their breakfast cereal and lattes. From what I understand, sales of fluid milk have declined 3 percent a year in the U.S. from 2012 to 2017 and 5 percent in western Europe. Also, global retail sales growth for alternatives has soared 8 percent annually over the past 10 years. Where is it all going? Read more [HERE](#).

Should I Stay Or Should I Go? The burden of paying back hefty loans is becoming too much for some college students to bear. In a recent survey of 3,069 students, MagnifyMoney found that 39 percent of those with loans would consider dropping out of school before graduation to avoid taking on more debt. Of those who would consider dropping out, more than half already owe \$20,000 or more. Another 15 percent owe between \$10,000 and \$19,999. However, the magnitude of the debt isn't the main reason students would consider giving up. Find out what is [HERE](#).

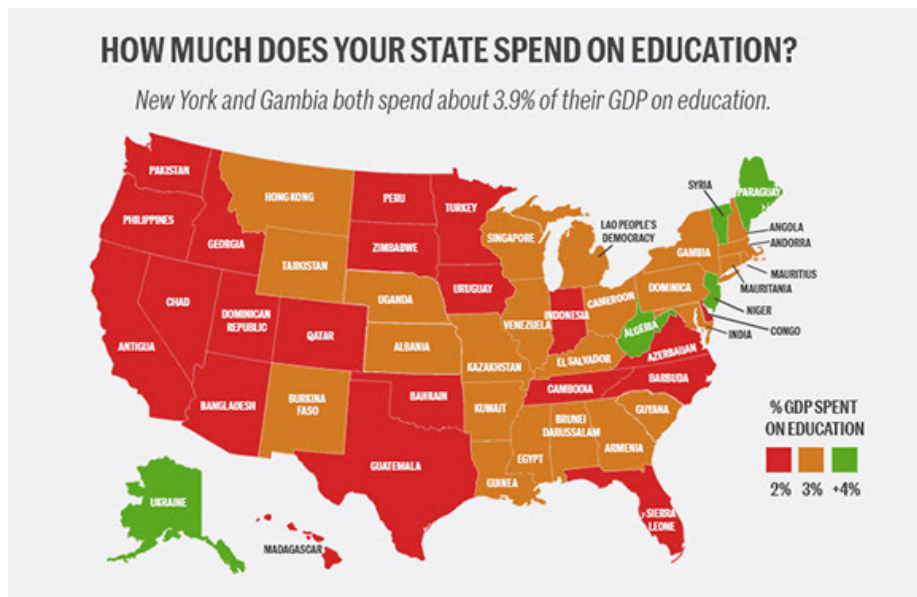
Future Of Military Health Monitoring: Keeping soldiers healthy — both mentally and physically — has long been a struggle, but there may soon be a high-tech solution. The army's surgeon general, Lt. Gen. Nadja West, has revealed that implantable monitoring devices may be the future of military medicine. From what I understand, soldiers would be monitored full time, looking for any patterns of injury or signs of early detection. I'm told a gold chip could be implanted in the soldiers' wrist allowing staff to collect data on blood sugar, oxygen levels and even sleep data, and even determining which soldiers may not be ready for battle. Read more [HERE](#).

Perspective On Tough Conversations: Piper Anderson taught theater to middle schoolers before facilitating discussions on mass incarceration. Discomfort, in her view, is crucial to really communicating. Anderson believes sharing stories builds trust more effectively than discussing opinions. She finds that people often adopt and harden their beliefs about certain issues over time—typically without critically reevaluating the premises of those beliefs. Gain more insights from Anderson's experience [HERE](#).

Are We Spending Enough On Educating Our Kids? United States spends only 5.6 percent of its gross domestic product on education, placing it 51st on the United Nations Development Program's list of 160 countries. Depending on how you view the importance of education this is embarrassing. Cuba spends 12.9 percent of its GDP, Denmark spends 8.7 percent, Moldova spends 8.6 percent, and Ghana spends 8.1 percent making West Africa great again. Here's a map depicting the



percentage of GDP that each state spends on education, along with the country that most closely matches its educational priorities.



#### "Stanley Cup Championship"... What You Need To Know

The Vegas Golden Knights are the first professional team to ever call Las Vegas their home. This also happens to be their inaugural season, and it has been a gem! The Knights are already considered the most successful expansion team in league history. I suspect if they can win the Stanley Cup it only solidifies their long list of accomplishments. Also, if the Knights win the Stanley Cup they will go down as the biggest pre-season underdogs in NHL history to ever win the championship. Keep in mind, no previous NHL expansion team had ever even finished with a .500 record in its first season. But thanks to new rules for the expansion draft and some savvy moves by general manager George McPhee, Las Vegas had one of the best records during the regular season -- and the team of castaways has played even better in the playoffs. This is perhaps why the Knights are actually favored to win the Stanley Cup verses the Washington Capitals, a team who has been in the league since 1974, but has yet to win a championship. The Knights are favored in this series (-135) and the Capitals (+115). This means if you bet \$135 on the Knights you will win \$100 and if you bet \$100 on the Capitals you will win \$115. Recent tweets show the odds have already been making some fairly large swings. Some sources now have the Knights at (-145), I suspect because of all the early action coming in on the Knights. Keep in mind, the Knights were a 500-1 long-shot at the beginning of the season to win the Stanley Cup. This means someone could have bet \$1,000 and now be hoping to cash a ticket worth \$500,000 if they can win it all. From what I understand, this could end up being one of the biggest losses in Las Vegas sports booking history. Supposedly there are many outstanding pre-season tickets as fans of the team plunked down bets in droves, some simply because they wanted a keepsake from the inaugural season. Don't feel too bad for the Sports Books, from the numbers we've seen Vegas hasn't had a losing month since July 2013. And the Capitals are going to be a formidable contender, recently winning two elimination games in a row against the Tampa Bay Lightning. Even though the Capitals have been in the league 44-years, they have only been to one Stanley Cup Championship, it was in the 1997-1998 season, which ended in being swept by the Detroit Red Wings. Ironically, the current general manager of the Knights, George McPhee, was the general manager for the Capitals during that very season. Personally, I'll be pulling for the Vegas Knights. One thing the team made crystal clear months ago, is the fact they were playing this season for their city. Remember, the Golden Knights played their opening franchise game just nine days after 58 people were gunned down while attending the Vegas Jason Aldean concert. The team actually breaks their huddle saying, "Vegas Strong." If you look at the history of sports during traumatic city events, you will see it tends to propel teams to a higher level. Most recently the Houston Astros won their first ever World Series after Hurricane Harvey hit. The Houston Rockets are now currently competing in the playoffs with the Golden State Warriors, who may be considered the best team ever in NBA history, following the Santa Fe High School shooting. The 2013 Boston Red Sox's won the World Series after the Boston Marathon

Bombing. The 2010 New Orleans Saints played at a higher level after Hurricane Katrina. It will be interesting to see if the Vegas Knights can keep the momentum going. The first game of the Stanley Cup Finals will start on Monday, May 28, at 8 pm in Vegas. Should be an awesome series to watch.



### **Indianapolis 500 Running Sunday**

Indianapolis Motor Speedway in Indiana will host the "Indy 500" this weekend. From what I hear, Sunday's forecasted high temperature is 90 degrees. The record for the warmest high temperature on race day is 92, set in 1937. The high was 91 degrees in 2012 and 1953. The high has reached 90 degrees or more just six times in the race's history. The average temperature is generally around 68 degrees, with the average high around 77 degrees. There have actually been three Indy 500 races where temps were 40 degrees or less. For fans, by far the biggest change for 2018's 102nd Running of the Indianapolis 500 is that any vehicles entering the speedway on race day will be subject to searches. They say the additional layer of security was prompted by "world events" that have included cars intentionally striking pedestrians, running through barricades or carrying explosives. Below are a few additional facts:

**In the Beginning:** *It was in 1908 that Carl Fisher and partners acquire 328 acres of farmland five miles northwest of downtown Indianapolis for \$72,000. The basic 2.5-mile track design begins. In 1911 Forty-six cars enter the first "500-mile Sweepstakes," 44 show up, and 40 qualify. Qualifying consists of sustaining 75 mph for a quarter-mile down Indy's front straight.*

**Only One Yard of Brick Remains:** *The earliest car races at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway took place on a track made from a mixture of crushed rock and tar, which caused a lot of problems for drivers. "They didn't realize it wasn't substantial enough," said Donald Davidson, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway historian. "But they soon realized it was a mistake and immediately put down a new surface made of 3.2 million paving bricks" each weighing 9.5 pounds. The track at The Brickyard, as it became known, was later covered in asphalt, except for a 36-inch strip at the start/finish line. That strip of exposed brick is now known as the Yard of Bricks.*

**Watching The Race On TV:** *ABC will be airing the Indy 500, with pre-race coverage beginning Sunday at 10 a.m. CST. The Indianapolis Motor Speedway website says the command for drivers to start their engines will take place at 11:12 p.m. CST and the race will unfold at 11:19 p.m. CST.*

**The Drivers:** *The 500-mile competition will feature 33 drivers. Ed Carpenter has taken the top starting spot for the third year in a row. Drivers Simon Pagenaud and Will Power will join him in Row 1 in the No. 2 and No. 3 spots, respectively.*

**Danica Patrick's Final Race -** *Danica qualified seventh for the final start of her career, meaning she'll start in Row 3. Keep in mind, she hasn't raced here in seven years.*

**Going For A Record Tying Four Wins:** *Helio Castroneves will be chasing a record-tying fourth 500 win from the No. 8 starting spot next to Danica Patrick. Three drivers in the past have won the Indianapolis 500 four times each: A.J. Foyt (1961, 1964, 1967, 1977); Al Unser (1970, 1971, 1978, 1987); Rick Mears (1979, 1984, 1988, 1991).*

**What Is The Distance Of One Lap?** *The track is 2.5 miles and has four distinct turns and straightaways, a layout unchanged since the facility opened in 1909. The front and back straightaways are 5/8th of a mile each, with the "short chute" straightaways between Turns 1 and 2 and Turns 3 and 4 at 1/8th of a mile each. Each of the four turns is 1/4th of a mile long.*

**What Is The Fastest Lap Ever Ran?** *Records indicate that in 1996, Arie Luyendyk ran a lap averaging 237.498 mph. Luyendyk turned a lap at 239.260 but it was during a practice run. It was the fastest unofficial lap ever at the Speedway, as practice laps are not official.*

**Why The Winner Drinks Milk In Victory Lane?** *Three-time Indianapolis 500 winner Louis Meyer regularly drank buttermilk to refresh himself on a hot day and happened to drink some in Victory Lane as a matter of habit after winning the 1936 race. An executive with what was then the Milk Foundation was so elated when he saw the moment captured in a photograph in the sports section of his newspaper the following morning that he vowed to make sure it would be repeated in coming years. There was a period between 1947-55 when milk was apparently no longer offered, but the practice was revived in 1956 and has been a tradition ever since.*



### **Memorial Day Tribute**

With the Memorial Day holiday taking place this Monday, I thought it would be appropriate to pass along three reminders about the sacrifices that have been made! Having a grandfather who served in WWII and a father who served in Vietnam, I was taught at an early age to be thankful for the freedoms my family enjoys and the sacrifices that have been made by others on my behalf. Below are three important reminders....

### **Estimated Number of Americans Killed and or Wounded While Defending Our Freedoms**

1775-1783 American Revolutionary War - 50,000 Wounded / 25,000 Dead  
1812-1815 War of 1812 - 20,000 Wounded / 15,000 Dead  
1846-1848 Mexican-American War - 17,500 Wounded / 13,300 Dead  
1861-1865 Civil War - 1,300,000 Wounded / 750,000 Dead  
1898 Spanish-American War - 6,000 Wounded / 2,500 Dead  
1898-1913 Philippine American War - 11,000 Wounded / 4,200 Dead  
1917-1918 World War I - 320,000 Wounded / 117,000 Dead  
1941-1945 World War II - 1,100,000 Wounded / 406,000 Dead  
1950-1953 Korean War - 128,000 Wounded / 40,000 Dead  
1955-1975 Vietnam War - 215,000 Wounded / 60,000 Dead  
1990-1991 Gulf War - 1,200 Wounded / 300 Dead  
2003-2011 Iraq War - 37,000 Wounded / 4,500 Dead  
2001 - Present ... War in Afghanistan - 20,000 Wounded / 2,500 Dead

### **Freedom Is Not Free... by Kelly Strong**

*I watched the flag pass by one day.  
It fluttered in the breeze.  
A young Marine saluted it,  
and then he stood at ease.  
I looked at him in uniform  
So young, so tall, so proud.  
With hair cut square and eyes alert  
He'd stand out in any crowd.  
I thought how many men like him  
Had fallen through the years.*



How many died on foreign soil?  
 How many mothers' tears  
 How many pilots' planes shot down?  
 How many died at sea?  
 How many foxholes were soldiers' graves?  
 No... freedom isn't free.  
 I heard the sound of TAPS one night,  
 When everything was still  
 I listened to the bugler play  
 And felt a sudden chill.  
 I wondered just how many times  
 That TAPS had meant "Amen,"  
 When a flag had draped a coffin  
 Of a brother or a friend.  
 I thought of all the children,  
 Of the mothers and the wives,  
 Of fathers, sons and husbands  
 With interrupted lives.  
 I thought about a graveyard  
 At the bottom of the sea  
 And unmarked graves in Arlington.  
 No... freedom isn't free.

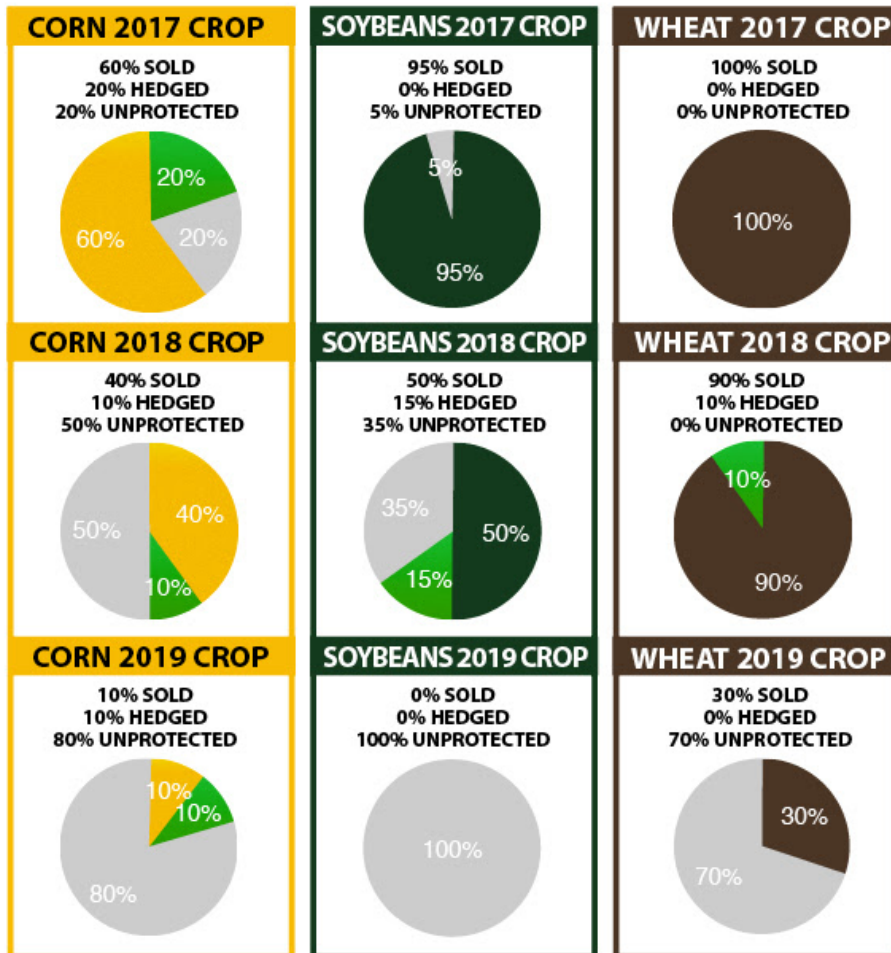
### MUST SEE VIDEO

I included a video I was sent several years ago. It was from a friend who had a son in the military. The video is of Brandon Lara, from New Braunfels, Texas, coming back home to the US. Brandon was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, from Camp Pendleton, Calif.; Brandon died July 19th at the age of 20 in Ubaydi, Iraq, while supporting US combat operations. A military flight from Dover Air Force Base, Del., that landed at about 10 a.m. at Randolph AFB brought his body home to awaiting family members and military officials. After a Marine Corps honor guard transferred the flag-draped casket from the aircraft to a hearse, the procession of base and local police cars, funeral home vehicles, family cars and more than 100 Patriot Guard motorcyclists traveled from base operations and then down Harmon Drive between the rows of people lining each side of the street. Just outside the gate, the motorcade passed under an American flag suspended between the buckets of two outstretched ladders from fire trucks from Live Oak, Texas, and Universal City, Texas. From the base, the motorcade travelled down FM 78 to FM 3009 and up Interstate 35 to New Braunfels. Like the scene along Harmon Drive, thousands of people in the community lined the streets in Universal City and Schertz leading to the highway. The video below is shot from the dash camera of a police car in the procession. The appreciation seen by the American people has stuck with me ever sense. I urge everyone to watch this video, pass it along and keep the spirit of our fallen soldiers alive. Click [HERE](#) it's certainly worth your time...



**ANSWER to riddle:** The doctor is the boys mother.

# CASH SALES & HEDGING TOTALS



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Fri, May 25, 2018 at 6:11 AM

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