

GOOD MORNING: 12/12/18 Farm Direction - Van Trump Report

1 message

The Van Trump Report <reply@vantrumpreport-email.com>

Wed, Dec 12, 2018 at 7:24 AM

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"Good things only happen when you are in motion." - Dan Sullivan

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2018
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Morning Summary: Stocks are starting the day higher. Trade headlines involving the Chinese seem as if they've once again improved. Talk circulating is that China has agreed to reduce auto tariffs and buy more American products, but the market is still waiting on rumors that China is going to buy large amounts of U.S. agriculture and energy. More good news is the fact a Canadian judge granted bail to Huawei Technologies finance chief Meng Wanzhou. From what I understand, she has a curfew and has to stay in and around the Vancouver area, but she's out of jail following more than week in detention. The uncertainty is that she could still be extradited to the U.S. facing criminal charges over violating Iran sanctions. President Trump also weighed in on the Huawei controversy, saying he was willing to intervene in the case if it helped secure a significant trade deal with China. Unfortunately, at the same time we are hearing better news regarding China, there are hearing increasing rumors and talk that leaders in Washington might be facing a budget showdown in the next couple of weeks, which could ultimately shut down the U.S. government. President Trump said, "I am proud to shut down the government for border security" and this seemed to rattle up the market. The trade has clearly developed a hypersensitivity to headlines as of late and everything seems to be creating extreme swings and wild market moves. Looking ahead, we still have major uncertainty surrounding Brexit and the overall health of the European Union. Italy is expected to submit a new budget proposal today, and the latest ECB rate decision will be released tomorrow. Here at home the remainder of the week, we have some inflationary data, updated retail sales figures, and industrial production numbers. Next week it will be all about the Fed and if they are going to once again raise interest rates? The odds were almost a certainty a few weeks back, but have since fallen back to around 70% probability. Personally, I think the Fed moves forward with the rate hike in December, then takes a bit more dovish tone towards 2019. Probably only one or two rate hikes will be forecast for the new year. Stay tuned... lots of geopolitical balls now in the air.

Could We See A Shutdown? *Investors are now becoming more concerned about whether Mr. Trump and lawmakers will reach an agreement by the December 21 deadline to keep much of the government open. From what I am hearing, insiders believe a closure is certainly a possibility with most saying there is a 25%-30% chance it will happen. From what I understand, the Department of the Interior and the Department of Homeland Security, as well as financial services and transportation would most likely be affected should a shutdown occur. Keep in mind, since the early 1980s, there have been three "true" shutdowns in which government operations were affected for more than three days, one was in 2013, and two occurred in the winter of 1995-96. I should mention that shutdowns in recent decades typically haven't corresponded with significant stock-market drops, according to data from LPL Financial. The S&P 500 SPX, has fallen 0.4% on average during the period of a closure. I did hear it suggested that if the president wanted to play real hardball, he'd shut down the air-traffic-control system, and within seconds bring the U.S. economy to a halt. I'm guessing we don't get to that point but I suspect the threat of it could be a card played by the president as he seeks the \$5 billion need for completion of the wall.*

Internet Tipping Point: *Half the world is now connected to the internet — 51% to be precise. The transformative moment for the world wide web was driven by a record number of Africans going online.*

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Who's Winning the Battle of Innovation? In the technology industry, the imperative to innovate is never-ending. After all, the speed of technological change is exponential – and if a company like Microsoft or Google misses one important trend, it can drastically alter the direction of future prospects. For the above reasons, both tech giants and unicorns are laser-focused on hiring the best engineering talent available and deploying it to come up with the new innovations, business models, and game-changing products that they feel comfortable betting their futures on. Click the link below to see an infographic from The UK Domain, showing the number of patents won by tech giants as well as unicorn startups. Specifically, it pulls data from the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office, categorizing hundreds of thousands of patents by company, technology, and even CEO. While the data is quite comprehensive, it's also worth noting that recent years of data may be incomplete because there is up to an 18-month lag between patent registration and those patents becoming public. Take a deeper look at who's winning the battle [HERE](#).

Warren Buffet Made a Call in 2008 That May Have Saved the Economy: In October 2008, in the midst of the financial crisis, Berkshire Hathaway CEO Warren Buffett made a late-night phone call to then-Treasury Secretary Henry "Hank" Paulson, with an idea about how the government might be able to turn the economy around. Paulson was asleep. He'd had a busy night working through various policy ideas with his team to restore confidence in Wall Street. "I was exhausted," he recounts on Vice Special Report's "Panic: The Untold Story of the 2008 Financial Crisis," a documentary that debuted Monday night on HBO. It features interviews with private sector and government officials on the front lines of the crisis, including former Presidents Barack Obama and George W. Bush. At the time, Congress had just passed the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act, or the "bailout bill" as it came to be known, and created a \$700 billion Troubled Assets Relief Program to purchase assets of failing banks. But these actions were not enough to calm investors. Read more [HERE](#) to find out what Buffet said.

102-Year-Old Skydiver Jumping For Charity: An Australian woman, Irene O'Shea, who is 102 years old and 194 days has become the oldest skydiver in the world while also raising awareness for motor neuron disease research. 10 years ago, Irene O'Shea's daughter died from motor neuron disease and she wanted to use this jump to help raise money for the cause. It wasn't the first time Irene O'Shea has jumped from an airplane, though. This is her third consecutive year skydiving with SA Skydiving in Wellington, Australia, which makes her way cooler than your average grandma. The record was previously held by Bryson William Verdun Hayes, a British D-Day veteran who jumped out of a plane in May of 2017 at the age of 101 years and 38 days old. Click [HERE](#) to watch Irene break the record.



If you have any troubles ordering the DVD's online please call our office at

(816) 322-5300

Today In History



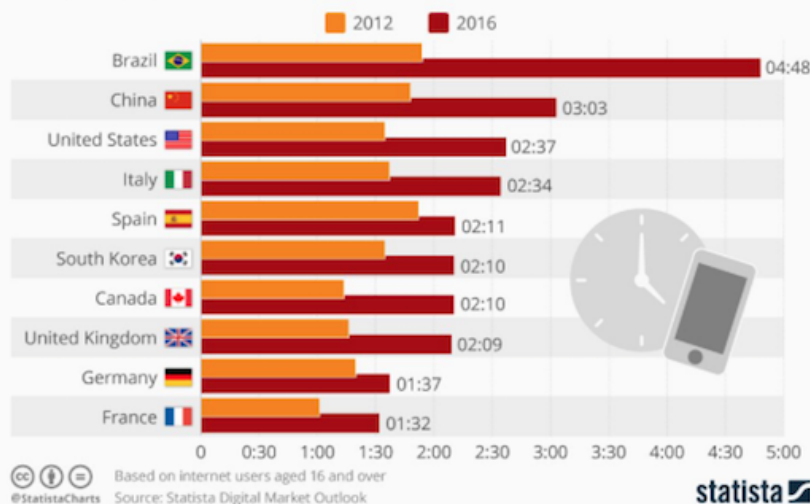
1901, Marconi's Wireless Overseas Transmission -

Italian physicist and radio pioneer Guglielmo Marconi succeeds in sending the first radio transmission across the Atlantic Ocean, disproving detractors who told him that the curvature of the earth would limit transmission to 200 miles or less. The message—simply the Morse-code signal for the letter “s”—traveled more than 2,000 miles from Poldhu in Cornwall, England, to Newfoundland, Canada. Born in Bologna, Italy, in 1874 to an Italian father and an Irish mother, Marconi studied physics and became interested in the transmission of radio waves after learning of the experiments of the German physicist Heinrich Hertz. He began his own experiments in Bologna beginning in 1894 and soon succeeded in sending a radio signal over a distance of 1.5 miles. Receiving little encouragement for his experiments in Italy, he went to England in 1896. He formed a wireless telegraph company and soon was sending transmissions from distances farther than 10 miles. In 1899, he succeeded in sending a transmission across the English Channel. That year, he also equipped two U.S. ships to report to New York newspapers on the progress of the America's Cup yacht race. That successful endeavor aroused widespread interest in Marconi and his wireless company. Marconi's greatest achievement came on December 12, 1901, when he received a message sent from England at St. John's, Newfoundland. The transatlantic transmission won him worldwide fame. Ironically, detractors of the project were correct when they declared that radio waves would not follow the curvature of the earth, as Marconi believed. In fact, Marconi's transatlantic radio signal had been headed into space when it was reflected off the ionosphere and bounced back down toward Canada. Much remained to be learned about the laws of the radio wave and the role of the atmosphere in radio transmissions, and Marconi would continue to play a leading role in radio discoveries and innovations during the next three decades. In 1909, he was jointly awarded the Nobel Prize in physics with the German radio innovator Ferdinand Braun. After successfully sending radio transmissions from points as far away as England and Australia, Marconi turned his energy to experimenting with shorter, more powerful radio waves. He died in 1937, and on the day of his funeral, all British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) stations

It's not kids' screen time you should worry about - it's yours wef.ch/2N6iPPM
#technology

Smartphone Addiction Tightens Its Global Grip

Hours per day spent online via a mobile device, per user

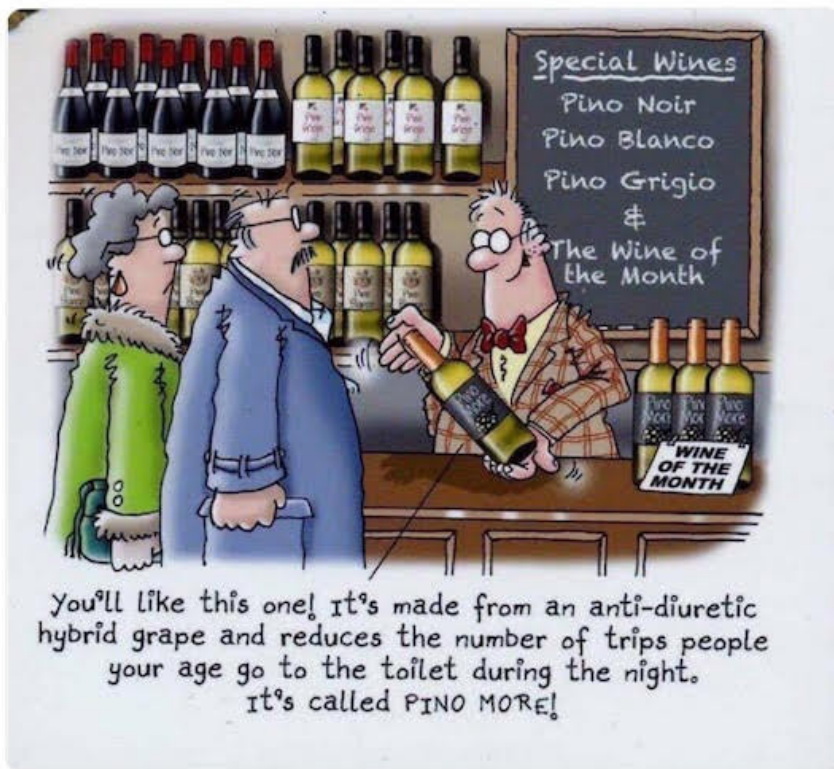


Greg Carpenter

@CowboyCubby

Following

Just what we needed!



were silent for two minutes in tribute to his contributions to the development of radio.



1917, Father Flanagan Establishes Boys Town -

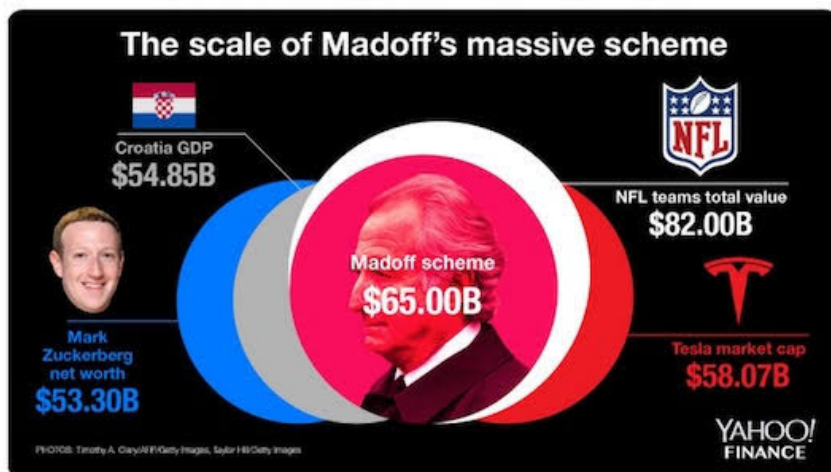
In Omaha, Nebraska, Father Edward J. Flanagan, a 31-year-old Irish priest, opens the doors to a home for troubled and neglected children, and six boys enter to seek a better life. Flanagan, who previously ran the Workingmen's Hotel, a haven for down-and-out workers in Omaha, understood that mistreated or orphaned children were at high risk of turning to delinquency and crime in later years. The location of what would become known as "Boys Town" rapidly filled up with the arrival of additional children. Many were sent by local courts, others were referred to the home by citizens, and some wandered off the streets and through the home's unlocked doors on their own accord. In the spring of 1918, no space was left in the drafty Victorian mansion at 106 North 25th Street, so Father Flanagan, assisted by sympathetic citizens, moved Boys Town to a building 10 times the size on the other side of town. The vacant building was the German-American Home, which, with the U.S. declaration of war against Germany in April 1917, had become the most despised building in the city. Within months, enrollment at Boys Town had soared to more than 100 boys, and a school was established that later grew into an institution with a grade school, a high school, and a career vocational center. Before the new building was four years old, more than 1,300 neglected boys from 17 states had passed through Boys Town. In 1921, Boys Town expanded again with the financial assistance of the people of Omaha, this time to a farm 10 miles west of Omaha. The institution remains at this site today and has changed its name to "Girls and Boys Town" to reflect its co-ed enrollment.



1980, Da Vinci Notebook -

American oil tycoon Armand Hammer pays \$5,126,000 at auction for a notebook containing writings by the legendary artist Leonardo da Vinci. The manuscript, written around 1508, was one of some 30 similar books da Vinci produced during his lifetime on a variety of subjects. It contained 72 loose pages featuring some 300 notes and detailed drawings, all relating to the common theme of water and how it moved. Experts have said that da Vinci drew on it to paint the background of his masterwork, the Mona Lisa. The text, written in brown ink and chalk, read from right to left, an example of da Vinci's favored mirror-writing technique. The painter Giuseppe Ghezzi discovered the notebook in 1690 in a chest of papers belonging to Guglielmo Della Porto, a 16th-century Milanese sculptor who had studied Leonardo's work. In 1717, Thomas Coke, the first Earl of Leicester,

Bernie Madoff's lawyer remembers the moment he learned of the \$65 billion Ponzi scheme yhoo.it/2EjgC2t by @ajshaps



Aquaculture is the fastest growing meat-producing sector in the world. Thanks in part to checkoff efforts, #USsoy has surpassed fish meal as the No. 1 source of aquaculture feed in the world. #Croportunity



bought the manuscript and installed it among his impressive collection of art at his family estate in England. More than two centuries later, the notebook—by now known as the Leicester Codex—showed up on the auction block at Christie's in London when the current Lord Coke was forced to sell it to cover inheritance taxes on the estate and art collection. In the days before the sale, art experts and the press speculated that the notebook would go for \$7 to \$20 million. In fact, the bidding started at \$1.4 million and lasted less than two minutes, as Hammer and at least two or three other bidders competed to raise the price \$100,000 at a time. The \$5.12 million price tag was the highest ever paid for a manuscript at that time; a copy of the legendary Gutenberg Bible had gone for only \$2 million in 1978. "I'm very happy with the price. I expected to pay more," Hammer said later. "There is no work of art in the world I wanted more than this." Lord Coke, on the other hand, was only "reasonably happy" with the sale; he claimed the proceeds would not be sufficient to cover the taxes he owed. Hammer, the president of Occidental Petroleum Corporation, renamed his prize the Hammer Codex and added it to his valuable collection of art. When Hammer died in 1990, he left the notebook and other works to the Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). Several years later, the museum offered the manuscript for sale, claiming it was forced to take this action to cover legal costs incurred when the niece and sole heir of Hammer's late wife, Frances, sued the estate claiming Hammer had cheated Frances out of her rightful share of his fortune. On November 11, 1994, the Hammer Codex was sold to an anonymous bidder—soon identified as Bill Gates, the billionaire founder of Microsoft—at a New York auction for a new record high price of \$30.8 million. Gates restored the title of Leicester Codex and has since loaned the manuscript to a number of museums for public display.

Upcoming Events

Tues. 12/11 - USDA Supply and Demand, Crop Production

Thur. 12/13 - Export Sales

Mon. 12/17 - NOPA Crush

Thur. 12/20 - Export Sales

Fri. 12/21 - Quarterly Cold Storage, Hogs and Pigs, Monthly Cattle on Feed, Personal Income

Mon. 12/24 - Christmas Eve; Market Closes at Noon CST

Tues. 12/25 - Christmas Day; US Markets Closed

Fri. 12/28 - Export Sales



Chris Eats
@eats_chris

Following

Bird's eye view #canola #windrowing
#Harvest2018



Kevin's Song of the Week

WHAT I'M LISTENING TO: ▶



▶ **Mason Ramsey**
"White Christmas"

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



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Following



#success #motivational lilachbullock.com



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.

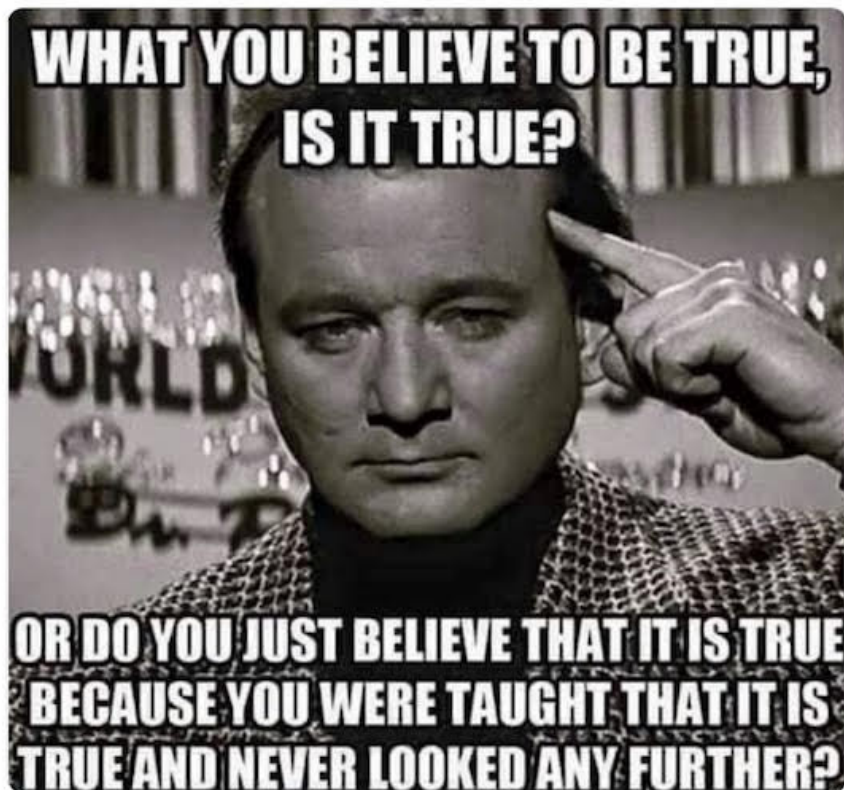
- Option #1 - Conservatively long.
- Option #2 - Aggressively long.
- Option #3 - Sitting on the sideline.

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.



GT fn' O
@GtoPmd

Following



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.

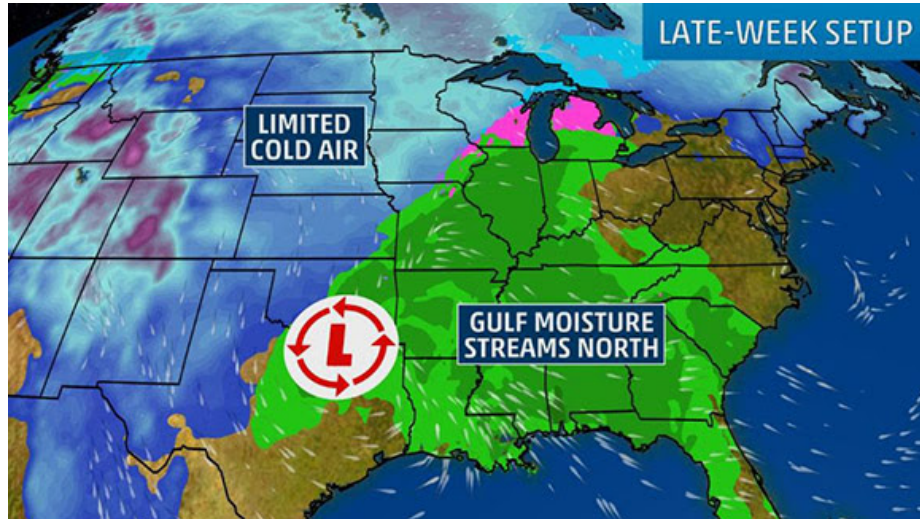
TODAY'S RIDDLE:

What loses it head in the morning and gets back at night?

Weather on the Plains, has seen temperatures rebound to above normal levels, although some snow remains on the ground across the northern half of the region. In western Texas, where considerable cotton remains in the field, the recently fallen snow has mostly melted. Across the corn belt, dry weather is accompanying a gradual warming trend. Some Midwestern producers have been able to complete harvest activities in recent days due to dry weather and fields that have firmed up due to either freezing or sufficiently drying out. In the South, cold, dry weather prevails in the wake of the recent snowfall. Due to cold weather, soggy soils, and lingering snow cover, fieldwork continues to languish in some areas. A warming trend will continue across much of the country, with above normal temperatures returning across most areas by the end of the week. Some of the most impressive warmth, relative to normal, will appear across the northern half of the U.S. Late in the week, however, a new storm

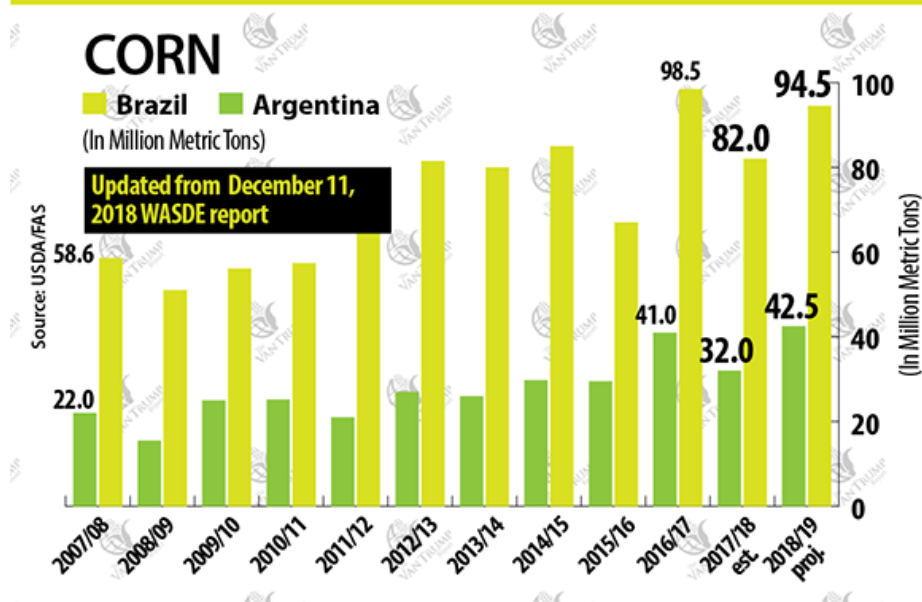
system will traverse the southern and Ohio Valley and portions of the middle and southern Atlantic States. In addition, late week snow could develop along the northern and western edge of the precipitation shield. Most of the remainder of the country will remain dry.

Another Late Week Storm Headed Our Way: *A new storm system will emerge over the central and eastern U.S., where it will likely produce more rain than snow or ice late this week into the weekend. By Thursday, the storm will be over the plains and Midwest before moving toward the East Coast into the weekend. Any snow or ice will be very limited and confined to the nation's northern tier. Locally heavy rain is likely in portions of the South late this week. There could also be severe thunderstorms in a few parts of the South.*



Corn bulls continue to pin hopes on Chinese buying. There's been more talk circulating that the Chinese will soon be buying both U.S. corn and ethanol. There is also headlines circulating that the Chinese are trying to massively increase their ethanol production capacity. Bulls are hoping this ultimately means more U.S. corn being shipped to China. Bears are quick to point out this is still just rumor and talk. The fact of the matter is the USDA just raised U.S. ending stocks by +45 million bushels. The biggest concern is the -50 million bushel reduction in corn used for ethanol. Another concern is the Ukraine and Romania crops are getting bigger. Meaning more export competition coming to the marketplace. As I've mentioned the past several weeks, there are starting to be some holes punched in the demand story. This helps confirm some of the bearish thoughts. South American production was left "unchanged" in this report, but keep in mind Argentina is forecast to produce 42.5 MMTs this year vs. just 32.0 MMTs last year, Brazil is forecast to produce 94.5 MMTs this year vs. just 82.0 MMTs last year. The good news is the market is more concerned with Chinese possibilities than the facts surrounding traditional supply and demand. I should also note, the USDA narrowed its price range from \$3.25 to \$3.95 per bushel, which seems to be a fairly widespread estimate inside the trade. As a producer, I'm paying close attention to this estimate as the USDA has been very good with this forecast. I'm also hearing a lot of technical traders in the market talking about much heavier resistance on the charts between here and \$4.10 per bushel. In other words, we might want to have some resting sell orders in place in case the Chinese headlines hit the trade. There's some talk we could see a "buy the rumor sell the fact" type of play following the actual release or confirmation of the headlines. Remember, it's not just about "having a plan", the real money is made in the "execution". I still see this as an environment where I'm just looking to hit singles and get on base. From my perspective, cash-flow and margins are just too tight to be swinging for the fences or trying to stretch it into a double.

South American CORN Production



Soybean producers and traders are trying to make heads or tails of the recent rumors out of Washington and the fact they might be delaying the second round of additional payments from the \$12 billion Market Facilitation Program. It sounds like Washington believes the Chinese are going to resume buying U.S. soybeans and the subsidies will no longer be needed. This optimistic talk of exports to China resuming in some capacity should help keep new bears from entering the marketplace, at least until the specifics of the purchases are announced. The kicker is we are still sitting on a record amount of U.S. soybean supply, 955 million bushels. The USDA made no balance sheet adjustments in yesterday's report, electing to leave everything "unchanged" until they learn more. From my perspective, that seems like the right move considering all of the recent balls tossed in the air and uncertainty in play. Adding to the bearish fundamentals, the USDA raised global ending stocks, bumping Brazil's production estimate +1.5 MMTs higher to another all-time record of 122.0 MMT's. The U.S. season-average soybean price for 2018/19 is forecast at \$7.85 to \$9.35 per bushel. As a producer, make certain you are paying close attention to the NOV19 new-crop contract, which just posted its highest close since mid-June, just north of \$9.60 per bushel. Keep in mind, this is also about +\$1.00 higher than the summer low. There's some talk that a Chinese purchase announcement could push us up to between \$9.75 and \$10.00 per bushel, but the question is do we risk getting greedy? I'm personally wanting to look long and hard at feathering in some sales on the move higher. There are a few dry weather headlines starting to pop up in Brazil that could soon make things a bit more interesting, but I'm worried about trying to ride the rally for too long. I prefer the boxing analogy..."stick and move". I don't want to get caught flatfooted...

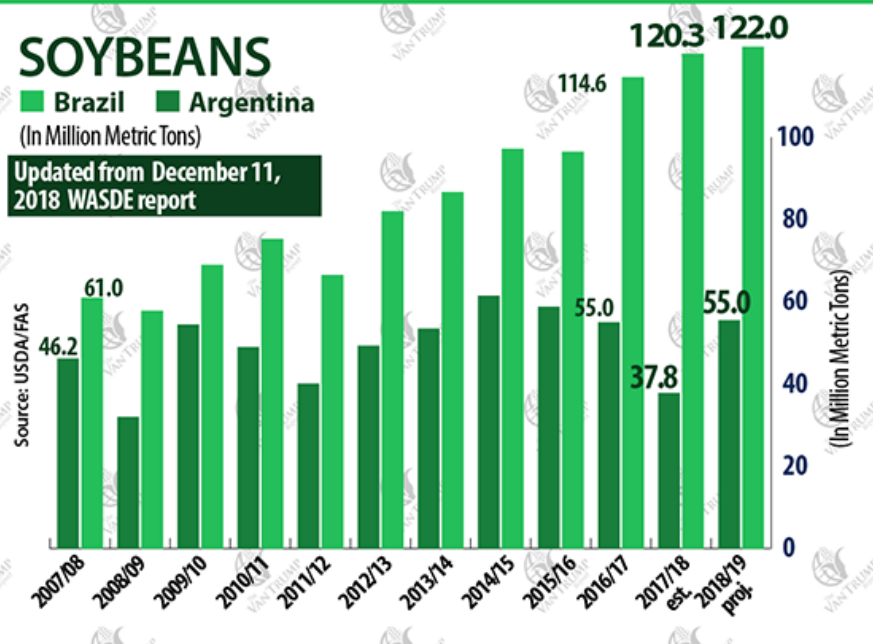
South American SOYBEAN Production

SOYBEANS

■ Brazil ■ Argentina

(In Million Metric Tons)

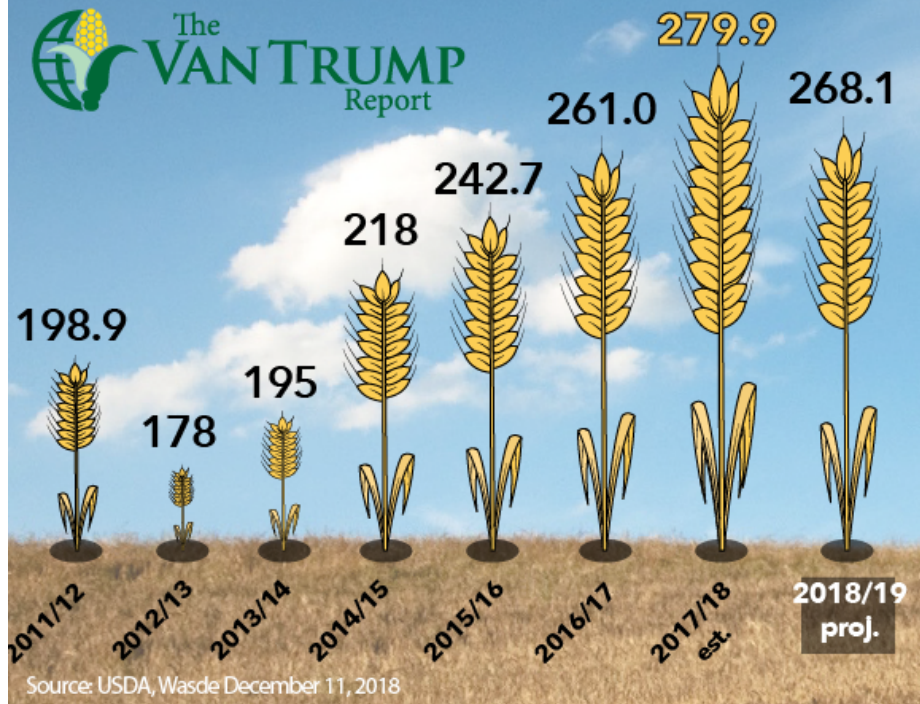
Updated from December 11,
2018 WASDE report



Wheat bears are digesting another reduction in U.S. exports. The USDA lowered their U.S. export estimate by -25 million bushels, in turn raising ending stocks to 974 million bushels. Bulls point to the fact this is still 11% lower than last year and optimistic in U.S. exports eventually gaining some momentum. All of the reduction in exports were in Hard Red Winter, which was partially offset by higher exports of Hard Red Spring and Soft Red Winter. Globally, the trade is digesting Australian production being lowered from 17.5 MMTs down to 17.0 MMTs, which is the lowest wheat output for Australia since 2007/08. Canada's wheat production is raised +300,000 tons to 31.8 MMTs. Russian exports, where increased +1.5 MMTs to 36.5 million. Global ending stocks are raised 1.4 million tons to 268.1 MMTs, but is still -4% lower than last year's record 279.9 MMTs. Bottom-line, traditional supply and demand fundamentals seem to remain bearish, but the non-traditional headlines are keeping me aligned on the bullish side of the market. I continue to keep a close eye on the headlines surrounding Chinese trade, the Russian-Ukraine conflict, uncertainty in the European Union, etc... Staying conservatively bullish despite the burdensome supply.

World Ending Stocks

Wheat (in million metric tons)



> Senate Farm Bill Passes: On Tuesday, the Senate voted 87 to 13 to approve a farm bill that will cost \$867 billion over 10 years, legalize the production of hemp, expands farm subsidies to the extended family of farmers, permanently funds farmers markets and farmer-training programs, and doesn't add work requirements to receive food stamps, as House Republicans had wanted. The bill is expected to pass the House vote next week.

> Schroder Steps Down as Bunge CEO: Investor pressure has led to the resignation of Chief Executive Officer Soren Schroder after five years at the helm. Weak earnings results beginning last year forced the issue as it left the company vulnerable to takeover attempts by rivals Glencore Plc and ADM.

> White Wheat Exports Forecast At Highest Level In More Than 20 Years: U.S. white wheat exports are forecast at 5.3 million tons (220 million bushels), up 14% from last year and the highest since 1996/97. However, sales to date are actually down from a year ago, mainly due to lost sales to China. Exports are expected to pick up in the coming months based on strong demand from Asian countries. Drought in Australia, the main competitor for U.S. wheat in the region, should push more demand to U.S. white wheat.

> Increased Brazilian Soy Exports Create Gains for Dreyfus and Olam: Thanks to the trade war with China, Louis Dreyfus Company and Olam International Ltd saw big gains in their exports in 2018. Dreyfus and Olam had the highest percentage increases in soybean exports out of the South American nation in the January-November period, compared to a year earlier.

> Minnesota Sets Cut-Off Date for Dicamba: The Minnesota Ag Department set a June 20 cut-off for use of the weedkiller dicamba on row crops, a new restriction intended to reduce the chance of damage to neighboring fields. (Source: Farm Journal)

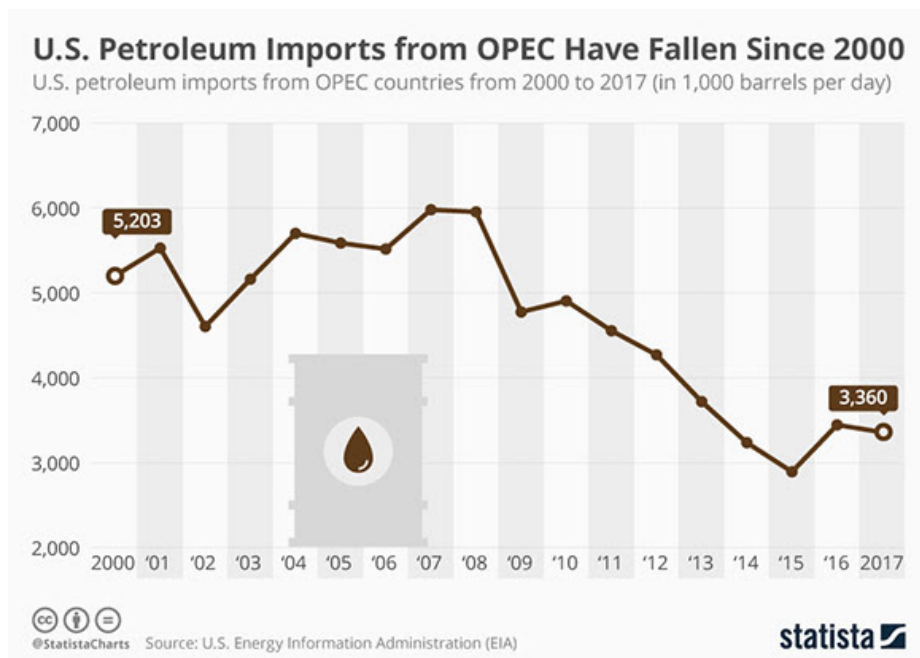
> Ag Groups Looking to Make Trade Deals with Japan: A handful of ag groups are hoping President Trump's administration to reach a speedy trade agreement with Japan in the coming months. Some analysts believe the U.S. beef industry is at risk of losing significant market share in Japan unless action is taken. Understand, Japan is the fourth largest market for U.S. pork and grain producers. (Source: Politico)

> South Carolina Ups Aid Request from Hurricane Florence: The state is asking for an additional \$327 million in federal funds to provide relief following Hurricane Florence, after officials increased flood damage estimates. Over. Henry McMaster is increasing the request from \$108 million to \$435 million. (Source: AP)

> Mercedes Is Going Green In A Big Way: The German automaker said it would by more than \$22.75 billion in battery cells for electric vehicles by 2030, in preparation for "the electric future of our company." Mercedes-Benz, its marquee luxury division, plans to release 130 electric and hybrid vehicles by 2022.

> Samsung Kills Headphone Jack After Years Of Mocking Apple: Samsung today introduced its latest smartphone, the Galaxy A8s. It is Samsung's first smartphone with an Infinity-O display, which has a nearly edge-to-edge, uninterrupted design beyond a small hole for the front-facing camera. It is also Samsung's first smartphone without a headphone jack, much to the amusement of iPhone users, as Samsung has mocked Apple for over two years over its decision to remove the headphone jack from the iPhone 7 starting back in 2016. Just like with Apple, the only way to use your traditional 3.5 mm jack you have to have a "dongle" or adapter. It's funny how the tables turn... (Source: The Verge)

> Look At How Much U.S. Oil Imports Have Fallen Since 2000: OPEC recently met in Vienna and agreed to cut production by 1.2 million barrels per day, with the exception of Iran. As of today, the U.S. is a net oil exporter for the first time in 75 years, meaning the amount of crude oil the U.S. exports exceeds the country's imports. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, since 2000 the U.S. was importing over 5,000 barrels of petroleum products per day from OPEC countries. In 2017, that had fallen to just above 3,000 barrels of petroleum products per day, a roughly 35% drop in imports. (Source: Statista, EIA)



Northern Ohio – We are harvesting soybeans with snow on the ground in the middle of December. We have rarely found ourselves harvesting soybeans this late, but it has happened one other time that I can remember. The beans are actually still making 64-67 bushels at 16-17% moisture. We are running the header above the ground ever so slightly to keep the moisture out of the machine, so I think we could actually be making over 70 if conditions were a little better. The beans are coming off easier then I thought

when it comes to shelling the beans from the pod, which I think has a lot to do with the 10 degrees that we are sitting at in the middle of the night. We seem to do better the later we go and the colder it gets. Like I said harvest for December in the middle of December could be much worse.

Central Iowa – I want to start off by saying we got way too much rain in June. I think we got close to 20 inches of rain. If we had good drainage, we made record yields if the ground was flat and didn't drain, we saw corn that was close to 50 bushels less than the fields with drainage. The fields with rolling hills came right in the middle. I would say they were a better representation of our entire farm. We would say we had average corn, good corn and great corn so we are pretty happy with the way things turned out. Harvest was like everyone else, slow and tedious.

Central Missouri – We are done with harvest and it was one of the better crops we have ever seen. The corn was 250 bushels on most of our ground, but our biggest problem we faced this year, we just didn't sell enough. One thing I'm going to do is get in front of next year and start making sales before we drop below \$4.00. We were fortunate enough to get our Trump payment but now I'm hearing we are not going to get the second payment. Our farm is going to be okay either way, but I know a lot of guys even in this area that produced a good crop are really banking on that second payment which is not going to happen. Might be some ground to pick up next year, I guess.



Honeybees May Finally Have Some Help in First-Ever Vaccine: *Scientists are hoping a new vaccine will protect honeybees against the American foulbrood disease as well as against other major pathogens. The vaccine helps the bee's immune system recognize harmful diseases early on in life, similar to the way antibodies in the human body recognize diseases. When the queen bee consumes foulbrood bacteria, the vitellogenin protein binds with the pathogenic molecules, which are then passed along in her eggs. The developing baby bees' immune systems then recognize the foulbrood bacteria as an intruder, setting off an immune response that protects the bee from the disease. Read more [HERE](#) how researcher believe they can stave off future deadly pathogens.*

Did You Know Your Phone Could Do That? *If you have a smartphone, storing appointments and destinations are all apart of daily life, as well as being central to your communications with friends, loved ones and co-workers. Research and investigative reporting continue to reveal the degree to which your smartphone is aware of what you're up to and where you are – and how much of that information is shared with companies that want to track your every move, hoping to better target you with advertising. Read more [HERE](#) to better understand what that powerful technology in your pocket can do.*

How Photography Shapes Our Travel Experiences: *The standardization of travel all started in the 18th century, as guidebooks began directing visitors to "picturesque" views that looked like paintings. People would record their memories with the gadgets of the day, until one day with the introduction of George Eastman's lightweight, foolproof camera in 1888. At this point, hordes of tourists could quickly press a button to capture their individual experiences ... which strangely enough, turned out to be more or less identical. According to sociologist Dean MacCannell, that's because photographs actually created the attractions in the first place. Read more [HERE](#) how our travels are definitely influenced by the pictures we take.*

Oklahoma Highschooler Changes What We Know About Chemistry: *Everyone learns in high school chemistry class that carbon, the essential molecule of life, can form up to four bonds with other atoms. Those four bonds allow carbon to form the compounds that make life livable, like carbon dioxide, natural gas, and even booze. But as Inverse reported this year, George Wang, a teenager attending the Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics, discovered that under very special circumstances, carbon can form not only four but seven bonds. I'm told the discovery, Wang and his co-authors wrote, can be applied to improve chemical synthesis and hydrogen storage, which could have huge implications for the future of fuel. Impressively, Wang spent his personal time over the summer break making this discovery, that's what I call making things happen! Read more [HERE](#).*

Armadillos Keep Marching North: *The armadillo, or "little armored one" in Spanish, has been on a march across the U.S. from Texas for at least the last 169 years, and it's now calling the St. Louis area home. Armadillos entered southern Missouri in the 1970s,*

and are now sighted in every county in the state, said Tom Meister, a wildlife biologist with the Missouri Department of Conservation who handles damage caused by animals. In Texas, armadillos are mascots, bar decorations and the butt of old jokes — like "Why did the chicken cross the road? To show the armadillo it could be done." Or "What's armadillo mean in Spanish? Speed bump. I'm told that the little-armoured animals have also rooted their way even farther north, and crossed the Mississippi River into Southern Illinois. I've even seen them in Iowa and Nebraska as I've traveled. Read more [HERE](#) on how the armadillos are finding new homes outside the southern borders.

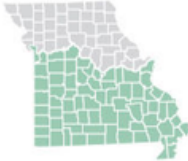


THE NINE-BANDED ARMADILLO

Armadillo is Spanish for “little armored one.”

20

There are **20 varieties**, but only one – the nine-banded armadillo – has made it as far north as the United States.



IN MISSOURI

The nine-banded armadillo continues to expand its domain, first venturing into the St. Louis area within the last 25 years. They are primarily found in the southern half of the state, according to the Missouri Department of Conservation.



x4

The nine-banded armadillo almost always gives birth to **identical quadruplets**.

6in.

Armadillos have terrible eyesight, but they can **sniff out an insect as far as 6 inches** underground.

4ft.

Armadillos can **jump up to 4 feet in the air** when scared. That may ward off coyotes, but proves ineffective against a 2012 Honda minivan, instead often propelling them right into the grill of oncoming vehicles.



Contrary to popular belief, **most armadillos do not curl themselves into balls** when frightened. Only three-banded armadillos do that, and they are not found in the U.S.

Armadillos can make themselves their own floaty. They can't float normally because of their armor, but **armadillos can cross bodies of water by gulping air into their lungs** to make them buoyant.

Some people in Central and South America eat armadillo, which reportedly tastes like pork or chicken. **During the Great Depression, the animals were eaten** by hungry people in the U.S., earning them the nickname “Hoover Hogs.”

Armadillos are the only animal that **can give humans leprosy**. (Don't worry, though, your risk of catching the disease is extremely low especially if you are not eating armadillos for dinner.)

SOURCES: Nine-banded armadillo photo courtesy of the Wildlife Rescue Center; Associated Press (Three-banded armadillo photo); Missouri Department of Conservation | Post-Dispatch

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE

Kevin Van Trump



WHAT'S REALLY IN YOUR FEED?

ENZYMES FOR HEALTHIER, GREENER LIVESTOCK

WEBINAR 12/13 AT 3PM CT
PRESENTED BY: AGRIVIDA

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



During 2018, iSelect, The VanTrump Report and The Yield Lab Institute are sponsoring a series of weekly webinars featuring the best in agriculture innovation. Agrifood Conversations is all about driving innovation and each month will highlight a specific theme, from biologicals to vertical farms, featuring emerging topics such as soil health, biologics, plant genetics, vertical farming, precision agriculture, herd health and management, and aquaculture, to name a few. Once a quarter, we'll open up the conversation with a panel of experts on that month's topic. Learn about new trends in ag, connect with industry leaders and discover new solutions.

Join us each Thursday at 3pm CT for [Agrifood Conversations](#).

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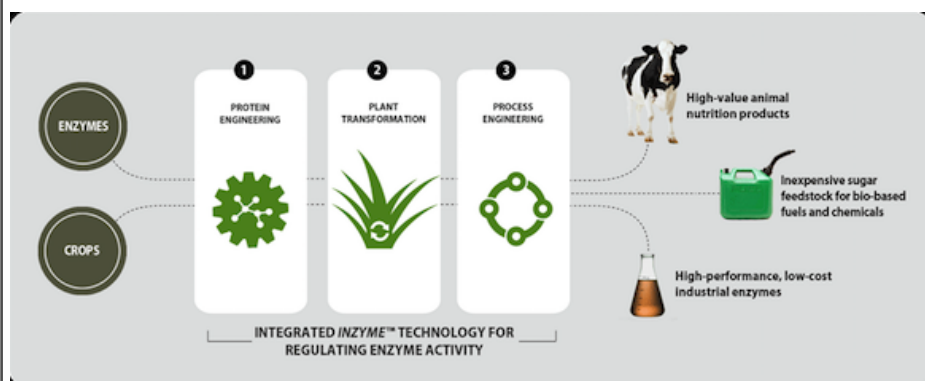


Learn More About "Agrivida"

Title: What's Really in Your Feed?

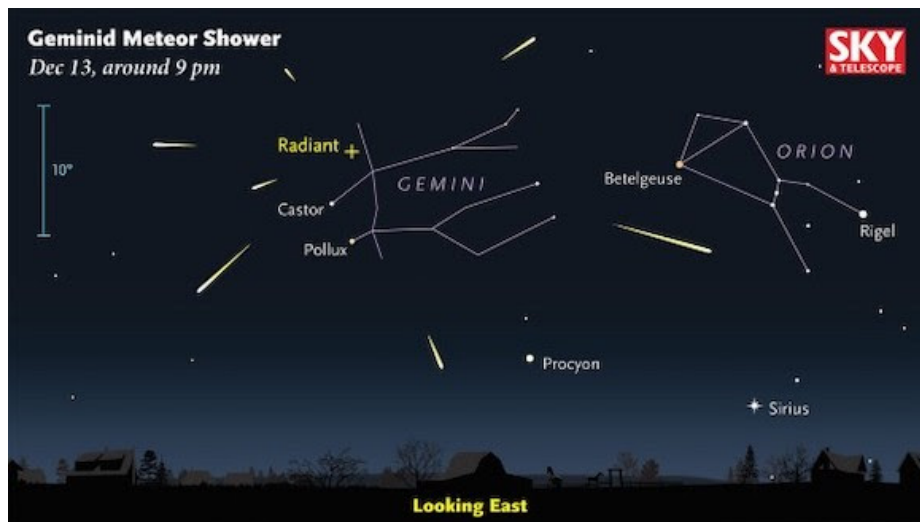
Time: Thursday, December 13 @ 3:00 pm CT

Enzymes are nothing new. These highly beneficial proteins have been added to animal diets for decades, improving the availability and digestion of nutrients from plant-based feeds, and helping convert nutrients into both energy and the building blocks of cells. Ultimately, these proteins contribute to better health and growth in livestock animals. Agrivida's platform produces enzymes inside kernels of corn, offering a natural, convenient, and profitable way to introduce beneficial enzymes such as phytase and glucanase into animal diets by simply replacing a small amount of corn with Agrivida's corn. Feed enzymes optimize nutritional performance, enabling livestock to excrete less phosphorus, nitrogen, and undigested carbohydrates into the environment. What's more, they can help improve digestibility and performance, boosting the feed conversion ratio and improving yields naturally. Learn how one company is working to improve the manufacture and use of these enzymes at "What's Really in Your Feed? Enzymes for Healthier, Greener Livestock," a webinar to be held at 3 pm CT on December 13th featuring Dan Meagher, President & CEO of Agrivida.



One of the Best Meteor Showers of the Year

The Geminid meteor shower, which is generally the strongest we will see in any year, will reach its peak and be the easiest to see tomorrow night, Thursday, December 13th. There will be hundreds of meteors streaking across the night sky. In fact, experts from the American Meteor Society say some people will be able to see up to 120 multi-colored meteors per hour. From what I understand, the Geminids will peak on Thursday night into early Friday morning, but onlookers should be able to spot plenty of meteors tonight as well as on Friday night. In addition to being the most active meteor shower of the year, it is also one of the few showers where meteors are visible during the evening hours. Most meteor showers tend to have better meteor rates after midnight, but the Geminids will be very active all night, which is good for younger observers trying to spot some meteors on a school night. One reason why the Geminid meteor shower is the most reliable shower of the year is because of the celestial object that causes it. The meteor shower is triggered by an interesting object called "3200 Phaethon", which is a comet/asteroid hybrid. It orbits the sun about every 550+ days. This object puts out a fresh batch of debris every other year. This makes the Geminid meteor shower very consistent. In fact, some argue it has actually increased in intensity every other year since being first written about in 1862. It is believed that the meteors are traveling about 79,000 miles per hour. The Geminids will be visible all around the globe, but tend to favor the Northern Hemisphere. One common misconception is that people need to look in a certain part of the sky to see meteors, when in fact meteors will be able to be seen in all areas of the sky. The reason most people don't see meteors is because they don't allow their eyes enough time to adjust. Experts say it takes close to a half hour to get your eyes fully adjusted to the contrast of darkness and light. If you have a bright moon in your area, they say you need to stand with your back facing the moon as it allows your eyes to adjust better. (Source: [AccuWeather](#))



The Old Shoes In Church

Below is a little something that I've run in the past and it made me stop and think about doing more for folks who might be struggling. I'm sure you may have seen this simple poem before, but I wanted to pass it along this holiday season in hopes it can help rekindle and spread the spirit!

*I showered and shave
I adjusted my tie.
I got there and sat
In a pew just in time.*

*Bowing my head in prayer
As I closed my eyes.
I saw the shoe of the man next to me
Touching my own. I sighed.*

*With plenty of room on either side
I thought, 'Why must our soles touch?'
It bothered me, his shoe touching mine.
But it didn't bother him which made it fine.*

*A prayer began: 'Our Father'
I thought, 'This man with the shoes, has no pride.
They're dusty, worn, scratched and holes on the side!'*

*'Thank You for blessings,' the prayer went on.
The shoe man said A quiet 'Amen.'*

*I tried to focus on the prayer
But my thoughts were on his shoes again.
Aren't we supposed to look our best. When walking through that door?
'Well, this certainly isn't it,' I thought, glancing toward the floor.*

*Then the prayer was ended
And the songs of praise began
The shoe man was certainly loud
Sounding proud as he sang
His voice lifted the rafters
His hands were raised high
The Lord could surely hear
The shoe man's voice from the sky.*

*It was time for the offering
And what I threw in was steep.
I watched as the shoe man reached into his pockets so deep.
I saw what was pulled out
What the shoe man put in.
Then I heard a soft 'clink' as when silver hits tin.*

*The sermon really bored me, and that's no lie.
It was the same sermon told to the shoe man, but tears fell from his eyes.
At the end of the service
As is the custom here
We must greet new visitors
And show them all good cheer.*

*But I felt moved somehow
And wanted to meet the shoe man.
So after the closing prayer I reached over and shook his hand.
He was old and his skin was dark and his hair was truly a mess
But I thanked him for coming and for being our guest.*

*He said, 'My name's Charlie, I'm glad to meet you, my friend.'
There were tears in his eyes, but he still had a large, wide grin.
'Let me explain,' he said, Wiping tears from his eyes.
'I've been coming here for months, and you're the first to say 'Hi.'
'I know that my appearance is not like all the rest.
'But I really do try to always look my best.'
'I always clean and polish my shoes before my very long walk.'
'But by the time I get here they're dirty and dusty, like chalk.'*

*My heart was filled with pain
And I swallowed to hide my tears.
As he continued to apologize, for sitting so near
He said, 'When I get here, I know I must look a sight.'
'But I thought if I could touch you, Then maybe our souls might unite.'*

*I was silent for a moment
Knowing whatever was said
Would pale in comparison
So I spoke from my heart, not my head.*

*'Oh, you've touched me,' I said, 'And taught me, in part'
'That the best of any man, Is what is found in his heart.'
The rest, I thought, This shoe man will never know.
Like just how thankful I really am, That his dirty old shoe touched my soul.*



**"No act of kindness,
no matter how small,
is ever wasted."**

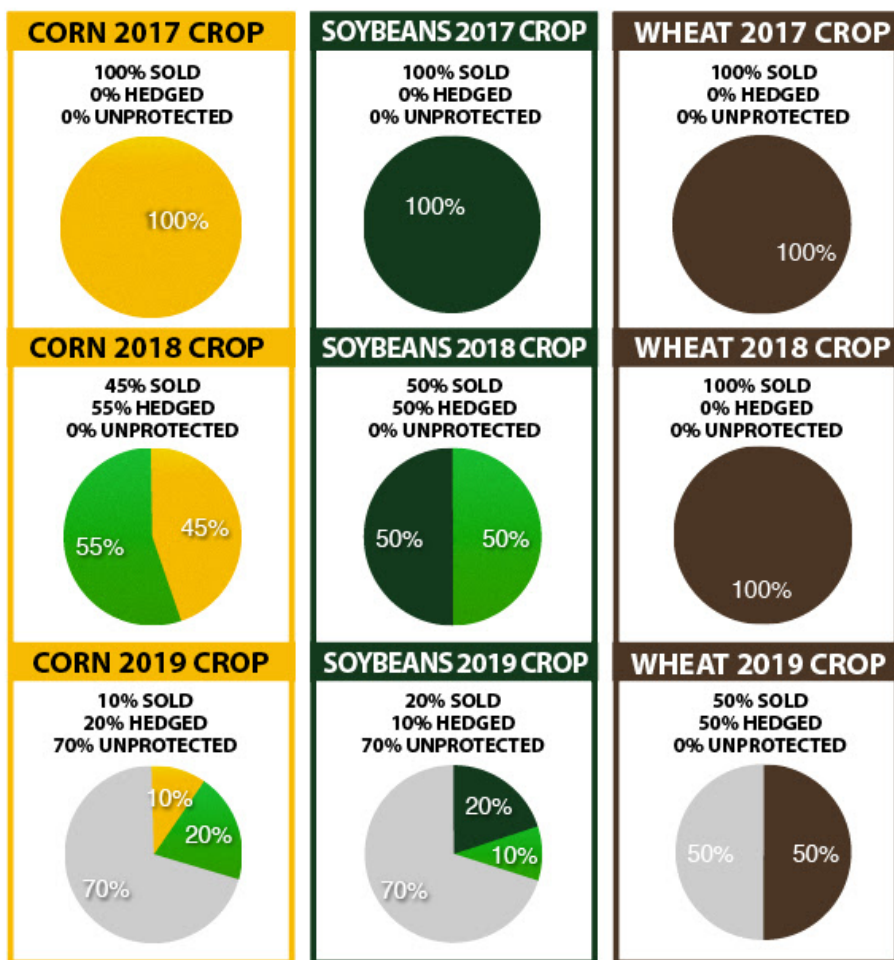
~ Aesop



ANSWER to riddle: A pillow.

CASH SALES & HEDGING TOTALS

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