

GOOD MORNING: 12/13/18 Farm Direction - Van Trump Report

1 message

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

Thu, Dec 13, 2018 at 7:43 AM

Reply-To: Jordan <reply-feba157870610d74-314_HTML-36250946-100003450-1@vantrumpreport-email.com>

To: info@farmdirection.com



"The question to settle is not what we would do if we had means, time, influence and educational advantage. The question is what we will do with what we already have." – **Hamilton Wright Mabie**

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2018
[Printable Copy](#) or [Audio Version](#)

Morning Summary: Stock market bulls are trying to find a way to build momentum, but bears are not giving up, insisting this is the beginning of a much larger bear market. Bond king Jeffrey Gundlach and several other very respected traders continue to voice their opinion and point to several reasons why stocks will continue to struggle. I'm not necessarily of the same opinion. I can certainly see and point to the bearish headlines and reasons for uncertainty, but at the same time, I think the U.S. consumer is still in good shape and the global economies might soon start finding better traction. Could we continue to feel nearby pressure and be pulled lower? Certainly. Longer-term however, I like the bullish setup. I like the demographics of the millennials, their strong rate of unemployment, and the fact they are just starting to enter the stages of increased spending. Some of the new pro-business policies put in play in Washington should also help provide some longer-term tailwinds as we move forward. The Fed seems to be walking back their hawkish rhetoric a bit, but I still see the economy as being strong enough that we should expect another rate hike in December, and perhaps one or two more in 2019. Crude oil prices have pulled back aggressively the past 90-days, down almost -25%. I believe the cheaper prices at the pump will also help the U.S. consumer. If oil prices were to continue tumbling, I would probably start singing a different tune. Since the oil business has become so big for the U.S., at some point, lower prices will start to work against our economy, as jobs, debt, and lack of spending inside the sector would create fear and uncertainty. Moral of the story, we are starting to be a significant exporter of energy, so we can't afford for prices to fall too far. There's also some talk that tumbling oil prices could create more global stress as tensions in the Middle East will certainly flare. The market is also paying closer attention to the European Union. U.K Prime Minister Theresa May won a crucial vote of confidence in her leadership yesterday. Winning this vote means her leadership cannot be challenged for another year. But there's still a ton of uncertainty surrounding Brexit and how it's all going to play out into the March 29th deadline date. I've heard several traders are starting to fear the worst, thinking that Britain's political paralysis will force it to go crashing out of the European Union without an approved deal. If that plays out, several speculate that it could result in chaos at the ports, major trade complications, empty grocery store shelves, soaring domestic inflation, aircraft and travel complications, and the obvious threat of the economy falling into a knee-jerk recession. Lets also keep in mind many large global banks are tied to debt in the U.K. I should also note, the markets are paying close attention to the ongoing debt problems in Italy, the massive widespread protests taking place in France, and the fact Angel Merkel has announced she will be stepping down as the German Chancellor. With the European people now questioning the leadership of Merkel, Macron, and May, along with the massive immigration problem and political populism now spreading across the continent, there's certainly some concerns worth monitoring. Don't forget, the European Central Bank is scheduled to release their latest monetary policy decision this morning. Here at home data will be fairly light. Tomorrow we have the latest Retail Sales data and Industrial Production numbers. Next week, it's all about the Fed and the two day policy meeting scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday.

Here We Go... *The Chinese government has detained two Canadian citizens, escalating a diplomatic spat that began with Canada detaining Huawei CFO Meng Wenzhou.*

SPECIAL Subscriber Pricing
3-DVD SET ONLY \$99



VTC18

The Conference Everyone Is Talking About



Learn insight and thoughts from some of the best and brightest in our industry, while sitting in the comfort of your own home or office.

Learn More







Were Marriott Guests Hacked By The Chinese? *There have been several stories and headlines circulating that the massive data breach at Marriott, where over 500,000 guests have had their data stolen, was part of a Chinese intelligence-gathering effort that also hacked health insurers and the security clearance files of millions more Americans. The hackers, they said, are suspected of working on behalf of the Ministry of State Security, the country's Communist-controlled civilian spy agency. In the Marriott case, Chinese spies stole passport numbers for up to 327 million people — many of whom stayed at Sheraton, Westin and W hotels and at other Starwood-branded properties. But Marriott has not said if it would pay to replace those passports, an undertaking that would cost tens of billions of dollars. And even for those guests who did not have passport information on file with the hotels, their phone numbers, birth dates, home addresses, credit card numbers and expirations could have been compromised. From what I understand, it was the Starwood Guest Reservation Database that was hacked, dating all the way back to 2014. This is the second biggest corporate data breach in U.S. history. You can read more details [HERE](#).*

\$220 Invested In (10) Shares of Apple Stock Now Worth Over \$95k: *This story just blew my mind, but it was during this week back in 1980 that a company named Apple, sold 4.6 million shares priced at \$22 each to the general public. Ironically, Massachusetts regulators wouldn't let individual investors touch it. They deemed Apple's IPO "too risky" under rules "aimed at weeding out highfliers that don't have solid earnings foundations." Apple launched its initial public offering on December 12, 1980. If you had purchased 10 shares of Apple at the company's IPO price of \$22 per share, they would have cost you \$220. Four stock splits and nearly 30 years later, you would own approximately 560 shares of AAPL. Also keep in mind, back in 1980, Radio Shack, Commodore, Atari, Sinclair and Texas Instruments were all making personal computers. Today the entire market is dominated by Apple!*

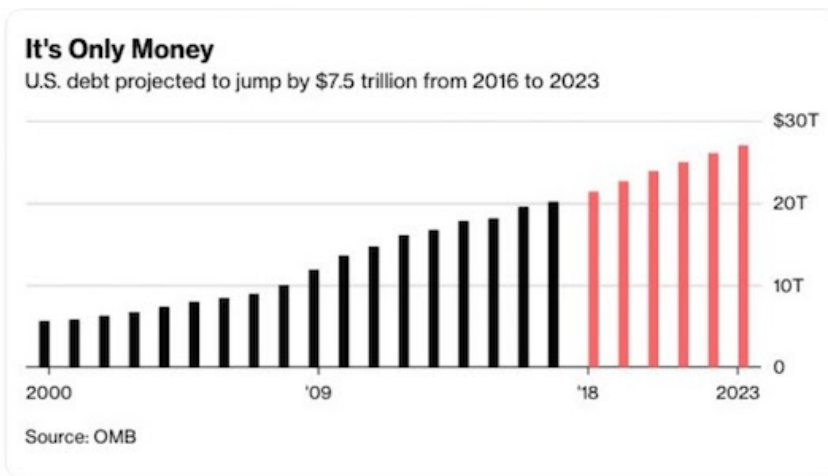
National Debt Is Surging at Its Fastest Pace Since 2012: *U.S. government debt is on track to rise at the fastest pace since 2012, as a stronger economy fails to offset a wider budget deficit. Total public debt outstanding has risen by \$1.36T, or 6.6% since the start of this year and if this year's debt growth rate continues through the last few weeks of 2018, it would be the biggest jump percentage-wise since the last year of President Barack Obama's first term, at a time when the economy still needed fiscal stimulus after the financial crisis. The borrowing is needed to cover a budget deficit that swelled by an estimated \$779B in Trump's first full fiscal year as president, the widest gap in six years. I'm told, even with historically low unemployment, relatively low interest rates, and healthy growth, the national debt is expected to increase by \$4.4T by the end of Trump's first term.*



Bloomberg Markets
@markets

Following

U.S. government debt under Trump is on track this year to rise at the fastest pace since 2012 bloom.bg/2Ert9kk



Free Climber Alex Honnold is First Ever up El Capitan Without Ropes: *Free solo climbing is an extreme technique practiced only by the most experienced climbers, where they scale mountains with their bare hands and many die trying. Famed free climber Alex Honnold, is the only person to ever ascend California's El Capitan alone without ropes and the epic adventure was the subject of a National*

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

(816) 322-5300

Today In History



1577, Drake Sets Off -

English seaman Francis Drake sets out from Plymouth, England, with five ships and 164 men on a mission to raid

Spanish holdings on the Pacific coast of the New World and explore the Pacific Ocean. Three years later, Drake's return to Plymouth marked the first circumnavigation of the earth by a British explorer. After crossing the Atlantic, Drake abandoned two of his ships in South America and then sailed into the Straits of Magellan with the remaining three. A series of devastating storms besieged his expedition in the treacherous straits, wrecking one ship and forcing another to return to England. Only The Golden Hind reached the Pacific Ocean, but Drake continued undaunted up the western coast of South America, raiding Spanish settlements and capturing a rich Spanish treasure ship. Drake then continued up the western coast of North America, searching for a possible northeast passage back to the Atlantic. Reaching as far north as present-day Washington before turning back, Drake paused near San Francisco Bay in June 1579 to repair his ship and prepare for a journey across the Pacific. Calling the land "Nova Albion," Drake claimed the territory for Queen Elizabeth I. In July, the expedition set off across the Pacific, visiting several islands before rounding Africa's Cape of Good Hope and returning to the Atlantic Ocean. On September 26, 1580, The Golden Hind returned to Plymouth, England, bearing treasure, spice, and valuable information about the world's great oceans. Drake was the first captain to sail his own ship all the way around the world—the Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan had sailed three-fourths of the way around the globe earlier in the century but had been killed in the Philippines, leaving the Basque navigator Juan Sebastián de Elcano to complete the journey. In 1581, Queen Elizabeth I knighted Drake, the son of a tenant farmer, during a visit to his ship. The most renowned of the Elizabethan seamen, Sir Francis Drake later played a crucial role in the defeat of the Spanish Armada.



1918 , First European Presidential Visit -

After nine days at sea aboard the SS George Washington, Woodrow Wilson arrives at Brest, France, on December 13, 1918, and travels by land to Versailles. There, he headed the American delegation to the peace

Geographic documentary 'Free Solo', which generated the highest per-venue average of 2018 and the best theater average ever for a documentary when it was released in September. New incredible stills from National Geographic's documentary about Honnold's climb have been released and I wanted to share the heartstopping pictures as he is scaling an almost vertical and smooth rock face at 2000 meters up. Read more and see a short video of the feat [HERE](#).

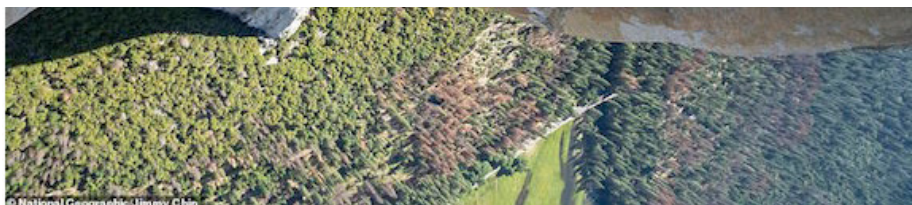


conference seeking a definitive end to World War I. The visit marked the first official visit by a U.S. president to Europe. Although the president's political opponents criticized his European visit as a sign of egotism, Wilson worked tirelessly during the proceedings to orchestrate an agreement that would encourage a lasting peace in Europe. During the stay, Wilson also led the effort for the establishment of the League of Nations, an international organization designed to seek diplomatic solutions to future conflicts. At Versailles, Wilson's hopes for a "just and stable peace" were opposed by the other victorious Allies, and the final treaty, which called for stiff war reparations from the former Central Powers, would be regarded with increasing bitterness in Germany in the years to come. President Woodrow Wilson was awarded the 1920 Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to bring peace to Europe.



2003 , Saddam Hussein captured -

After spending nine months on the run, former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein is captured on this day in 2003. Saddam's downfall began on March 20, 2003, when the United States led an invasion force into Iraq to topple his government, which had controlled the country for more than 20 years. Saddam Hussein was born into a poor family in Tikrit, 100 miles outside of Baghdad, in 1937. After moving to Baghdad as a teenager, Saddam joined the now-infamous Baath party, which he would later lead. He participated in several coup attempts, finally helping to install his cousin as dictator of Iraq in July 1968. Saddam took over for his cousin 11 years later. During his 24 years in office, Saddam's secret police, charged with protecting his power, terrorized the public, ignoring the human rights of the nation's citizens. While many of his people faced poverty, he lived in incredible luxury, building more than 20 lavish palaces throughout the country. Obsessed with security, he is said to have moved among them often, always sleeping in secret locations. In the early 1980s, Saddam involved his country in an eight-year war with Iran, which is estimated to have taken more than a million lives on both sides. He is alleged to have used nerve agents and mustard gas on Iranian soldiers during the conflict, as well as chemical weapons on Iraq's own Kurdish population in northern Iraq in 1988. After he invaded Kuwait in 1990, a U.S.-led coalition invaded Iraq in 1991, forcing the dictator's army to leave its smaller neighbor, but failing to remove Saddam from power. Throughout the 1990s, Saddam faced both U.N. economic sanctions and air strikes aimed at crippling his ability to produce chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. With Iraq continuing to face allegations of illegal oil sales and weapons-building, the United States again invaded the country in March 2003, this time with the expressed purpose of ousting Saddam and his regime. Despite proclaiming in



Movie Audiences Love Women in Leading Role: According to a study by Creative Arts Agency and shift7, films with women in leading roles earn more than movies with male counterparts at the box office, a finding which could lead to a major paradigm shift in show business. "The perception that it's not good business to have female leads is not true," CAA agent Christy Haubegger told *The New York Times*. "They're a marketing asset." CAA and shift7 examined 350 top box office films from 2014 to 2017, defining "lead actor" as the first performer credited in official press materials. 105 of these were women. In every category broken down by budget, films with women in the lead outperformed those starring men. From what I understand, the CAA attributes the change to the movie audience's desire to see something new, rather than say, yet another superhero origin story about a white guy. Interestingly a previous study by the agency also found audiences now prefer stories starring those of color. Read more [HERE](#).



early March 2003 that, "it is without doubt that the faithful will be victorious against aggression," Saddam went into hiding soon after the American invasion, speaking to his people only through an occasional audiotape, and his government soon fell. After declaring Saddam the most important of a list of his regime's 55 most-wanted members, the United States began an intense search for the former leader and his closest advisors. On July 22, 2003, Saddam's sons, Uday and Qusay, who many believe he was grooming to one day fill his shoes, were killed when U.S. soldiers raided a villa in which they were staying in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul. Five months later, on December 13, 2003, U.S. soldiers found Saddam Hussein hiding in a six-to-eight-foot deep hole, nine miles outside his hometown of Tikrit. The man once obsessed with hygiene was found to be unkempt, with a bushy beard and matted hair. He did not resist and was uninjured during the arrest. A soldier at the scene described him as "a man resigned to his fate." Saddam is now in Iraqi custody with U.S. security and faces trial in front of a special tribunal on several criminal cases pending against him. The first began in October 2005. On November 5 of the next year, he was found guilty of crimes against humanity and sentenced to death by hanging. After an unsuccessful appeal, he was executed on December 30, 2006. Despite a prolonged search, weapons of mass destruction were never found in Iraq.

Upcoming Events

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

Kevin's Song of the Week

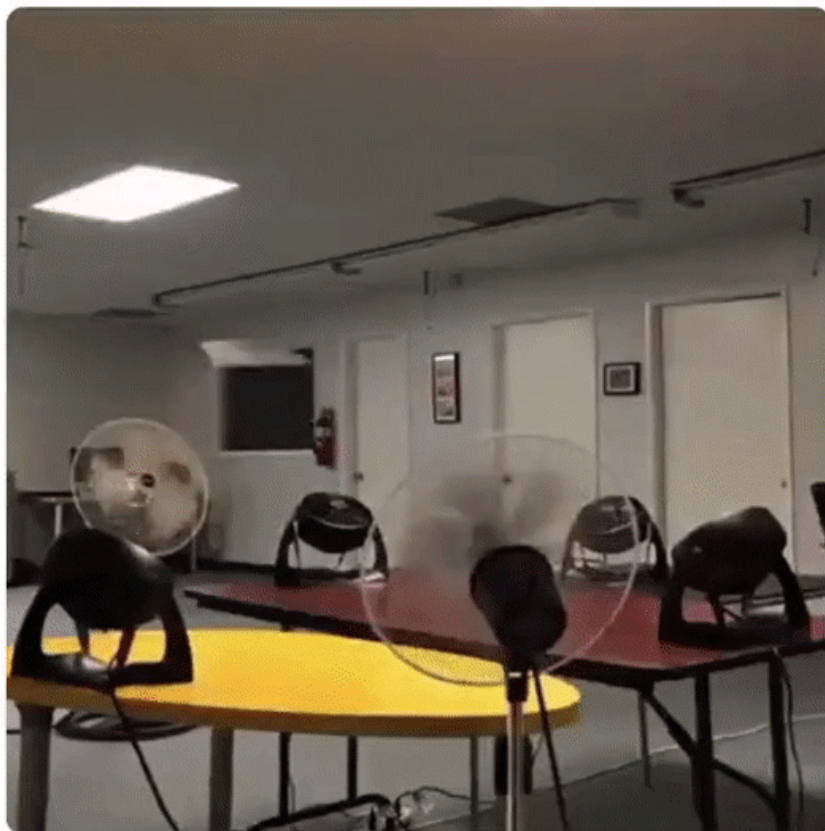


Physics & Astronomy Zone

@ZonePhysics

Following

When a Physicist gets bored !!!



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 the thorough manner in which Kevin evaluates every economic aspect, both nationally and internationally, that



Enjoy Nature
@EnjoyNature



Following

Flowers hills and mountains at Hokkaido 🇯🇵

#Travel #Nature #Photo #Plants #Gardening
#Landscape #Trekking #Places #Relaxation
#Colorful



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.



quotes101

@_quotes_31

Following

The only way to decorate a tree 🎄
#christmastree

So this year we bought a 20 ft
Christmas tree and cut it in half so it
goes through the roof



Farm Direction
RECIPES

★ **FAMILY** ★
FAVORITES

-SENT IN BY OUR READERS-

**Apple Cider
Mimosa**



CLICK TO SEE RECIPE



Corteva U.S. ✓
@CortevaUS

Following

After 13 years as the Hi-Bred Corn Company, leadership announced it was changing its name to Pioneer Hi-Bred Corn Company in 1935. #CortevaHistory #ThrowbackThursday @PioneerSeeds



Steve Keating
@LeadToday

Following

After all is said and done, more is usually said than done.

What you do has far greater
impact than what you say.

STEPHEN COVEY
Author & Educator



Real Marsha Wright® | Influenc...
@marshawright

Following

Don't settle for something that is only half-fulfilling, reach for what you really want deep down. #success #future #settle #motivation



Don't settle: Don't finish crappy books. If you don't like the menu, leave the restaurant. If you're not on the right path, get off it.



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:

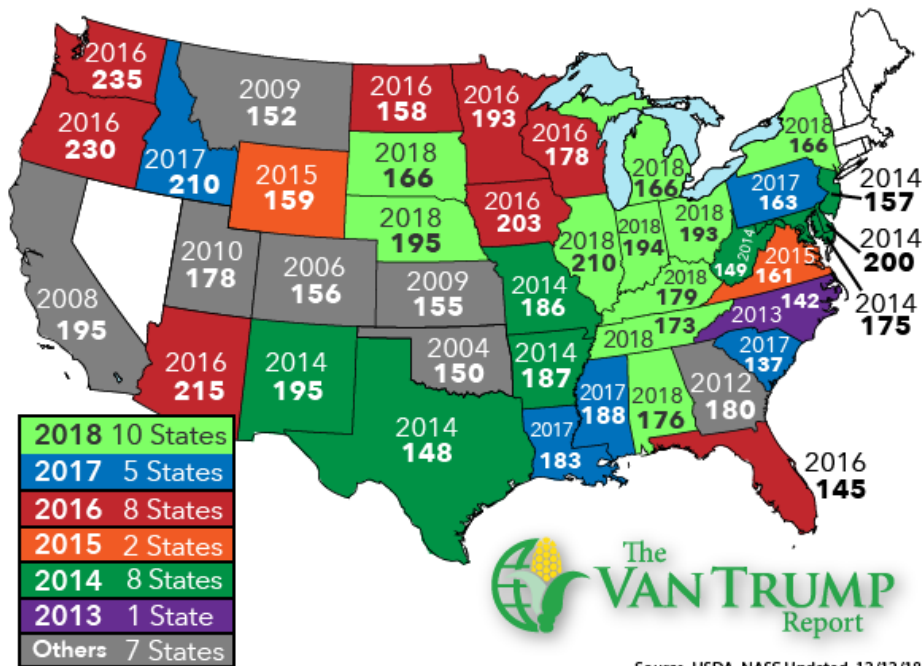
What has a foot, but no leg?

Weather conditions on the Plains continue to see above normal temperatures prevail, accompanied by dry weather and breezy conditions. Winter wheat is benefiting from warmer weather and abundant soil moisture reserves. In the Corn Belt, snow is falling early today in Wisconsin and portions of neighboring states. Meanwhile, the return of mild weather has melted most of the remaining snow across the southern Corn Belt, but a lingering snow cover in the western Corn Belt continues to limit final harvest efforts. In the South, chilly weather lingers in the Southeast. Meanwhile, mild weather has returned to areas west of the Mississippi Delta. Near or above normal temperatures will cover much of the country during the next several days. The most anomalous warmth will develop from the northern Plains into the Midwest. Meanwhile, a storm system will cross the southern Plains on Thursday, the lower Mississippi Valley on Friday, and the southern Appalachians on Saturday. More on that below.

Another Storm Could Bring Flooding To Southeast: Another round of heavy rain, combined with melting snow, might trigger flash flooding and additional river flooding Friday in parts of the Southeast, adding another chapter to one of the wettest years on record for some. Last weekend's storm dumped over a foot of

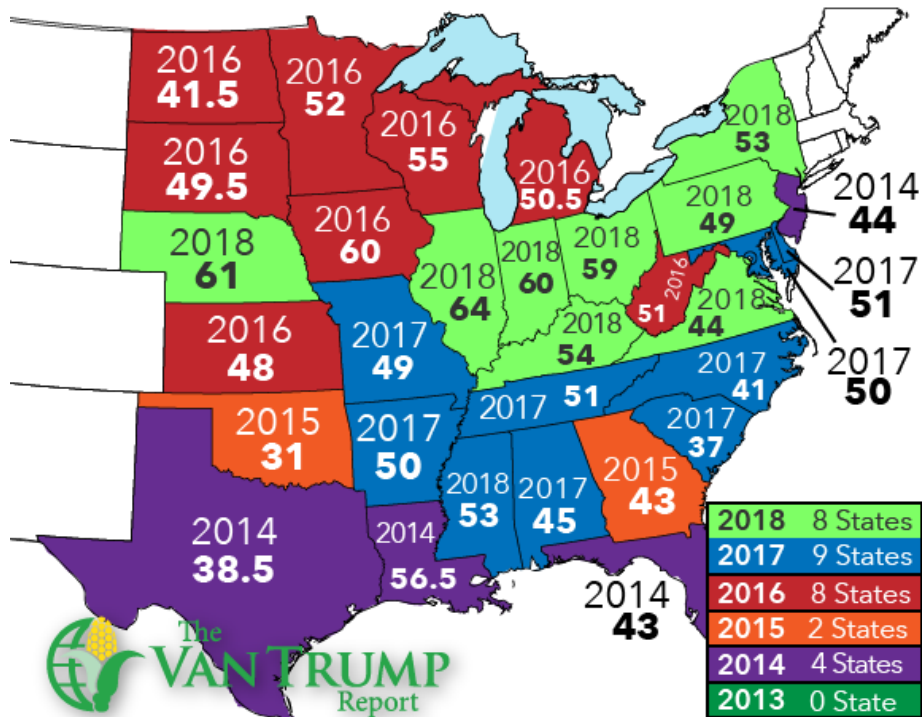
bushel. Heavy resistance on the upside still looks to be in the \$4.10 to \$4.20 range. The new-crop DEC19 contract seems to be running into much stiffer resistance in the \$4.05 to \$4.15 range. Keep in mind, the DEC19 contract hasn't closed above \$4.16 since the end of May. Heavy nearby support seems to be in the \$3.90 to \$4.00 range. I continue to stay patient, at least until I learn more about possible Chinese purchases.

Record State Corn Yields



Soybean bulls are pointing to rumors and headlines circulating inside the trade that Chinese buyers have already jumped in the U.S. market. From what I've heard, perhaps 30 to 40 cargoes have already been booked or traded, with the majority of cargoes off the PNW and a lesser amount out of the Gulf. I've also heard talk there could be another round of similar buying by the end of this week or early next week. I suspect the USDA will be confirming these purchases today or tomorrow, so keep your eye on the headlines. I still haven't heard specifics about China dropping the import tariffs on U.S. soybeans. I heard rumors earlier in the week that Chinese leaders were talking about reducing U.S. auto import tariffs from 40% down to 15%, but still nothing specific on soybeans. At the same time, I'm starting to hear a bit more buzz about weather uncertainties in parts of Brazil where the forecast is looking a little dry for some areas to the south, south-central, and west. Unfortunately, as we all know, the weather forecast can change in a blink of an eye, so I'm not calling it a bullish card just yet, but rather something I'm keeping a close eye on. From a technical perspective, producers need to be paying close attention. The old-crop JUL19 contract just posted it's highest close since June 18th. There's a similar type story for the new-crop NOV19 contract, which just posted its highest close since June 11th. I still believe the upside is going to get much more difficult once we push into the \$9.75 to \$10.10 area. If you look at a new-crop NOV19 chart, we were stuck in that range for an extended period prior to the Chinese trade confrontation. Bottom-line, if you've been patient and waiting to price your bushels, not only do I tip my hat, but you are now being offered the best window of opportunity in the past six-months. Perhaps an official announcement and or headlines will bring about additional nearby tailwinds? I like the thought of starting to feather in additional sales and reducing a little longer-term risk.

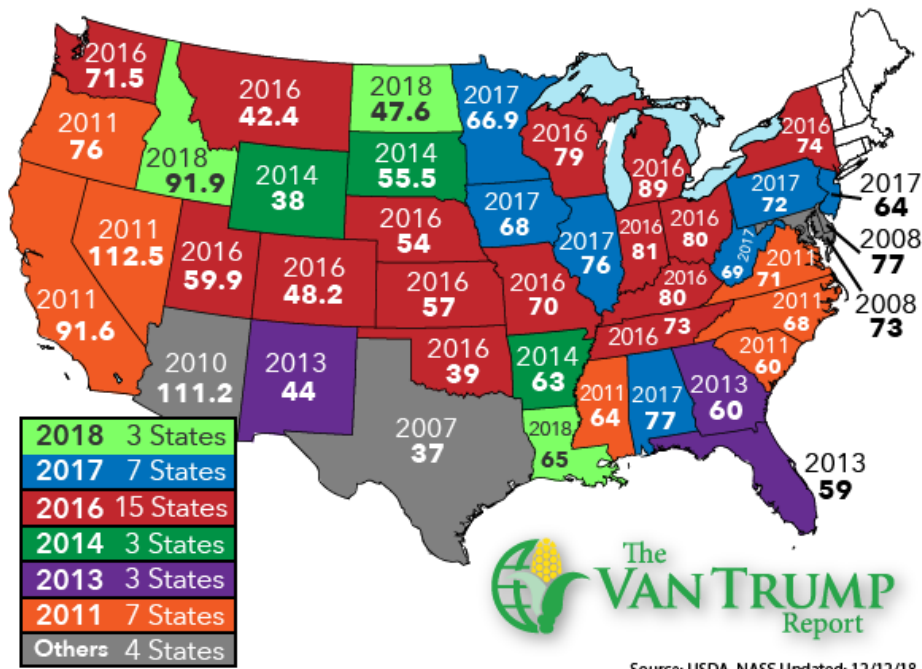
Record State Soybeans Yields



Source: USDA, NASS Updated: 12/12/18

Wheat bulls are pointing to a possible breakout to the upside in the global markets. Both the Matif and Rosario contracts have made some strong moves as of late and are drawing attention. There's some talk of weather hiccups in Argentina that will delay harvest and cause some quality concerns. I also still believe the USDA will be further reducing the Australian crop forecast. The Chinese appearing more cooperative and receptive to U.S. agriculture is probably the biggest nearby tailwind. I continue to hear rumors and talk that they will eventually be buying U.S. wheat. Bears point to the fact U.S. exports still remain somewhat uncompetitive and we continue to lose marketshare to Russia and the Black Sea region. This was obviously confirmed in this weeks USDA report, as they reduced U.S. exports by -25 million bushels and pushed ending stocks closer to 1.0 billion. Despite the well advertised traditional supply and demand fundamentals, I remain a conservative bull on the non-traditional headlines i.e. China possibly stepping in the U.S. market, a potential conflict between Russia and Ukraine, a winter vortex brewing, cross-hedging by the funds, etc. Staying patient and staying a nearby bull...

Record State Wheat Yields



> **Passing of the 2019 Farm Bill:** U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today hailed the passage of the 2019 Farm Bill. The House of Representatives approved the conference report on the bill this afternoon, following the Senate's passage yesterday. Perdue issued the following statement: "The passage of the 2019 Farm Bill is good news because it provides a strong safety net for farmers and ranchers, who need the dependability and certainty this legislation affords. This Farm Bill will help producers make decisions about the future, while also investing in important agricultural research and supporting trade programs to bolster exports. While I feel there were missed opportunities in forest management and in improving work requirements for certain SNAP recipients, this bill does include several helpful provisions and we will continue to build upon these through our authorities. I commend Congress for bringing the Farm Bill across the finish line and am encouraging President Trump to sign it." (Source: USDA)

> **Ukraine Expecting Record Corn Production:** USDA estimates Ukraine corn production for 2018/19 at a record 35.0 million metric tons, up 1.5 million metric tons from last month, up 10.9 million metric tons from last year and 4.1 million metric tons above the previous record crop which was harvested in 2013. Yield is estimated at about 124 bpa, 43% above last year. The high yield is attributed to favorable growing conditions throughout the season. The estimated harvested areas is unchanged at 11.25 million acres. The yield reported by the Ministry of agrarian Policy and Food as of December 4, 2018 was 21% above the previous high for that date. Harvest is 97% complete and will continue until mid-December. (Source: USDA)

> **Organic Industry Gets A Win With the Farm Bill:** Organic producers and organizations are eagerly waiting for the Farm Bill to be signed into law as organic production could see increased financial commitment from the government for research and helping farmers convert to this production method. The Farm Bill has \$50 million in annual funding earmarked for the flagship Organic Research and Extension Initiative program by 2023, more than double the current funding level. With the money they are hoping they can modernize and speed up federal efforts to prevent organic fraud, create a transparent marketplace and ensure all stakeholders are playing by the rules. (Source: USDA)

> **South African Maize Planting Delayed by Dryness:** Opportunity for planting is dwindling in the western parts of South Africa as dry conditions are delaying getting in the fields. Waiting too much longer will threaten yields and send prices higher, meaning

a little reprieve is needed. I should mention, the area of concern produces 60% of the crop and to this point only 5% has been planted.

> Ohio Soy Plant to Resume Crushing Following November Fire: Bunge plans to resume crushing operations this week following a November 20 fire at the facility in Bellevue, Ohio. From what I understand, the fire damaged a grain elevator as well as conveyor belts and other equipment, shutting down the facility that processes soybeans into soybean oil and soymeal, an animal feed.

> Green Coffee Exports Up Over +25%: Brazilian coffee producers exported 3.42 million bags of green coffee last month, up over 25% year on year. Following a record production year, volumes have been rising month on month. This year expectations are for 60 million bags compared with 45 million last year.

> Corruption Probe Related to Meatpacker JBS Investigation: Brazilian police made public that three senators and three lawmakers are being investigated as it connects to a probe into major meatpacker JBS SA. Twenty-four search-and-seizure warrants were carried out early Tuesday morning. I'm told the investigations surrounds money laundering and corruption, among other crimes. Sources are telling me the inquiry is looking into ill-gotten gains from a "large meatpacking company".

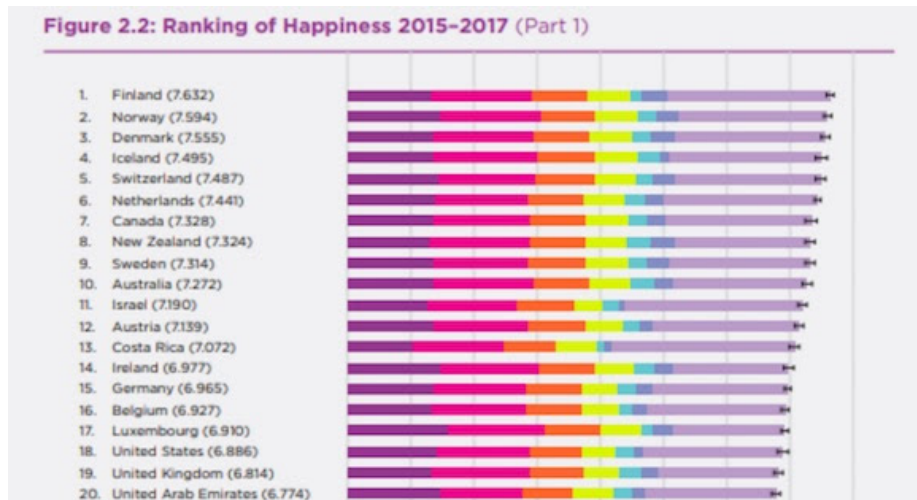
> Jimmy Dean Recalls More Than 29,000 Lbs. of Sausage: A press release from the USDA specifies the product being recalled as 23.4 ounce packages of Jimmy Dean HEAT'n Serve Original Sausage Links made with Pork & Turkey with a "Use By" date of Jan. 31, 19. The USDA says anyone who has the product in their freeze should throw it away or return it to the place where they bought it. At least five consumers have made complaints that the sausage contains small string-like pieces of metal. (Source: USDA FSIS)

> McDonald's Cutting Back on Antibiotic Use in Beef: McDonald's plans to reduce the amount of antibiotics used in their global beef supply. I'm told the move by the world's biggest fast-food chain addresses concerns that the overuse of antibiotics vital to fighting human infections in farm animals may diminish the drugs' effectiveness in people.

> Chinese Music Giant "Tencent" Goes Public: The stock debuted on the NYSE at around \$14 per share. The stock currently trades under the ticker symbol TME. Tencent Music owns the four largest music apps in China and the company has a market cap of more than +\$21 billion. The company recently reported more than 800 million unique monthly active users. Essentially this is the music arm of Chinese tech giant Tencent. From what I understand, parent company Tencent still owns about 58% of the music division. The company originally planned to go public back in October but reportedly delayed the stock offering because of the U.S. and Chinese trade tensions. Perhaps this means the Chinese see better relations ahead. Keep in mind, this is one of the largest U.S. IPOs by a Chinese company since Alibaba went public back in 2014.

> How About Happiness As the Metric of the Future? The idea that happiness can be measured and mapped, and that it varies geographically, is now established. Every three years since 2012, a World Happiness Report releases eagerly awaited global rankings of happiness. These are based on a global survey that asks people to evaluate how they feel about their life on a scale from zero to ten. The rankings are usually dominated by the Nordic countries, with Finland currently topping the list. Click [HERE](#) for Full graphic

Figure 2.2: Ranking of Happiness 2015-2017 (Part 1)





FROM THE FIELD

Central Texas – We plant a lot of corn that makes less than 100 bushels. We usually shoot for 80 bushels corn but this year we had corn closer to 60 bushels. Sitting here without rain for 60 days just took its toll on us. Our population usually sit around 15,000 seeds per acre. We usually plant that much to shade the ground and go for a lot of smaller ears rather than larger ears spaced further apart. We did not have much luck this year using that strategy, so we are going to drop our population back a little and see if we can run a hybrid that is really drought resistance. I think we might try some decent flex hybrid with good stress tolerance. We have to try something different because we need to get that top end closer to 100 bushels. We can't afford to throw a ton of money at corn because yield is too unpredictable.

Northern Kentucky – We have had one of the toughest years in memory. There are soybeans scattered all over the country side the quality is lack luster at best. We are just trying to get done and hopefully get rid of the production. I have heard tons and tons of guys getting loads rejected due to quality issues. We keep getting hit with rain followed by days of cloudy cold weather, so we are not able to harvest even if we several days between rains because the sun won't come out.

Central Indiana – This is the harvest that keeps on giving. We farm west of Indianapolis about an hour. I shouldn't complain because we actually made really good yields considering how slow the harvest progressed. We just finished up the end of last week, but we have another week or more of cleaning and doing minimal repairs before we shed the combine, grain cart and tractor. I told my guys if they can get everything cleaned up, they could take off the balance of the year and I would have thought I had a completely different crew of guys. They were all at work on time, stayed late and by goodness we got everything cleaned up and repaired in 4 days. They were here on Sunday which I about sent them home, but I thought what the heck let them earn this break.



CROSSING WIRES

A place to share intelligent thoughts...

Christmas Tree Farmers Battle Artificial Business: Artificial trees, once crude imitations of an evergreen, are now so realistic that it's hard to tell they are fakes even though many are conveniently pre-strung with lights and can fold up for storage at the push of a button. I'm told, between 75 and 80 % of Americans who have a Christmas tree now have an artificial one, and the \$1 billion market for fake trees is growing at about 4 % a year — even though they can be reused again and again. To combat this trend, Christmas tree farmers have joined forces as the Christmas Tree Promotion Board and are running a social media ad campaign this holiday season to tout the benefits of a real evergreen. The campaign, called "It's Christmas. Keep It Real!," is funded by a 15-cent fee that tree farmers pay for each tree they harvest. One campaign, directed at millennials, has a video showing families cutting their own trees and buying pre-cut trees from lots, a good move considering that millennials love "experiences". Read more [HERE](#) how tree producers are trying to regain market share.

New Biped Robotics Could Help Those with Walking Difficulties: We're used to seeing robots from companies like Boston Dynamics run, jump and even do parkour. But the robots at the Amber Lab aren't just about performing fancy tricks. By understanding how robots locomote, researchers at the lab can directly translate that to devices that help people with walking difficulties. Or people who can't walk at all. One of the prosthetics developed at the lab is the Ampro 3. It's a powered, transfemoral (above the knee) prosthesis with two degrees of freedom at the ankle, designed to make people walk better than with existing devices. The long-term outlook for the robots at the Amber Lab is to have them traverse the same sorts of terrain as humans. Similar research is being conducted at places including the Florida Institute for Human & Machine Control on robotic parts that can withstand rugged terrain. Read more [HERE](#).

How is Your State's Internet Speed? Finally some good news about internet speed - it's getting faster, especially fixed broadband internet. Broadband download speeds in the U.S. rose 35.8% and upload speeds are up 22% from last year, according to internet speed-test company Ookla in its latest U.S. broadband report. The growth in

speed is important as the internet undergirds more of our daily lives and the wider economy. As internet service providers continue building out fiber networks around the country, expect speeds to increase, though speeds vary widely by region depending on infrastructure and whether or not an area has fiber. On a city level, Kansas City — the home of Google Fiber — had the highest mean broadband speeds of any city in the country, both for downloads and uploads, at 159 and 127 Mbps respectively. Click [HERE](#) to see how your city compares.

Apple to Try Again with Texture: Apple is preparing to relaunch Texture, an app it agreed to buy in March that offers unlimited access to about 200 magazines. From what I understand, the company plans to make it a premium product within Apple News, which currently curates articles and comes pre-installed on iPhones. I'm hearing insiders say a new version could be unveiled as soon as this coming spring, even though no one is supposed to know. Apple is trying woo newspapers like the Wall Street Journal and New York Times to join Texture and plans to refine its design, which currently creates an image of what magazines look like in print. Joey Levin, chief executive officer of online media-company IAC, said publishers could benefit from a Netflix or Spotify model by aggregating readers and their payment information in one place. Read more [HERE](#).

Puma Reintroduces the 1986 S-Computer Shoe: In 1986, the Running System (RS) Computer Shoe used a computer chip embedded in the shoe to measure speed, distance, and calories burned. Those functions are a lot like a stripped down Fitbit or other modern activity tracker — it just required a connection to an Apple IIE or Commodore 64 computer to read the data. From what I understand the company will only produce 86 pairs released, so it will be interesting to see what they go for on the internet after purchase. I put in a video [HERE](#), showing the process to pull your info from the shoe...remember at the time it was cutting edge tech!



Dreaming Of A White Christmas?

It's always nice to have snow on the ground on Christmas day. Not too much, just

enough to cover the ground, but not enough to disrupt travel and make the roads dangerous. Even if a light dusting is present on Christmas Day, in order to garner the official meteorological declaration of a white Christmas, at least 1 inch of snow must be measured. Keep in mind, it doesn't have to be snowing on the holiday for that to happen, it can simply be snow already on the ground. The first map I included below shows the historic probability of their being at least 1 inch of snow on the ground in the Lower 48 states on December 25th. The other map I included below, is the latest Christmas Day snow forecast recently released by The Weather Channel. On average, about 40% of the Lower 48 states has snow on the ground on Christmas. Last year, nearly 50% of the contiguous U.S. had snow on the ground Christmas morning. This percentage can vary widely, in 2003 only about 20% was covered in snow, where as in 2009 almost 65% of the contiguous U.S. had snow on the ground. (Source: NOAA; AccuWeather; The Weather Channel)



Gift Ideas For Gadget Lovers

Every gift giver has at least one tech-savvy gadget lover on their list, but it's tough to keep up with all the latest gear. It's especially difficult if you yourself haven't embraced the digital world. Below are some of the most talked about tech gadgets that have come out over the last year and appear on a lot of "gift idea" lists.

iRobot Roomba 960, \$549.99: *Not exactly cheap, but this is no ordinary vacuum. It seamlessly navigates room to room to clean an entire level of your home, recharging and resuming until the job is done by itself. Roomba 960 loosens, lifts, and suctions dirt with up to 5x more air power and requires less maintenance. Just press CLEAN or schedule Roomba on the go with the iRobot HOME App.*



Ninja Foodi, \$199.80: *This kitchen appliance is like a cross between the two new kitchen fads, pressure cooking and air frying. The Foodi can cook and crisp your foods within minutes allowing users to make some of the best french fries in crazy short periods of time. If you were planning on getting someone an air fryer and an Instant Pot, then the foodie is the way to go!*



Rocketbook Everlast, \$32.00: *This is a "smart" notebook is an endlessly reusable notebook that connects to all of your favorite cloud services. The Rocketbook gives users a classic pen and paper experience that's built for the digital age. Mark a symbol and scan your pages using the Rocketbook App to blast your notes to the cloud. The Everlast notebook can be used with any pen, marker or highlighter from the Pilot FriXion line. Add a drop of water... and the notebook erases like magic.*



Hulu no-ads subscription, \$11.99 per month: For a TV lover, what's better than the gift of no commercials? Hulu streams the current seasons of shows from NBC, CBS, ABC, and other networks. Seasons on Hulu include *This is Us*, *Son's of Anarchy*, *30 Rock*, *Twin Peaks*, *Parks and Recreation*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Seinfeld*, and *I Love Lucy*.



Moment Wide Lens for smartphones, \$117.99: Help your favorite Instagram lovers take their photo game to the next level with this detachable lens for the iPhone, Samsung, and Google Pixel phones. The Moment Wide Lens is an everyday, go-to wide-angle lens for mobile photographers and filmmakers. This wide lens provides the most dramatic new view capturing 2X more picture making landscapes more epic, giving food more table context, and letting people be more proportioned in the shot.



Apple AirPods, \$159: *These wireless earbuds looked a little goofy when they first came out, but now they seem like they're everywhere. The AirPods allow users to put the device in their ears to instantly connect to what you're listening to, speak in them for phone calls, and use Siri with up to 5 hours of battery life on one charge. Click [HERE](#) to see how they work. The only biggest downside to this product is they're one-size-fits-all design, so you should try on a pair and give your head a good shake before buying.*



Nest Learning Thermostat, \$207: *Using smart learning technology, the Nest Learning Thermostat can learn what you like and automatically adjust itself to your comfort level. After a couple of days of manual adjustments, the Nest Learning Thermostat can anticipate when you would want to turn the temperature up, to help keep you cozy in the morning, and set the temperature down as you head to bed. Nest is focused on making simple, human, delightful things.*



MSRM WiFi Range Extender, \$23.99: Farewell to slow Internet with weak connection and delays in playing games, file downloading, online chatting, or video streaming. The MSRM Wireless Router Wi-Fi Range Extender/Repeater is designed to extend the Wi-Fi range and signal of your existing wireless network, eliminating Wi-Fi dead zones, and keeping your mobile devices connected as you move throughout your home.



Sonos Beam, \$399: This product upgrades your TV with Sonos most advanced soundbar. Sonos Beam produces premium sound, speech enhancement, night sound, and HDMI ARC. Keep in mind, Sonos easily connects to speakers in different rooms through WiFi to bring everyone together. This might be something on my list for Christmas this year.

Sonos Beam



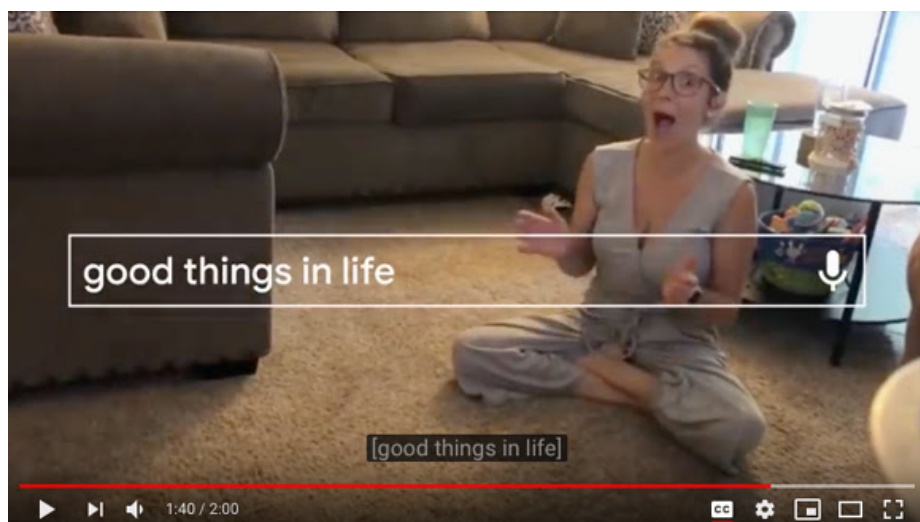
Fitbit Versa SmartWatch, \$199: Fitbit's newest smartwatch can monitor any type of physical activity you can imagine, providing personal coaching with on-screen video and real-time stats to power through the most grueling workouts with over 15 exercise modes. The watch also features 24/7 heart rate activity, sleep tracking, call & text alerts, music, water resistance, and over 4-day battery life. Could be a great gift for someone you that like to train.



Hey Google... What Were The Top Searches of 2018?

As the year comes to a close, Google puts a list together to recap what topics and news events were most fascinating for hundreds of millions of Internet users worldwide. Turns out, the FIFA World Cup, the U.S. midterms, Mega Millions, and Keto diets were on everyone's minds this year, according to [Google's 2018 Year In Search Report](#), which analyzes Google Trends data to discover what the world was looking for. In addition, the top-list of searches was dominated by celebrities who died in 2018 including: Stan Lee, Anthony Bourdain, Stephen Hawking and Kate Spade. When it comes to news, Hurricane Florence and Hurricane Michael were popular search topics, as was the Royal Wedding, Mega Millions lottery and election results. There is one notable change compared to years past, and that is the fact "tech-related" topics didn't make it to the top of any lists. The absence of tech in both the general searches and news searches list is notable — though mostly for Apple, whose phones are typically very popular search topics. Last year, iPhone 8, iPhone X and Bitcoin all made the list. In 2016, it was Pokemon Go and iPhone 7 that dominated Google searches. Unlike in previous years, Google didn't even publish a separate top-10 list for Consumer Tech this year. Perhaps even more cool is the fact "Google's Year In Search 2018 Video" highlighted all of the "good stuff" people searched for, such as... the rescue of all 12 members of the Thai soccer team that were trapped in a cave; U.S. figure skater Mirai Nagasu landing a triple axel at the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang; and role models like Stephen

Hawking and Senator John McCain, who also passed this year. The data that Google compiles is incredible and I for one appreciate being able to go back and uncover the moments, people, ideas, and searches that stand out to hundreds of millions of people across the world. It's a great look at the psychology of today's world -- and gaining a better understanding of the topics they are curious about. I encourage you to check out the video by Clicking [HERE](#)



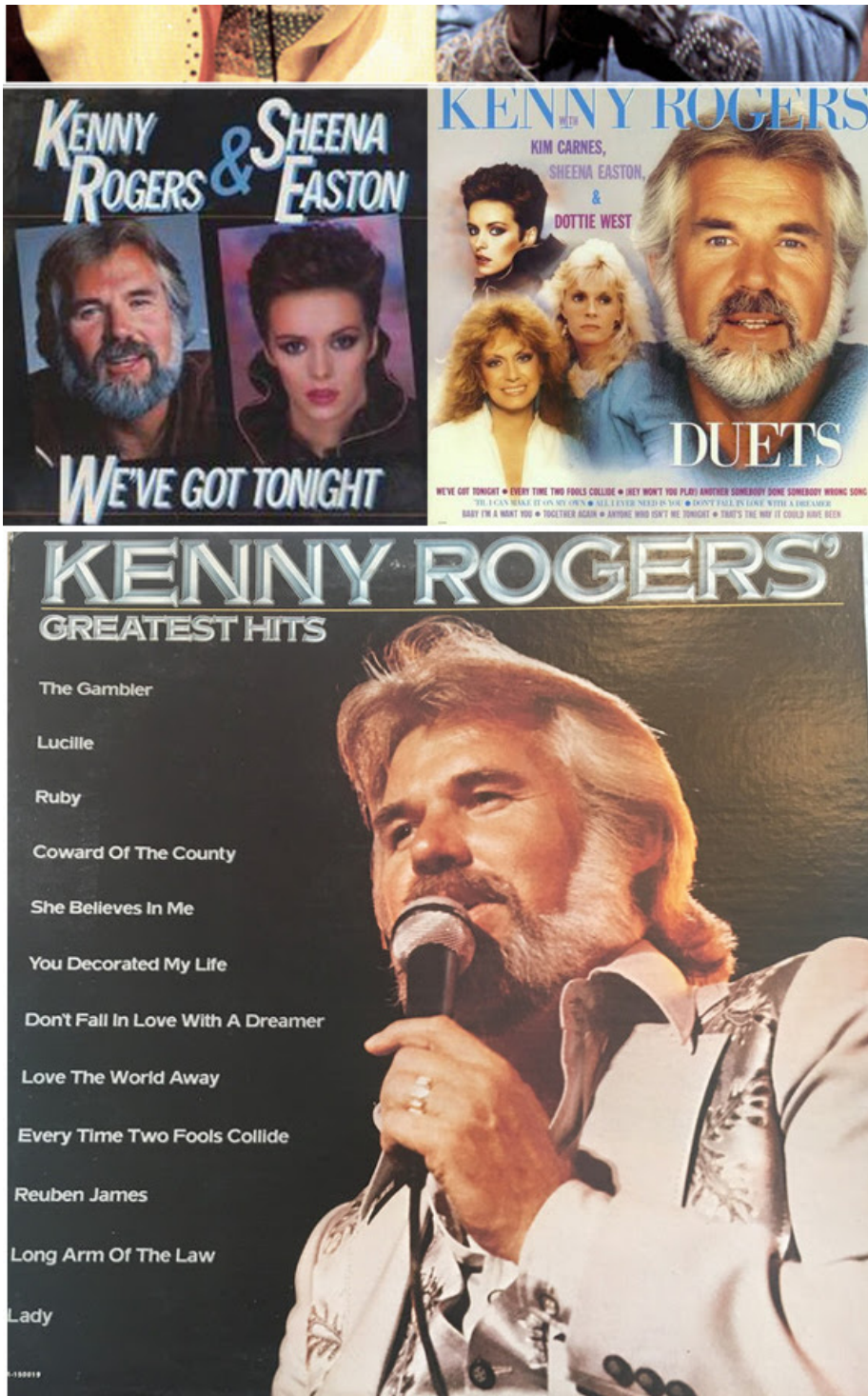
| SEARCHES | NEWS | PEOPLE | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• World Cup• Hurricane Florence• Mac Miller• Kate Spade• Anthony Bourdain• Black Panther• Mega Millions Results• Stan Lee• Demi Lovato• Election Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• World Cup• Hurricane Florence• Mega Millions• Election Results• Hurricane Michael• Kavanaugh Confirmation• Florida Shooting• Royal Wedding• Olympic Medal Count• Government Shutdown | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demi Lovato• Meghan Markle• Brett Kavanaugh• Logan Paul• Khloe Kardashian• Eminem• Urban Mayer• Ariana Grande• Rick Ross• Cardi B | |
| LOSS | HOW TO ... | ACTORS | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mac Miller• Kate Spade• Anthony Bourdain• Stan Lee• Aretha Franklin• XXXTentacion• Mollie Tibbetts• Avicii• Burt Reynolds• John McCain | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to vote• How to register to vote• How to play Mega Millions• How to buy Ripple• How to turn off automatic updates• How to get the old Snapchat back• How to play Powerball• How to buy Bitcoin• How to screen record• How to get boogie down emote | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Logan Paul• Bill Cosby• Sylvester Stallone• Pete Davidson• Michael B. Jordan• Allison Mack• Noah Centineo• Bradley Cooper• Roseanne Barr• Chadwick Boseman | |
| WHAT IS ... | MOVIES | SONGS | FOOD |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is Bitcoin• What is racketeering• What is DACA• What is a government shutdown• What is Good Friday• What is Prince Harry's last name• What is Fortnite• What is duck boat• What is a yanny laurel• What is a nationalist | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Black Panther• Incredibles 2• Deadpool 2• Avengers: Infinity War• A Quiet Place• A Star Is Born• Bohemian Rhapsody• Venom• Hereditary• The Nun | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bohemian Rhapsody• This is America• Baby Shark• God's Plan• Killshot• In My Feelings• Electric Slide• thank you, next• Mo Bamba• Lucid Dreams | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unicorn cake• Romaine lettuce• CBD gummies• Keto pancakes• Keto cheesecake• Necco wafers• Keto cookies• Keto chili• Keto brownies• Gochujang sauce |

Kenny Rogers Is 80... And I'm Feeling Old!

It's hard to believe it's been 38 years since Kenny Rogers' Greatest Hits went to #1 on the charts. My wife's family constantly played the album, my folks played the eight-track, and everybody I knew was wearing a cowboy hat with a feather headband. Believe it or not, Kenny Rogers is now 80 years old, and I can hear his most famous

songs like it was yesterday. Rogers was born in 1938 in Houston, Texas, the fourth of eight children. His parents were Lucille, a nurse's assistant, and Edward Rogers, a carpenter. Interestingly, Kenny didn't start in country music. He had a minor solo rock hit in 1957 called "That Crazy Feeling". After sales slowed down, Rogers joined a jazz group called The Bobby Doyle Three. The group actually recorded for Columbia Records. They disbanded in 1965, and a 1966 jazzy rock single Rogers recorded for Mercury Records, called "Here's That Rainy Day", failed. Rogers also worked as a producer, writer and session musician for other performers, including country artists Mickey Gilley and Eddy Arnold. In 1966 he joined the New Christy Minstrels as a singer and double bass player. That didn't work out either, so during the next 10-years he played with a couple of other bands. Then in 1976 he decided to launch his solo career somewhere in the middle-of-the-road between pop and country. To say he found his niche would be a huge understatement. Rogers has charted more than 120 hit singles. Two of his albums, *The Gambler* and *Kenny*, are featured amongst "The Most Influential Country Albums Ever". In 1986 he was voted America's "Favorite Singer of All-Time". His first country #1 hit was "Lucille" in 1976. Then came "The Gambler" in 1978 and "[Coward Of The County](#)" in 1979. Next came "[Don't Fall In Love With A Dreamer](#)," his 1980 duet with Kim Carnes. Then perhaps his biggest hit of all time, the Lionel Richie-penned "[Lady](#)", which was also released in 1980. Keep in mind he also recorded a couple of more huge duet hits, "[We've Got Tonight](#)," written by Bob Seger and performed in 1983 with Sheena Easton, and "[Islands In The Stream](#)," written by Barry Gibb and performed with Dolly Parton that same year. In 1981, Rogers bought the old ABC Dunhill building and built one of the most popular and state of the art recording studios in Los Angeles. The song "We Are The World" was actually recorded there. Kenny Rogers has clearly had an amazing career. I remember a lot of songs playing off that Greatest Hits album 40 years ago... In country music it remains the best selling compilation release of all-time, beating out even Garth Brooks' 1994 release of "The Hits". I also thought it was fitting to play "The Gambler" as the stock market is now trading like the Wild West. The lyrics are certainly worth considering. Click [HERE](#) to see this classic video.

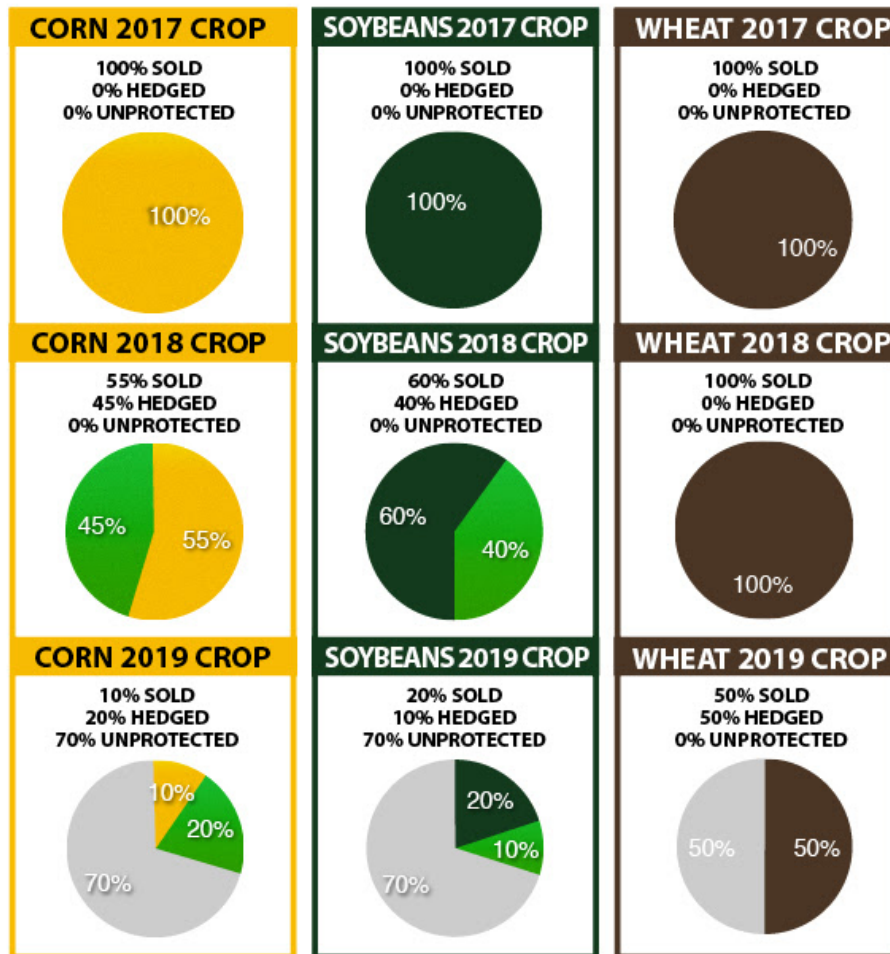




ANSWER to riddle: A ruler

CASH SALES & HEDGING TOTALS

PLEASE READ The Van Trump Report is a publication intended to give analytical research to the Agricultural community. The Van Trump Report is not rendering investment or hedging advice based on individual portfolios or individual business operations. Kevin Van Trump is NOT registered as a stock or commodity advisor in any jurisdiction. You need to consult with your own registered advisor for specific strategies and ideas that are appropriate to your specific portfolio or business entity. Information included in this report is derived from many sources believed to be reliable but no representation is made that it is accurate or complete. This report is not intended, and shall not constitute, or be construed as an offer or recommendation to "buy", "sell" or "invest" in any securities or commodities referred to in this report. Rather, this research is intended to identify issues and macro situations that those invested in the agricultural industry should be aware of to help better assess and improve their own risk management skills. Please read the entire [DISCLAIMER PAGE](#) for full risk-disclosure and copyright laws.



© FARM DIRECTION 2011

[About Us](#) | [Testimonials](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Disclaimer](#) | [Update Profile](#)

This email was sent by: **Farm Direction**
 1020 Pennsylvania Ave Kansas City, MO, 64105, US