

GOOD MORNING: 12/14/18 Farm Direction - Van Trump Report

1 message

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

Fri, Dec 14, 2018 at 8:10 AM

Reply-To: Jordan <reply-fec2157873600279-314_HTML-36250946-100003450-1@vantrumpreport-email.com>

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"Life is like a game of cards. The hand you are dealt is determinism; the way you play it is free will." - Jawaharlal Nehru

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2018
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Morning Summary: Stocks are again lower this morning as data overnight shows a weaker than expected Chinese economy, giving more credence to the bears belief that global growth is further slowing. Numbers from Dow Jones Market Data shows that the S&P 500 has closed either 1% below its intraday high or 1% above its intraday low 76 times in 2018, the most in the past three years. and significantly below the calm markets of 2017 when it happened only six times. Technical guru's argue that for the past couple of months, while being extremely wild, the S&P 500 has remained mostly rangebound between 2600 and 2800. We are now trading at the lower end of that range and many bears are saying the trend of posting lower-highs and lower-lows is just getting started. Personally, I'm still not on board with the bearish bandwagon. I still view it as a correction in a longer-term bull market. It feels like the Chinese trade conflict is overcoming some major hurdles and making progress in the right direction. It also feels like a major hurdle has been cleared with weakening gasoline prices at the pump. U.S. consumer spending remains extremely strong. And the Fed seems to be walking back some of their longer-term hawkish rhetoric. Investor sentiment certainly seems to be negative as the media continues to beat bearish drum. Flows out of mutual funds and ETF's have been extremely heavy. In fact, numbers circulating yesterday showed a whopping -\$46 billion fled U.S. stock mutual funds and ETFs last week, the most since data started being collected. A near-record -\$13 billion poured out of bond funds. At the same time, money market funds reported inflows of +\$81 billion, which is also record amount. Survey's are also showing individual retail investors are the most pessimistic they've been about the stock market in some five-years. In other words, the general public seems to be very nervous and uncertain about the stock market. In years past, that's generally been a good signal to buy with both hands. I'm not going to get wildly bullish or make big bets in this environment, but I have started to add a bit to my portfolio on this recent break. As for today, we will be getting a look at the latest Retail Sales data and U.S. Industrial Production. Looking to next week, it will be all about the Fed rate decision, which is scheduled to be released on Wednesday at 1:00pm CST. I suspect politics in Washington surrounding the budget and a possible government shutdown will also garner media attention. I will also be keeping a close eye on headlines out of the European Union, and an ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine. From what I understand, U.S. national security adviser John Bolton says there will be no meeting between President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin as long as Moscow is still holding the Ukrainian ships and sailors it seized near Crimea a few weeks back. I'm still not totally discounting the possibility of a military conflict in this part of the world. I think we should continue to pay close attention. It feels like overall I'm moving from a more bearish-neutral position to now a more neutral-bullish position. I would actually like to see one more major leg lower in order to pick up a couple of bigger bargains. Below is a simple graphic showing the massive increase in money moving into money-markets. All of this dry powder sitting on the sideline could become a big tailwind for the market if and when investors see more "all clear" signals. Trying to buy into a bottom and showing up too early can prove to be extremely dangerous, but it can also be extremely rewarding if you get in ahead of the crowd. That's why there's a lot of risk in trading... some are greatly rewarded, some are badly injured and penalized. These are certainly rough waters for this high of elevation, so be cautious and take calculated risks. Remember, there's no reward for style points, keep it simple!

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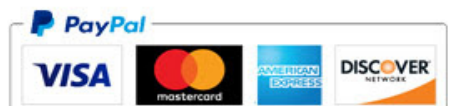
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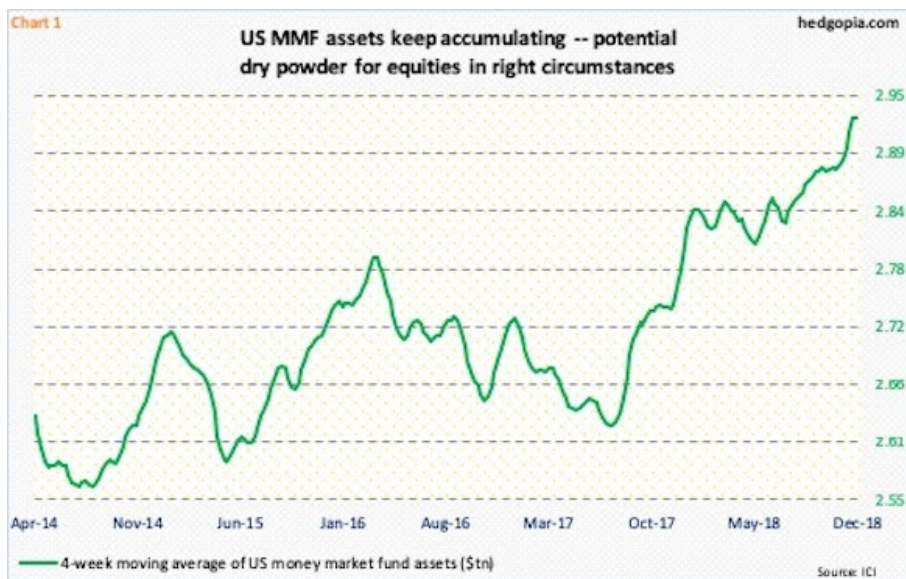
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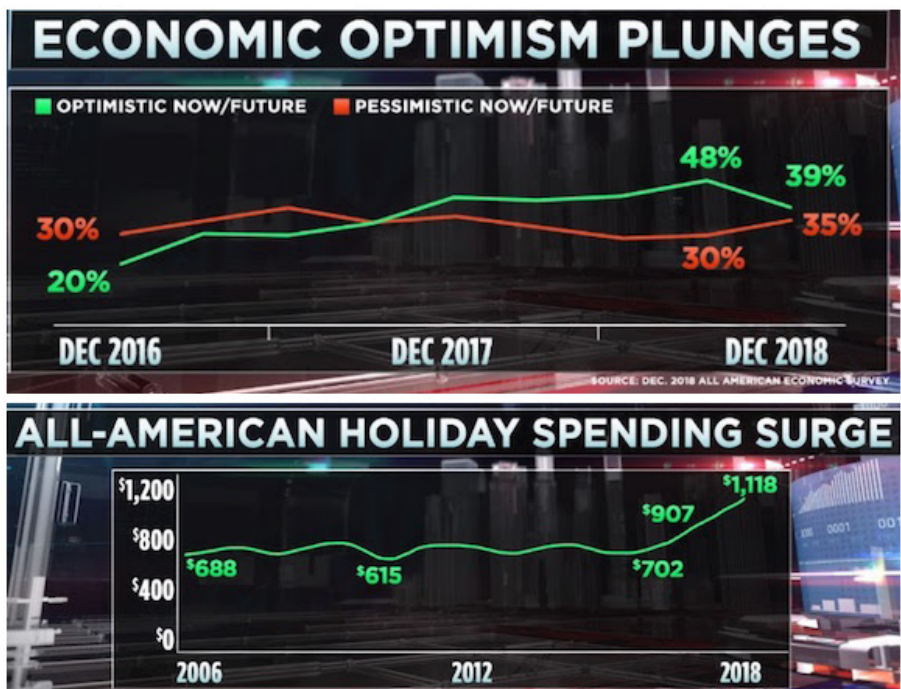
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Record-Breaking Travel Predicted This Holiday Season: Numbers released yesterday morning show that 112.5 million people are expected to be traveling in the air and on the roads. That's a 4.4 % increase over last year's number. It's also the highest number of travelers since AAA started tracking holiday travel in 2001. I'm hearing that some cities may see a quadrupling of travel time, with Atlanta being the worst, and New York following right behind. From what I understand, Dec. 20 from 9:30 – 10:30 p.m. will be the worst time for travel in New York City. If you will be out in it, you will be a part of the 102.1 million people are expected to travel by car, 6.7 million people will travel by air and 3.7 million will travel by trains, buses and cruise ships. Read more [HERE](#).

Consumers Spending Surges as Economic Optimism Plunges: American economic optimism took a sharp turn down in the fourth quarter from record high levels, with the CNBC All-America Economic Survey registering its biggest quarterly drop in its 12-year history. Yet the decline in optimism looks to be doing little to dissuade Americans from shopping for the holiday season. Spending plans surged to their highest level in the history of the survey, propelled by strong income and wage gains over the past year. The percentage of Americans viewing the economy as excellent or good dropped 8 points to 50%. Yet that number remains well above the long-run average for the survey. Those believing the economy will improve dropped 5 points to 31%, bringing it back down to the long-run average. The decline wiped out a big part of the gain that ensued after President Donald Trump took office. "This is not the trend we have been seeing," said Micah Roberts, partner with Public Opinion Strategies and the Republican pollster for CNBC's survey. "We are on a different trajectory than we have seen since the Trump presidency." Read more [HERE](#).



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Today in History



1799, George Washington

67, Dies - George Washington, the American revolutionary leader and first president of the United States, dies of acute

laryngitis at his estate in Mount Vernon, Virginia. He was 67 years old. George Washington was born in 1732 to a farm family in Westmoreland County, Virginia. His first direct military experience came as a lieutenant colonel in the Virginia colonial militia in 1754, when he led a small expedition against the French in the Ohio River valley on behalf of the governor of Virginia. Two years later, Washington took command of the defenses of the western Virginian frontier during the French and Indian War. After the war's fighting moved elsewhere, he resigned from his military post, returned to a planter's life, and took a seat in Virginia's House of Burgesses. During the next two decades, Washington openly opposed the escalating British taxation and repression of the American colonies. In 1774, he represented Virginia at the Continental Congress. After the American Revolution erupted in 1775, Washington was nominated to be commander in chief of the newly established Continental Army. Some in the Continental Congress opposed his appointment, thinking other candidates were better equipped for the post, but he was ultimately chosen because as a Virginian his leadership helped bind the Southern colonies more closely to the rebellion in New England. With his inexperienced and poorly equipped army of civilian soldiers, General Washington led an effective war of harassment against British forces in America while encouraging the intervention of the French into the conflict on behalf of the colonists. On October 19, 1781, with the surrender of British General Charles Lord Cornwallis' massive British army at Yorktown, Virginia, General Washington had defeated one of the most powerful nations on earth. After the war, the victorious general retired to his estate at Mount Vernon, but in 1787 he heeded his nation's call and returned to politics to preside over the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The drafters created the office of president with him in mind, and in February 1789 Washington was unanimously elected the first president of the United States. As president, Washington sought to unite the nation and protect the interests of the new republic at home and abroad. Of his presidency, he said, "I walk on untrodden ground. There is scarcely any part of my conduct which may not hereafter be

Rolling Thunder Ride Comes to an End in 2019: One of the nation's most iconic displays of support for military veterans, those missing in action and prisoners of war is coming to an end. The annual Rolling Thunder ride — which has brought thousands of bikers to the D.C. area for decades — is hitting the brakes. They won't be riding after their May 2019 run, group officials confirmed to WTOP. The key issues cited by the group are costs and communication problems with the Pentagon Police Department. Rolling Thunder, Inc. board member Gus Dante told WTOP that it cost them \$60,000 just to rent the Pentagon parking lot, and about \$200,000 for the whole ball of wax to promote the POW/MIA issue and veterans causes. After the 2019 run, "We are going to do it in our local areas, various states," he said. Read more [HERE](#).



During the 2018 event, one veteran said the Rolling Thunder ride is to raise awareness that there are still more prisoners of war, and they all need to be brought home. (WTOP/Melissa Howell)



A military helicopter flies over a police escort on the Memorial Bridge, for motorcyclists riding in the 30th anniversary of the Rolling Thunder 'Ride for Freedom' demonstration in Washington, Sunday, May 28, 2017. Rolling Thunder seeks to bring full accountability for all U.S. prisoners of war and missing in action (POW/MIA) soldiers. (AP Photo/Cliff Owen)



drawn in precedent." He successfully implemented executive authority, making good use of brilliant politicians such as Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson in his cabinet, and quieted fears of presidential tyranny. In 1792, he was unanimously reelected but four years later refused a third term. In 1797, he finally began a long-awaited retirement at his estate in Virginia. He died two years later. His friend Henry Lee provided a famous eulogy for the father of the United States: "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."



1911, Amundsen Reaches South Pole - Norwegian Roald Amundsen becomes the first explorer to reach the South Pole, beating his British rival,

Robert Falcon Scott. Amundsen, born in Borge, near Oslo, in 1872, was one of the great figures in polar exploration. In 1897, he was first mate on a Belgian expedition that was the first ever to winter in the Antarctic. In 1903, he guided the 47-ton sloop Gjøa through the Northwest Passage and around the Canadian coast, the first navigator to accomplish the treacherous journey. Amundsen planned to be the first man to the North Pole, and he was about to embark in 1909 when he learned that the American Robert Peary had achieved the feat. Amundsen completed his preparations and in June 1910 sailed instead for Antarctica, where the English explorer Robert F. Scott was also headed with the aim of reaching the South Pole. In early 1911, Amundsen sailed his ship into Antarctica's Bay of Whales and set up base camp 60 miles closer to the pole than Scott. In October, both explorers set off—Amundsen using sleigh dogs, and Scott employing Siberian motor sledges, Siberian ponies, and dogs. On December 14, 1911, Amundsen's expedition won the race to the Pole and returned safely to base camp in late January. Scott's expedition was less fortunate. The motor sleds broke down, the ponies had to be shot, and the dog teams were sent back as Scott and four companions continued on foot. On January 18, 1912, they reached the pole only to find that Amundsen had preceded them by over a month. Weather on the return journey was exceptionally bad—two members perished—and a storm later trapped Scott and the other two survivors in their tent only 11 miles from their base camp. Scott's frozen body was found later that year. After his historic Antarctic journey, Amundsen established a successful shipping business. He later made attempts to become the first explorer to fly over the North Pole. In 1925, in an airplane, he flew within 150 miles of the goal. In 1926, he passed over the North Pole in a dirigible just three days after American explorer Richard E. Byrd had apparently done so in an aircraft. In 1996, a diary that Byrd had kept on the flight was found that seemed to suggest that he had turned back 150 miles short of its goal because of an oil leak, making Amundsen's dirigible expedition the first flight over the North Pole. In 1928, Amundsen lost his life while trying



Ken Caryl of Dale City, Va. salutes the motorcyclists, many of them are veterans, as they ride across the Memorial Bridge into Washington Sunday, May 26, 2013, during the annual Rolling Thunder "Ride for Freedom" parade ahead of Monday's Memorial Day celebration. (AP Photo/Molly Riley)

FARM TANK

Tweets of the Day

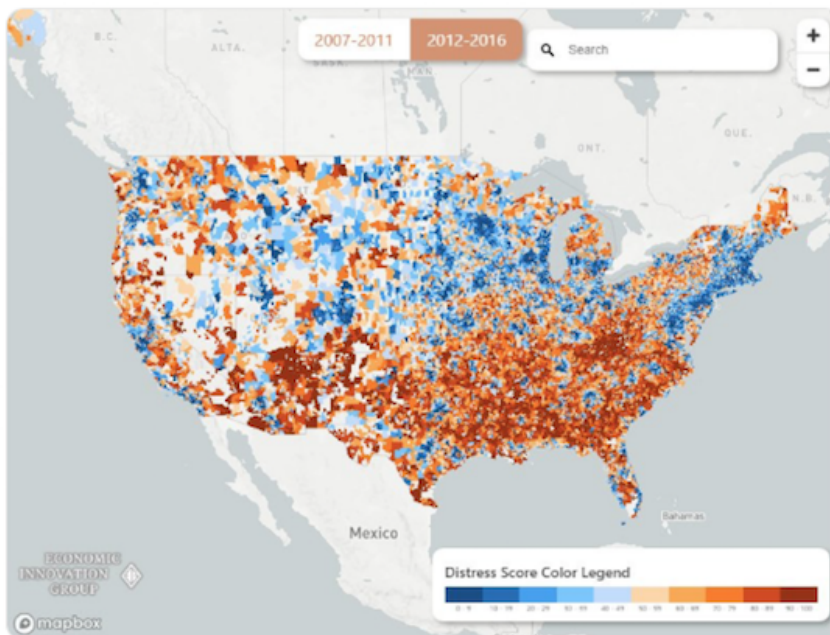


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to rescue a fellow explorer whose dirigible had crashed at sea near Spitsbergen, Norway.



1939, USSR expelled from the League of Nations - On this day the League of Nations, the international peacekeeping organization formed at the end

of World War I, expels the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in response to the Soviets' invasion of Finland on October 30. Although the League of Nations was more or less the brainchild of President Woodrow Wilson, the United States, which was to have sat on the Executive Council, never joined. Isolationists in the Senate—put off by America's intervention in World War I, which they felt was more of a European civil war than a true world war—prevented American participation. While the League was born with the exalted mission of preventing another "Great War," it proved ineffectual, being unable to protect China from a Japanese invasion or Ethiopia from an Italian one. The League was also useless in reacting to German remilitarization, which was a violation of the Treaty of Versailles, the document that formally set the peace terms for the end of World War I. Germany and Japan voluntarily withdrew from the League in 1933, and Italy left in 1937. The true imperial designs of the Soviet Union soon became apparent with its occupation of eastern Poland in September of 1939, ostensibly with the intention of protecting Russian "blood brothers," Ukrainians and Byelorussians, who were supposedly menaced by the Poles. Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were then terrorized into signing "mutual assistance" pacts, primarily one-sided agreements that gave the USSR air and naval bases in those countries. But the invasion of Finland, where no provocation or pact could credibly be adduced to justify the aggression, resulted in worldwide reaction. President Roosevelt, although an "ally" of the USSR, condemned the invasion, causing the Soviets to withdraw from the New York World's Fair. And finally, the League of Nations, drawing almost its last breath, expelled it.

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

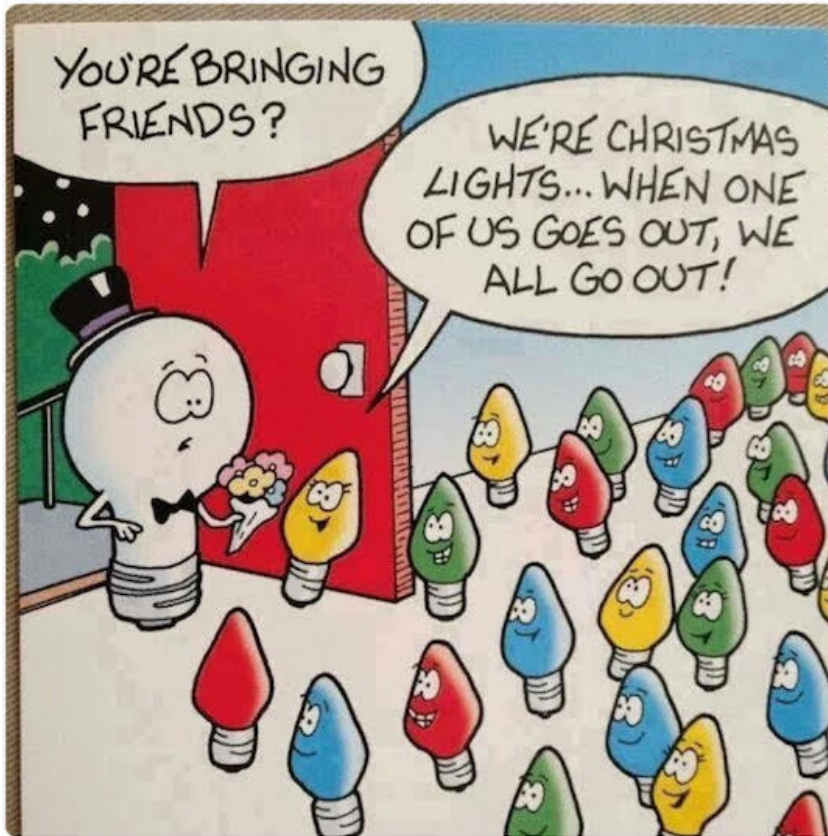
Fri. 12/28 – Export Sales



Brittany Wilbanks
@HotMessFarms

Following

#ChristmasJokes



Erin Holbert
@ErnHolbert

Following

Beginning of harvest ➡ end of harvest

Main differences? I was a whole lot tanner and there was a whole lot less snow and ice on the ground three months ago.



Kevin's Song of the Week

WHAT I'M LISTENING TO: ▶



▶ **Mason Ramsey**
"White Christmas"

Kevin's Song of the Week



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



Mike Pasztor

@Pasztor79

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Calling in the big guns to try and get
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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 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 loser in Vegas, always walks away from the table thinking he could have done better, the winners on the other hand leave while on top..."

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

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

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

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

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



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#ChristmasTree on the way



Farm Direction
RECIPES

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

**Apple Cider
Mimosa**



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Still Classic!

#Motivation #WednesdayMotivation

#WednesdayWisdom

\$182 Billion in one photo



**No Gucci Belt, No Armani Suit,
No Rolex Watch! Still Classic..** 🙌





Felix L. Griffin
@FelixLGriffin

Following



5 Things To Give Up. [#InspirationalQuotes](#)
[#MotivationalQuotes](#) [#Success](#) [#Happiness](#)
[#Entrepreneur](#) [#happy](#) [#change](#) [#positive](#)
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5 THINGS TO GIVE UP:

1. OVERTHINKING
2. FEARING CHANGE
3. LIVING IN THE PAST
4. NEGATIVE SELF-TALK
5. TRYING TO PLEASE EVERYONE

neuro mining



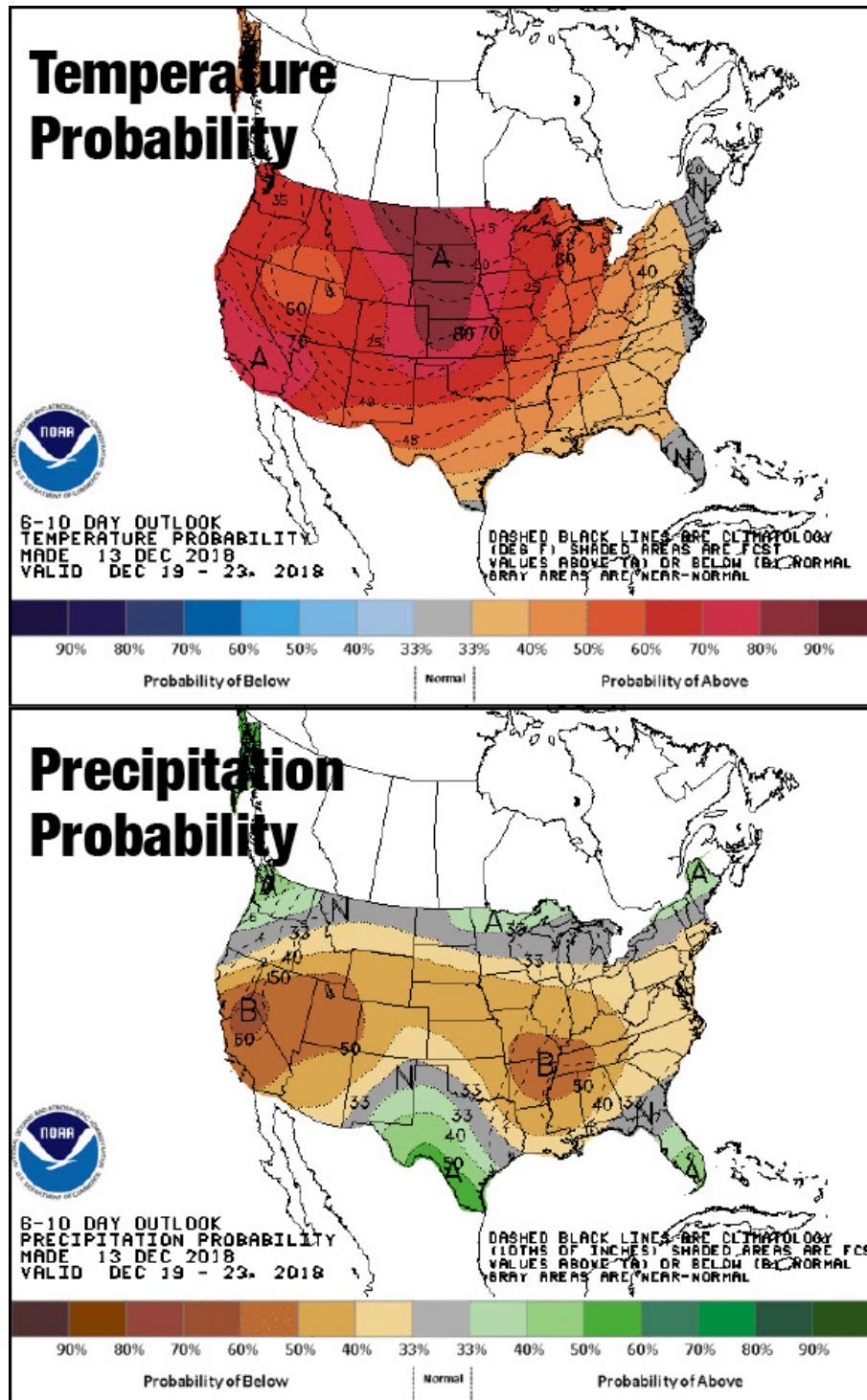
As we age, it gets harder and harder to create new neural pathways in the brain. It's the reason kids find it so easy to learn new things, but as adults it often gets more difficult. Doing brain teasers and solving riddles can be an important part of keeping our brain healthy. The more connections we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

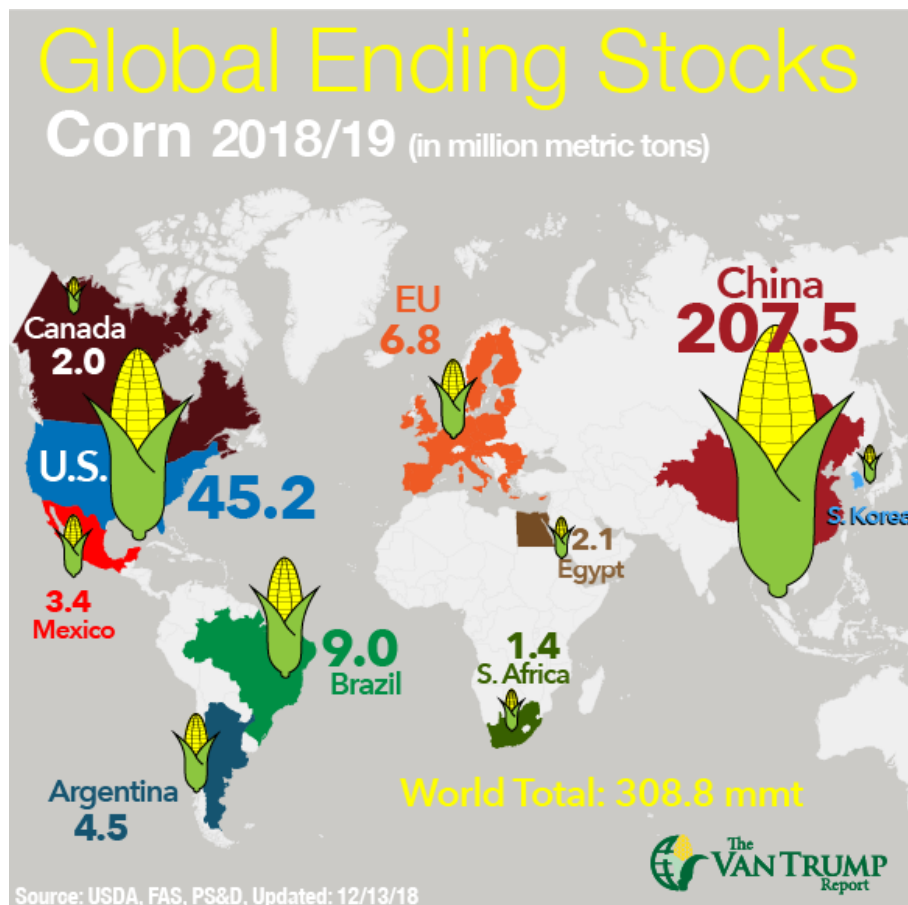
You may enter, but you may not come in. I have space, but no room. I have keys, but open no lock. What am I?

Weather on the Plains is seeing windy weather prevailing in conjunction with a

developing storm system. The storm, which is crossing the southern Plains, is also producing scattered rain and snow showers. Wind gusts could top 60 mph across large sections of the Plains today. On the Corn Belt, mild, mostly dry weather generally favors final corn and soybean harvest efforts, although complications include muddy fields, lingering snow cover and locally dense fog. In the South, rain showers from the western Gulf Coast region to the Mississippi Delta are increasing in coverage and intensity. Although most Southern fieldwork is complete, wet fields continue to hamper late-season harvest efforts. A storm system currently intensifying over Texas will drift eastward, crossing the lower Mississippi Valley on Friday and reaching the southern and central Appalachians by Saturday. Wind-driven snow could affect portions of central Texas and environs later today, but the bulk of the precipitation associated with the storm should fall as rain. Storm-total rainfall could reach 1 to 3 inches or more from the mid-South into the middle and southern Atlantic States. Most of the remainder of the country will experience mild, dry weather. The 6 to 10 day outlook for December 18 - 22 is calling for the likelihood of warmer than normal weather nationwide, except for near normal temperatures across southern Florida. Meanwhile, below normal precipitation in most areas of the country should contrast with wetter than normal conditions in the Rio Grande Valley and from the Pacific Northwest to the northern Rockies.



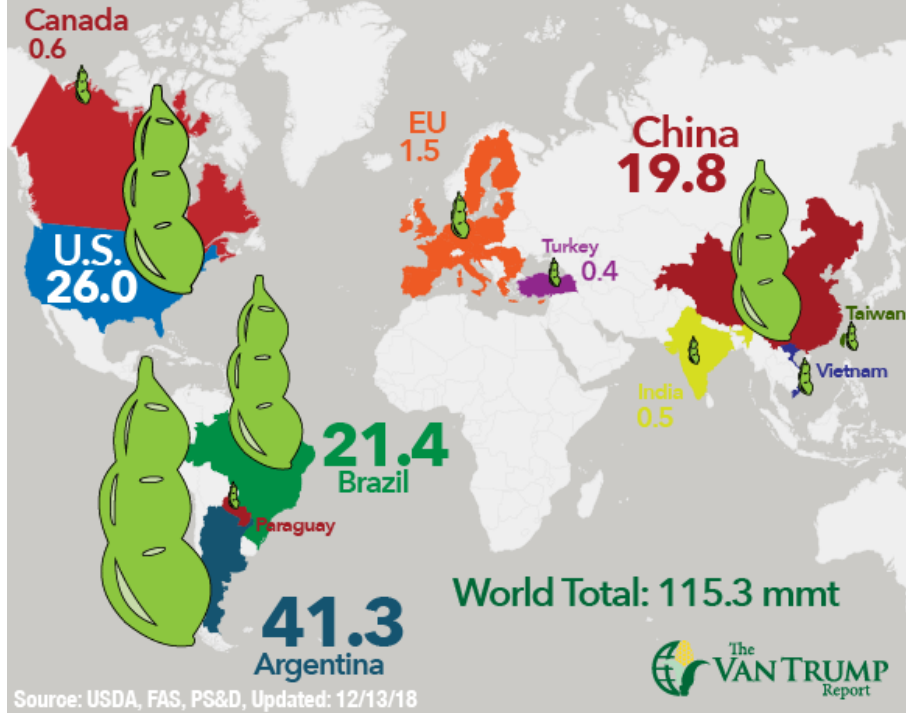
Corn bears continue to talk about slowing growth in demand. Earlier in the week the USDA confirmed the slowdown in ethanol by reducing their corn usage estimate by -50 million bushels. The past few days there's been more headlines and talk circulating about stiffer export competition. That was confirmed by the weaker than expected weekly export sales figures. It's not that export sales were bad, but just reported at the lower end of expectations. There's also more talk circulating that China is going to buy corn from Ukraine, which brings into question how much they will buy from U.S. exporters? There was some large numbers being thrown around last week in regard to China buying big doses of U.S. corn and ethanol. This week those numbers seem to be backing up a bit. With "demand" being questioned, bulls need some fresh "supply" side headlines and concerns. Perhaps some of the recent worries about dry conditions in parts of Brazil will help bring a little more excitement. I'm staying patient. It feels like prices want to back-and-fill a little before thinking about testing the next series of highs.



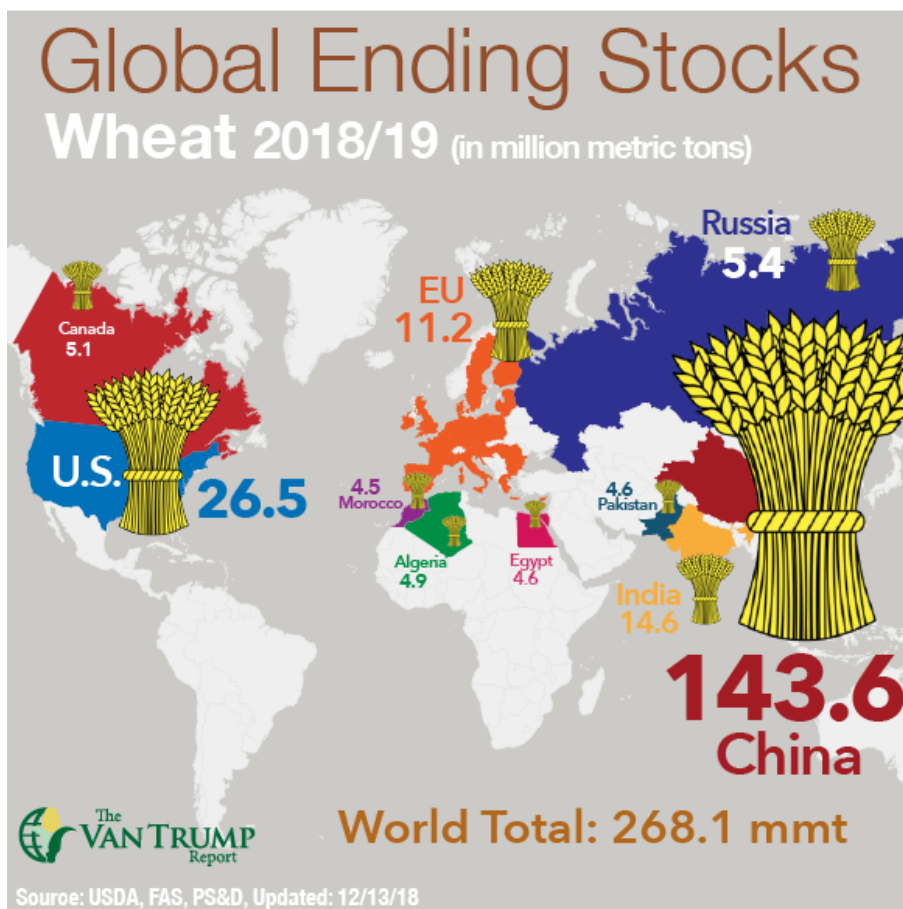
Soybean bulls seem a bit disappointed in the amount of sales announced to China. Yesterday, the USDA said a private sale amounted to 1.13 MMTs. This was the biggest single day soybean purchase by the Chinese on four years, and the ninth largest one-day purchase in a decade. The USDA will probably announce more sales this morning. The trade is thinking in total 2.0 to 3.0 MMTs will be announced. Unfortunately, that's just not enough to excite the bulls and or enough to substantially reduce the burdensome U.S. balance sheet. There was talk last week that we could see perhaps 6.0 to 8.0 MMTs sold to the Chinese. Hence the reason for the disappointment to this point. Perhaps we will see more sales announced to China in the next several sessions? Bulls are happy to see greater weather concerns in Brazil. There's more and more talk of extreme heat and dry weather in some key production areas inside Mato Grosso, western Parana and portions of Paraguay. I suspect if they stay dry through next week we could see some additional risk-premium added. As a producer, I continue to remain patient. I already have about 60% of my crop priced and a floor under the other 40%, hence no major downside risk remaining. I felt like this would allow me to buy "time" and give Chinese trade relations a chance to improve. I will be trying to price another 10% to 20% through the South American growing season and into U.S. planting headlines. Not wanting to get in a major hurry... As a spec, I still have a slightly bullish tilt.

Global Ending Stocks

Soybeans 2018/19 (in million metric tons)



Wheat prices for the SRW contract pushed to their highest close since mid-October. There was some talk of aggressively increasing prices inside Russia and the Black Sea region. There was also data circulating that showed Russian wheat exports have started to ease the past few weeks. Bulls are also pointing to some weather issues creating complications and concerns for Argentine wheat. From what I understand, the Argentine crop is being harvested, but freezing temps and overly wet conditions are prompting several sources to trim their current production estimate. I remain a longer-term bull. As a producer, I want to remain patient and make wait to make sales at higher prices. As a spec, I'm only adding to my bullish position on a pullback.



> **Second MFP Payment Expected:** *USDA Ag Secretary Sonny Perdue expects second MFP payments to be dispursed despite China's recent bean purchase. If all goes as planned the White House will approve the second tranche of aid payments to farmers under the Market Facilitation Program. Perdue is meeting with OMB on Friday to discuss the topic. I continue to hear mixed reports and talk about the payment. I know it would go a long ways towards easing some of the basis pain for many producers.*

> **Argentine Wheat Crop Lowered:** *Buenos Aires Grains Exchange lowered its 2018-19 Argentine wheat crop estimate to 19.0 MMT from 19.2 MMT. Recent frosts and hail have delivered headwinds to yields, with frosts in the province of Buenos Aires and hail in La Pampa and Cordoba. I'm told, the exchange says 57% of the country's wheat crop has been harvested to this point.*

> **U.K. on High Alert for ASF:** *UK's pig farmers are bracing themselves against a possible outbreak of African swine fever. The highly contagious disease cannot be caught by humans but can be carried in contaminated meat, such as pork chops, for as long as three months even if frozen. I'm told the disease which is fatal to pigs, has already led to the slaughter of more than 800,000 pigs worldwide.*

> **Indoor Farming Startup Raises \$90 Million:** *Bowery announced its Series B round of funding on Wednesday, led by GV (formerly Google Venture) and including the CEO of Uber. This New York-startup, whose produce ia already available at certain Whole Foods and Sweetgreen stores, uses vision systems and machine learning to continuously monitor plants and study the variables that maximize growth. (Source: Crunchbase)*

> **Cheez-Its Being Sued Over Misleading Label:** *A class-action lawsuit alleging that whole-grain Cheez-Its are not actually made of whole grains will move ahead after a court decision. Kellogg's Cheez-It cracker is labeled "made with whole grain." However, the lawsuit argues that the nutrition facts panel on the side of the box, lists enriched white flour as the main ingredient, which they believe contradicts Kellogg's "whole grains" labeling. Many are not giving Kellogg too much of a chance as the case is being*

tried in the Second Circuit court in New York City which is a precinct widely known for bringing frivolous food lawsuits. (Source: MarketWatch)

> Virgin Galactic Flies to Edge of Space: Two pilots on board Virgin Galactic's spacecraft Unity become the company's first astronauts on a test flight that reached an altitude of 51.4 miles. From what I understand, the spacecraft also carried four NASA-funded technology experiments on board.

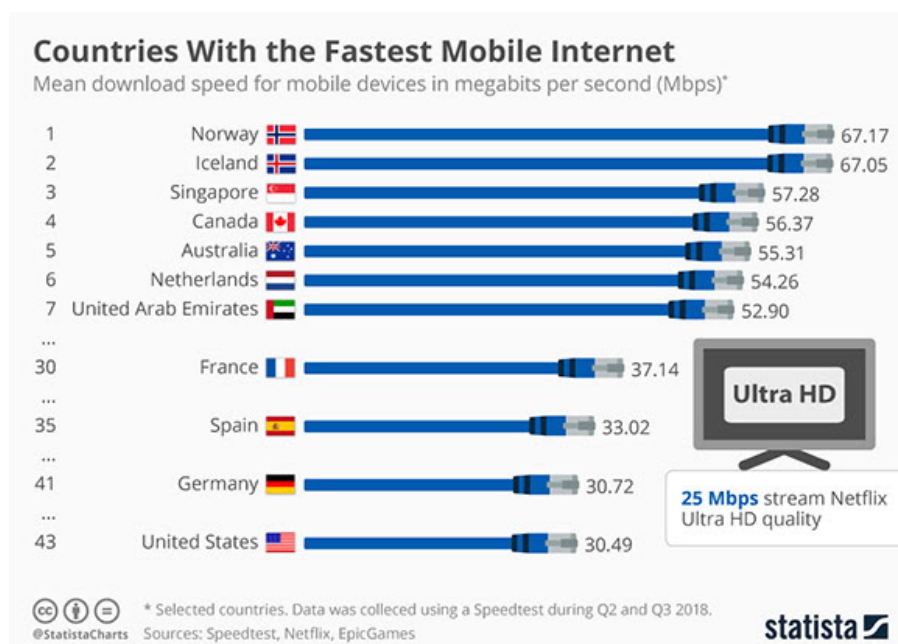
> Apple's Billion Dollar Campus: Apple will invest \$1 billion in a new 133-acre campus that will be located in North Austin. From what I understand, the campus will accommodate an initial 5,000 employees, with capacity for 15,000 employees in total.

> Intel and the Electronic Sports League Sign a 3-Year Deal: Intel and esports company ESL have extended a long-standing partnership, signing a three year, \$100 million deal designed to boost the profile of electronic sports worldwide. Intel will provide the technology -- including high-powered computer processors and 5G -- for some of the best-known esports events through 2021. The Intel Extreme Masters, an ESL-run league sponsored by Intel, is set to enter its 14th season as the longest-running global professional gaming circuit. (Source: CNBC)

> Drones Set to Deliver Blood Supplies to Ghana's Hospital: Ghanaian lawyers have approved the deployment of drones to deliver medical supplies around the country. The scheme, which will pay U.S. firm Zipline around \$12 million for the technology, has been criticized by doctors and politicians. They say the scheme is too expensive and that funding for medical professionals should be a higher priority. I continue to hear governments in developing countries are increasingly looking to drones to provide healthcare solutions, so it will be interesting what kind of traction they get. (Source: BBC)

> Rock and Roll Hall of Fame: This year's list of inductees was released and includes a great lineup of musicians, featuring Stevie Nicks, the Fleetwood Mac frontwoman and icon in her own right; Janet Jackson, known first as a pop star and second as an R&B innovator; Radiohead, one of the all-time indie rock greats; The Cure, whose nomination shows that the Rock Hall is finally taking the seminal genre of post-punk seriously; the Zombies, who helped define the sound of the British Invasion; Roxy Music, whose genre-bending visions helped inspire a generation of artful followers; and heavy-metal legends Def Leppard, who far-and-away gained the most fan votes in the Rock Hall's crowdsourced ballot. (Source: USAToday)

> Countries With the Fastest Mobile Internet Speeds May Surprise You: I find it quite interesting that here in the U.S. -- the birth place of the iPhone -- we come in 43rd in the world in terms of average internet speeds on a mobile device. According to analysis by Ookla, Norway had the fastest mobile download speed, coming in at 67.17 megabits per second. Canada, Australia -- even the United Arab Emirates -- all rate substantially faster than the U.S. As for the fastest and most consistent service providers across the U.S. T-Mobile was 1st, followed closely by Verizon. Of course, download speeds are expected to change substantially in the next year as 5G comes closer to a reality. Despite these advances, the U.S. still has a ways to go to catch up with the fastest in the World.





Northeast North Dakota – We just finished up harvest on Sunday. We had to wait on some soybeans to get uncovered with snow before we could finish. The corn made close to 160 and beans were about 40 bushels, so it was a pretty good year overall. We are busy hauling corn now. If guys aren't done now, they are holding it over the winter in the field which isn't going to be good. Guys have to weigh out the options of losing 25% in drying or lose 25% in field loss. We know for sure the drying cost, but we may not see as much field loss, so I guess that's the gamble.

Northcentral Ohio – We just finished soybeans, but we made a mess of the combine. I was accessing what needed to happen before we switched back to corn. I had one of my guys crawl back there and hand clean all the muck from harvesting wet soybeans in the snow. We had about 3-4 days' worth of build up, so we were not starting corn until it was cleaned out. We should be done with corn by the weekend. The crops have been okay, but the conditions have been terrible. We still had 60+ bushel beans in the snow. And, the corn is close to 200, maybe just a touch less on the average.

Central Minnesota – We were down a little in corn this year due to too much rain. I think we averaged 194 when our APH is close to 210. We did about 68 in soybeans which is good for us but not nearly as good as some of the Illinois guys that I'm hearing pushed through 80 bushels per acre. I think that's what guys in that part of the world have to average in order to make the farm work. We got lucky because guys north of us had one-third of their corn down and they were only able to pick about 60 acres per day.



U.S. Solar Growth Slow But Rebound Expected in 2019: U.S. solar market growth fell 15% in Q3 compared to the same period a year earlier, due to slower growth of utility-scale projects and residential installations were flat or up slightly. I should mention, the industry is still expanding, albeit more slowly, but the current quarter should see a boomlet, thanks to projects delayed by prior uncertainty over the early 2018 tariff decision coming to fruition. According to Wood Mackenzie analyst Colin Smith, developers originally planned to bring projects online in Q3 2018 were forced to push out completion dates to Q4 2018 or Q1 2019 due to uncertainty around tariffs. As delayed projects go forward, Q4 is slated to be biggest quarter for utility-scale projects in the last 2 years Smith said. Read more [HERE](#) on the solar market and keep your eyes open for opportunities in your area.

2018 Came and Went Without a Coup: The past year may have felt politically tumultuous with all the global headlines, but consider this...2018 is on track to be only the second year in a century without a coup d'état. The last head of state overthrown was Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe in November 2017. From what I understand, there have been 463 coup attempts worldwide since 1950, 233 of which were successful. These undemocratic power transfers have sparked civil wars, triggered authoritarian crackdowns and stunted economic growth. Prior to 2018, the only other coup-free year in the past century was 2007. Read more [HERE](#) to find out what experts are saying about where the next coup may await.

Why More Americans Are Working Past Age 65: For the first time since the 1940s, Americans are reaching retirement age in worse financial shape than their parents. An estimated 10 million people older than 65 are still working — an increase of 240% since 1985. According to CBS News business analyst Jill Schlesinger, Americans are facing three main obstacles to retirement. They're living longer, median wages have stagnated over the past 20 years and a shift from pension plans to 401(k)s have all put a burden on employees. But the National Bureau of Economic Research has found that working longer by even a short period of time can have a dramatic impact on retirement. For example, retiring at 66 instead of 62 can increase the standard of living in retirement by almost 33 percent. "Hang in there until age 70, and your standard of living will improve nearly 75 percent," Schlesinger said. Read more [HERE](#) on what faces millions of Americans.

What's in Space is no Longer a Secret: *Not many people need direct access to what the U.S. military calls "space situational awareness," a fancy term for knowing what manmade objects are in space, and where. But those with an eye on Earth's orbit now have access to a trove of never-before-seen data about space objects that before now the government has kept secret. The declassification effort, announced in October, yielded another release of data last week. "This is us being transparent, leaning forward and trying to enhance that spaceflight safety through data sharing," Col. Scott Brodeur, the commander of the Combined Space Operation Center, tells Popular Mechanics. Basically, it's a sign of things to come as Uncle Sam tries to make being a space more friendly place for business. Read more [HERE](#) on all that goes on in space.*

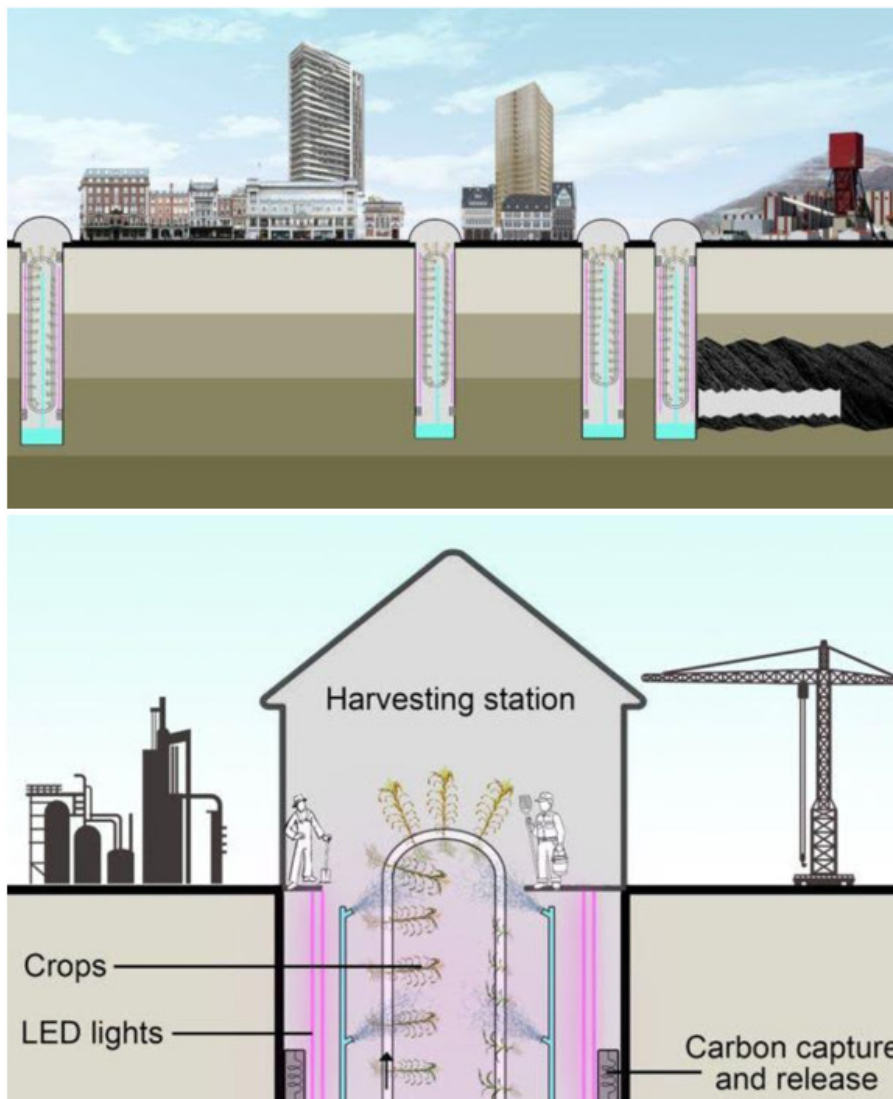
Built in 1344...the Astronomical Clock of Padua is Still Ticking: *Simply trying to imagine all the history that has transpired under the watchful eye of the clock is amazing. The fact it still works, even more so. The magnificent timepiece has a 24-hour dial, so the hour hand makes a full rotation only once a day, not twice, moving at half the usual speed and pointing down at midday instead of up. The clock also strikes the hours on a bell from 1 to 24, with the dial showing the day of the month, the current phase of the Moon, the motion of the planets, and the position of the Sun in the Zodiac. After the original clock was destroyed at the end of the 14th century, a replacement was built in 1423 as a faithful copy of the original, with one exception: It was missing one of Zodiac signs, Libra. Ton of cool history on the clock [HERE](#).*

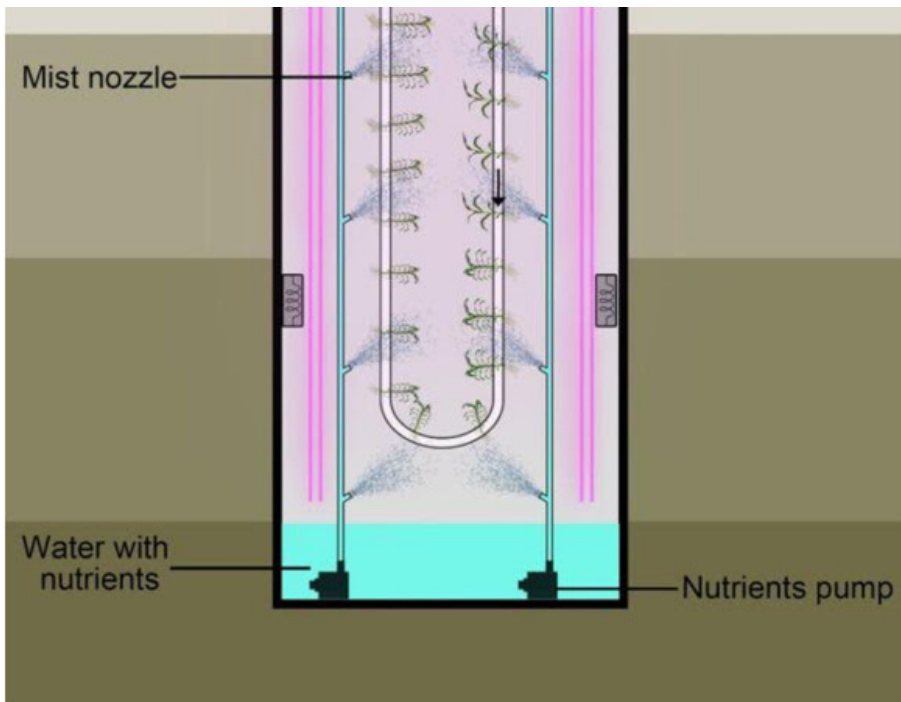




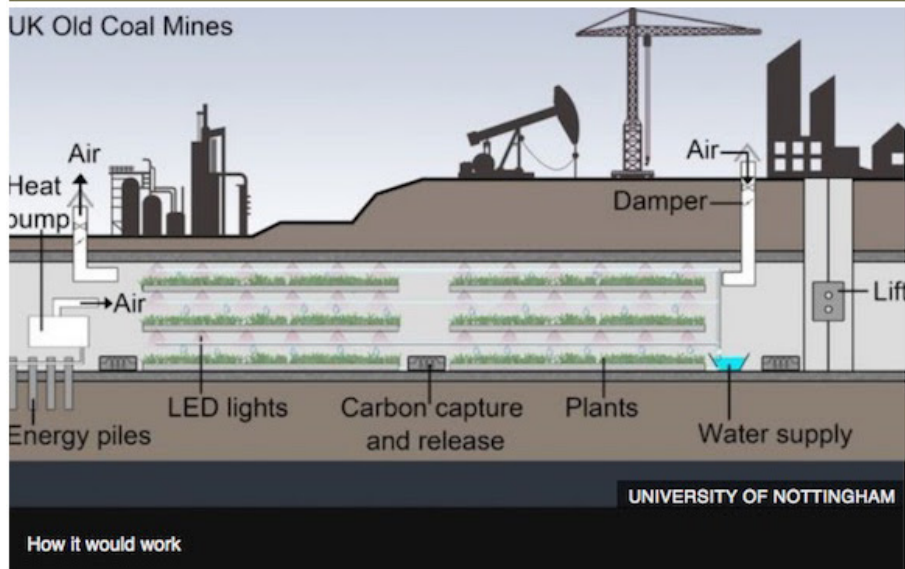
How About Underground Farming?

Researchers in the UK believe they can renovate abandoned coal mine shafts across the country, turning them into the latest venue for indoor farming. From what I understand there are an estimated 150,000 abandoned shafts and over 9,600 miles of unused mines and tunnels in the UK. I should mention many of the advocates, including landowners and investors say it offers a cheaper alternative to vertical farming in giant greenhouses, not to mention breathing new life into the regions where the decline of the coal industry began as far back as the late 1980s. Residents that still live in the area see another opportunity... less expensive food, which currently has to be brought in by air, rail and sea. I'm told a variety of crops could be grown in the subterranean farms using hydroponic planters with plant roots fed with nutrient-rich water and colored LED units enabling photosynthesis. As far as watering crops, there are two options, either groundwater used directly or condensing water from ambient air. Keep in mind that production will now be unaffected by climate or seasonal restrictions which is still one of the major limitations of conventional farming. Refurbishing the mine shafts for use as indoor farms does have a precedent as a former World War Two air-raid shelter under Clapham Common, London, is already being used to grow greens for local supermarkets and restaurants. Interestingly, almost all the ingredients needed for growing crops such as lettuces, carrots, mushrooms and strawberries are already in place when you consider the air temperature, humidity levels, water supply as well as carbon dioxide, meaning costs of production will be less, especially when compared to traditional vertical farming systems that require a large amount of water and energy for heating and cooling. I'm told producers can expect to produce 80 tons of food in an 8 yard/sq shaft, approximately eight to 10 times the amount of food grown on the same area of land above ground. It will be interesting to see the adoption rate of farmers who use the shafts verse stick with what they are currently doing. (Source: BBC, Univ. of [Nottingham](#))



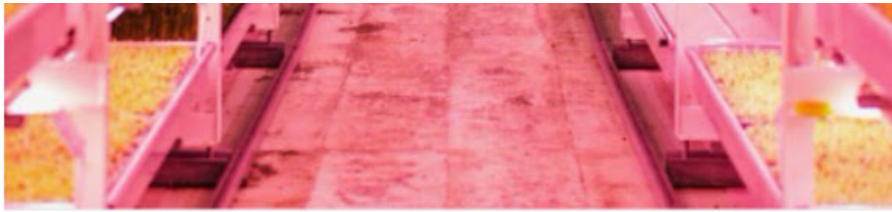


UK Old Coal Mines



How it would work





Growing Underground

@GrownUnder



THROWBACK THURSDAY! Remembering a very special visit down on the farm earlier this year from @MONKEY_47 Looking forward to celebrating something very special with these guys soon. Stay tuned! 🍌🌱🍷 #minesagin #undergroundfarm

Want The Perfect FruitCake... Call A Monk!

Several years ago a friend introduced me to a fruitcake that was amazingly delicious. It was made by the monks of Assumption Abbey, located in Ava, Missouri. The small group is actually quite famous for its fruitcakes, which they developed at the abbey with the help of chef Jean-Pierre Augé, who at one time cooked for the Queen of England herself. The fruitcakes they make in their humble bakery are one of the monks' main sources of income and they sell out every year. Last year, they sold over 30,000! The fruitcakes sell for \$35 each, and people from all over the world buy them. They also have a few wholesalers, including Williams-Sonoma. The abbey makes around 125 cakes a day, five days a week, except on holy days. Despite the hefty output, they still make each and every cake by hand. They start with roughly 30,000 pounds of dried fruit that they soak in burgundy wine. Once sufficiently steeped, the fruit is added to the cake batter, poured into cake tins and baked for around two hours. Each cake is then injected with rum, coated with a layer of corn syrup and decorated with four pecan halves and four cherry halves. Before carefully wrapping them in plastic, the monks say a special prayer over the fruitcakes:

*"O God, Creator of all things
Bless now these creations of our hands,
That these cakes may be received
As tokens of your love
And shared with friends as hints
Of your Eucharistic feast.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ
Incarnate in our midst."*

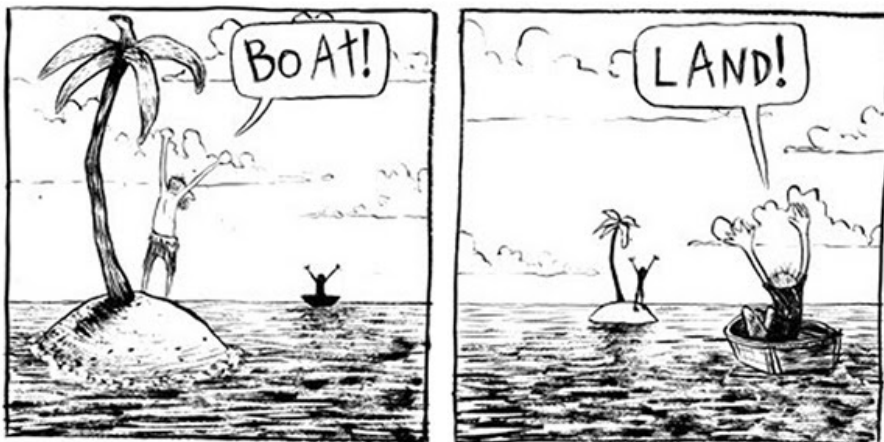
The cakes are then aged for at least two months before being shipped. Located in the foothills of the Ozark Mountains, Assumption Abbey was founded as a Trappist monastery, an order of Roman Catholic monks that branched off the Benedictine tradition with roots in 17th century France. A local man had donated the scenic property, hoping a monastery would be built there. Monks from New Melleray Abbey in Iowa first arrived there in 1950. The monks previously supported their lifestyle by making cement blocks but switched to baking in the 1980s when the cement enterprise became too laborious and its profit margin too slim. You can order the cakes by calling 888-738-0117 or go [HERE](#) to order online. If the abbey itself is already sold out, be sure to check with Williams-Sonoma or Amazon, both of which also sell them. If you're interested in purchasing other products that directly support Monasteries, Abbeys, Convents or Hermitages, check out [Monastery Greetings](#). Proceeds from all sales go directly to the groups that made them.



Your "Happiness" Depends on Your Perspective... And You Can Change It!

Time and time again, I learn that "happiness" is all about perception and perspective. Everyone ultimately wants to be happy, but I find too often people searching and looking for it in all the wrong places. Many of my friends ask about my success in both business and life, and particularly how I've accomplished happiness on all fronts. I tell them, it hasn't always been great. We've certainly had our fair share of ups and downs. I went

broke twice before the age of 35. Made some bad investments and some bad business decisions. Luckily I had met some very smart people along my journey and they were able to point out and tell me where I was missing the boat. Perhaps even more important was my willingness to listen and being receptive to their criticisms and suggestions. The biggest takeaway, my perception and perspective were way off target. I was setting goals and making plans to try and acquire more "money" and "material possessions" thinking it would ultimately bring our family more happiness. Wow, how stupid was I? Somewhere in life I had concocted or come to this crazy conclusion. We had learned in school that $2+2=4$, but somehow I concluded and started believing "money+possessions = happiness". In some cases that might be right. Money and possessions can bring momentary glimpses of happiness. But those moments are fleeting and not real. The moments don't last and constantly keep you craving for more. It's a very addicting and dangerous cycle to get trapped in. Bottom-line, you can't buy happiness! Objects--like all of the things we purchase only bring us temporary fulfillment. Psychologists researching happiness have repeatedly found that these things never buy lasting happiness. In fact, research shows that money and possessions can actually decrease happiness if you lose your perspective. So where did I find happiness? It was everywhere that I wasn't looking. Kind of like "negative space" in art. Sometimes it's just a whole lot easier to draw the "negative space" rather than focusing exclusively on the object you are trying to draw. In other words, I was spending the majority of my time focusing on ways to make money, building a business, and ways I could improve. The problem was it was all about me. It becomes extremely easy to leave "compassion" and "helping others" out of the equation when you are crazy busy and focused on the wrong goals. There are only so many hours in the day. How many of those hours are you focused on improving your situation? How many of those hours are you focused on helping others? Compassion not only brings happiness to those you help, but it also works in a strange way to improve how you feel about yourself. You become proud of what you are doing. You become excited and start to gain the ability to move very quickly. The decisions come much easier and execution much simpler. Hence, happiness starts to brew and build momentum. It's been proven time and time again, helping others stimulates the brain's pleasure pathways and provides a much more lasting dopamine drip in the brain. In addition, by focusing your attention on trying to help others solve their problems, you become less preoccupied with your own worries and concerns. Your brain becomes energized as you try to be part of someone else's solution, which allows you to tackle your own problems with renewed vigor. I suspect the biggest change I had to make, was to slow down and constantly think about my perception and perspective in life at any given moment. It's all around us everyday... I was recently getting a rental car, after my plane was delayed and I finally got to the counter, they didn't have the luxury SUV I had reserved. In fact, they had no large SUV. I was downgraded to a compact SUV, given some rental car bucks, and told sorry for the inconvenience. I was upset and mad and asked to talk to a manager. While waiting, I heard the woman next to me also having some issues with her reservation. They didn't have the compact car she had reserved, but instead they were going to upgrade her to a compact SUV. The same type of vehicle they were trying to give me. Only her response was much different. She was overwhelmed with happiness, almost bringing her tears. It was going to make her family's vacation and kids so much happier. She couldn't thank them enough! I immediately stopped and thought about my perception and perspective. Once again, I had temporarily lost my way. But now I am much more able to recognize this disease, and more quick to immediately change my perspective. I've read study after study about happiness, most all conclude the same thing, people almost always think if they only had more they would be happier. But the results always reveal this simply isn't true. Those who seemed to sacrifice the most to help the most, tend to always be the happiest. Bottom-line, somewhere along the line our perception in life gets thrown off, we start believe the more money or more stuff we can accumulate, the happier we will be. Interestingly however, the reality is, the more we give away and do to help others, the happier we become. Again, it's all about perspective...



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HAPPINESS

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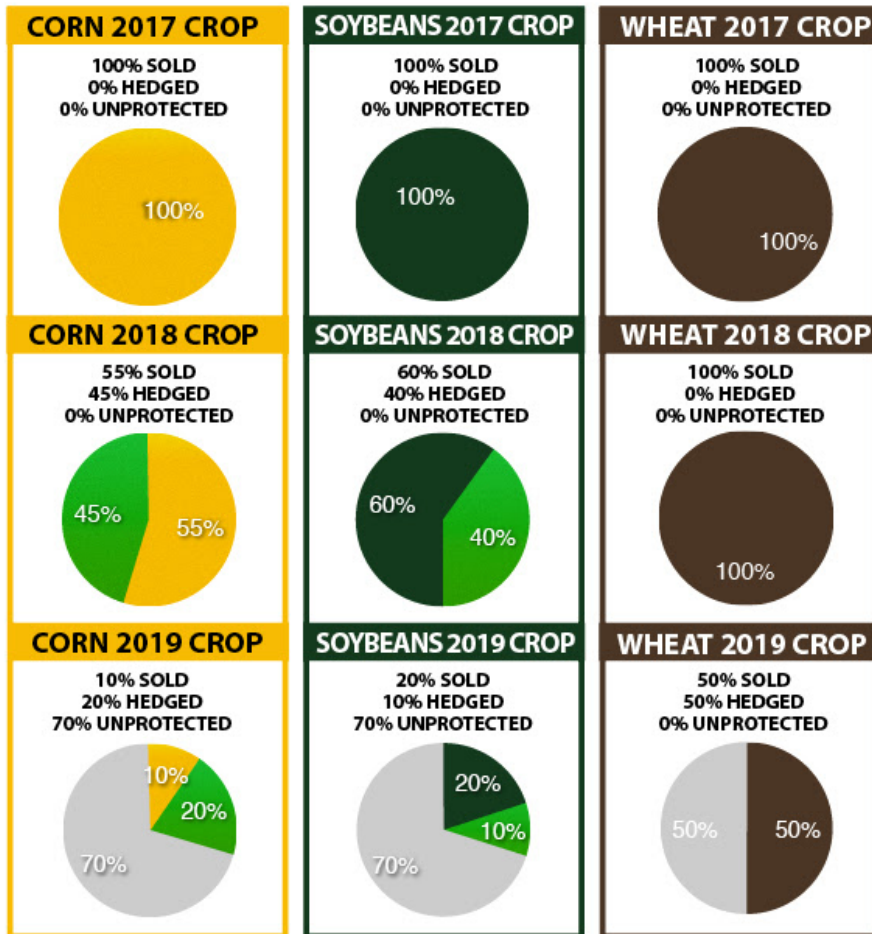
That's not buying
happiness; it's buying a
solution. My happiness is
not based on my
circumstances. It's based
on my perspective. I
understand the difference
between sadness and
depression. Just putting
things in perspective.

whisper

ANSWER to riddle: A computer.

CASH SALES & HEDGING TOTALS

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