

GOOD MORNING: 02/08/19 Farm Direction - Van Trump Report

1 message

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

Fri, Feb 8, 2019 at 7:19 AM

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Today In History

"You must do the things you think you cannot do." - Eleanor Roosevelt

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 08, 2019
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Morning Summary: Stocks are lower this morning and continue to move like the wind changes direction. Rumors started circulating yesterday that President Trump would probably NOT be meeting with Chinese President Xi while on his upcoming trip to Vietnam at the end of February, just ahead of the March 2 trade deadline. A senior administration official reportedly told the press that the presidents are still planning to meet but there's "too much work to do" in too short of a time period to flesh out a deal with China. The leaders set their March 2 deadline when they met in Argentina. While negotiators are making progress, officials said there's still much work to be done. Larry Kudlow, Director of the National Economic Council, followed that up yesterday by saying, President Trump "does expect to meet with Xi but when is totally up in the air. At some point they will meet, but that is off in the distance at the moment." As you can imagine, diminishing expectations for a nearby resolution to a U.S.-China trade spat, sparked fresh fears about a slowing global economy. As I've said several times, the stock market now finds itself in a precarious space. The U.S. economy remains strong but some of the data points have started to weaken. The Fed seems somewhat uncertain about their next move, going from hawkish to somewhat dovish almost overnight. The looming trade conflict with China also creates a ton of uncertainty. Bottom-line, I don't think anyone is arguing that the U.S. economy is going to fall apart any time soon, but earnings are flat on a forward looking basis and the stock market is currently asking for almost 17 times, which is a little rich for many "value" based investors. Meaning, if the stocks can't keep up with projected "growth" investors will not be willing to pay inflated premiums. It's not that companies are doing poorly or in trouble, rather just not certain they can keep growing at the pace they have the past few years. That's the big question with Apple stock. Can they continue to grow like they have during the past decade? Can Facebook continue to grow like it has now that they have to provide much more due diligence? Will Netflix continue to add new users and grow like it has in the past now that other big names like Disney, Amazon and Fox are jumping in the space? Again, this is why I'm being somewhat cautious in paying premium for "growth" right now. For full disclosure, I still own shares of Amazon, Alphabet, Apple, and Facebook, I've just trimmed down my exposure. I currently do not own any Netflix stock. There's very little in the way of traditional economic data scheduled for today. There's really not a lot of traditional economic data out next week either. We have the CPI on Wednesday and updated Retail Sales later in the week. I suspect the big ticket items will be the delegation of U.S. trade officials traveling to China to hopefully iron out a few more differences. Don't forget, we also have the U.S government budget deadline looming next Friday. If there's no compromise, we might be looking at another government shutdown. I'm personally keeping a close eye on the U.S. dollar. The thoughts have been, the Fed turning more dovish and the U.S. economy slowing a bit, would help pressure the dollar lower. Unfortunately, if other nations report even further slowing growth and their central banks become even more dovish than the U.S. Fed, the dollar, by default or proxy becomes the so called "best-of-bread" and will remain strong. Ultimately, that would create a headwind for the U.S. stock market and our global export business.

Interesting Odds of Presidential Re-Election: Since 1900 there have been 20 U.S. presidents that have run for reelection. Fifteen have won (75%) and only five have lost. Those five where: Taft, Hoover, Ford, Carter, George H.W. Bush.

Top 4 Titans Clash as Ambitions Cross Paths: For a few moments last week it might have looked like the tech industry's very own World War III was breaking



1862, Battle of Roanoke Island - On this day in 1862, Union General Ambrose Burnside scores a major victory when his troops capture

Roanoke Island in North Carolina. It was one of the first major Union victories of the Civil War and gave the Yankees control of the mouth of Albemarle Sound, allowing them to threaten the Rebel capital of Richmond, Virginia, from the south. During the war's first winter, Union strategists focused their efforts on capturing coastal defenses to deny the Confederates sea outlets. In August 1861, the Yankees took two key forts on North Carolina's Outer Banks, paving the way for the campaign against Roanoke Island. On January 11, 1862, Burnside took a force of 15,000 soldiers and a flotilla of 80 ships down to the Outer Banks. The expeditionary force arrived at Hatteras Inlet on January 13, but poor weather delayed an attack for three weeks. On February 7, Burnside landed 10,000 troops on the island. They were met by about 2,500 Confederates. Burnside attacked, and his force overwhelmed the outer defenses of the island. Confederate commander Colonel Henry Shaw retreated to the north end of the island but had no chance to escape. On February 8, Shaw surrendered his entire force. The Yankees suffered 37 men killed and 214 wounded, while the Confederates lost 23 men killed and 62 wounded before the surrender. The Union now controlled a vital section of the coast. The victory came two days after Union General Ulysses S. Grant captured Fort Henry in northern Tennessee, and, for the first time in the war, the North had reason for optimism.



1943, Americans Secure Guadalcanal - On this day in 1943, Japanese troops evacuate Guadalcanal, leaving the island in Allied possession

after a prolonged campaign. The American victory paved the way for other Allied wins in the Solomon Islands. Guadalcanal is the largest of the

out, as Apple briefly kicked iPhone users who work at Facebook and Google off much of their own software as part of a privacy dispute. Hostilities ended as quickly as they began — but the flare up reminded the world of just how completely, and complexly, the technologies and businesses of these giants are connected. The most valuable companies in the world — Apple, Google, Facebook, Amazon — mostly stayed in their own lanes as they grew into giants. But now they're increasingly clashing as their growing ambitions bump into one another. If you understand where these giants clash and where they find common ground, you can begin to grasp how they are shaping our world. Apple was furious when it learned Facebook was abusing rules governing internal apps and quickly kicked the company out of the program, breaking Facebook's ability to test new apps and use internal iPhone apps. When it became clear Google was doing the same thing, Apple was in a bind. Facebook and Apple have few business ties. But Apple gets billions of dollars per year from Google in exchange for making it the default search engine on iPhones and Mac — an arrangement that Apple CEO Tim Cook has had to defend while promoting the company's strong pro-privacy stance. Read more [HERE](#) how their interactions are shaping our world.



The Need for Speed! A publication called "The Drive" filed a public information request with the Texas Department of Public Safety for every single speeding ticket issued by Texas Highway Patrol troopers in excess of 120 mph in 2018. A couple weeks later, a lawyer for the department responded with a huge spreadsheet showing the date, location, vehicle, and speed for all 228 tickets fitting that description—plus extras like officer notes and the stop's exact GPS coordinates when available. The fastest? The driver of a 2003 Porsche 911, stopped for doing 166 mph in a 75 mph zone on June 10 in rural Carson County. The most unlikely? A 2013 Ford F-150 clocked at 150 mph just outside Fort Worth. And the best excuse? The driver of a 2018 Mazda CX-5, who claimed she was doing 123 mph in a 65 zone because she was "running late to take her daughter to the DPS office to get her driver[']s license." The full data also offers a peak at relative car performance. Those 122-129 mph tickets feature a healthy mix of vehicles, everything from a 2006 Honda Civic to 2015 Nissan 370Z to a 2018 Buick Encore. Above 130 mph, it's a lot of American muscle like the Dodge Challenger, a few determined pickup trucks, and an increasing number of sportbikes. And it probably won't shock you to learn the most commonly-ticketed car above 140 mph last year was the Ford Mustang. You can read more details at [TheDrive](#)

Solomons, a group of 992 islands and atolls, 347 of which are inhabited, in the South Pacific Ocean. The Solomons, which are located northeast of Australia and have 87 indigenous languages, were discovered in 1568 by the Spanish navigator Alvaro de Mendana de Neyra (1541-95). In 1893, the British annexed Guadalcanal, along with the other central and southern Solomons. The Germans took control of the northern Solomons in 1885, but transferred these islands, except for Bougainville and Buka (which eventually went to the Australians) to the British in 1900. The Japanese invaded the Solomons in 1942 during World War II and began building a strategic airfield on Guadalcanal. On August 7 of that year, U.S. Marines landed on the island, signaling the Allies' first major offensive against Japanese-held positions in the Pacific. The Japanese responded quickly with sea and air attacks. A series of bloody battles ensued in the debilitating tropical heat as Marines sparred with Japanese troops on land, while in the waters surrounding Guadalcanal, the U.S. Navy fought six major engagements with the Japanese between August 24 and November 30. In mid-November 1942, the five Sullivan brothers from Waterloo, Iowa, died together when the Japanese sunk their ship, the USS Juneau. Both sides suffered heavy losses of men, warships and planes in the battle for Guadalcanal. An estimated 1,600 U.S. troops were killed, over 4,000 were wounded and several thousand more died from disease. The Japanese lost 24,000 soldiers. On December 31, 1942, Emperor Hirohito told Japanese troops they could withdraw from the area; the Americans secured Guadalcanal about five weeks later. The Solomons gained their independence from Britain in 1978. In the late 1990s, fighting broke out between rival ethnic groups on Guadalcanal and continued until an Australian-led international peacekeeping mission restored order in 2003. Today, with a population of over half a million people, the Solomons are known as a scuba diver and fisherman's paradise.



1978, New England Digs out after Blizzard - A classic "Nor'easter" storm that brought a severe blizzard to New England finally subsides

on this day in 1978, and the region begins to dig out from under several feet of snow. Over the previous 72 hours, some areas of Rhode Island and Massachusetts had received as many as 55 inches of snow. Three major weather systems all converged near the Atlantic Coast on February 5, and New York City was the first to be hit with a snowstorm. As the storm moved northeast, it stalled over Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts, catching many of the region's residents by surprise. It is estimated that 3,500 cars were abandoned on Massachusetts streets and highways and several people died in their vehicles on Interstate 93 when they became trapped. A college hockey playoff



was played at the Boston Garden despite the weather, and many of the spectators were unable to return home. On February 6, the blizzard whipped up powerful sustained winds of up to 50 miles per hour with gusts of nearly 100 mph. Fifty-foot waves on the Massachusetts coast wiped out seaside homes, while further north, in Maine, waves destroyed three lighthouses and an amusement pier. One of the hardest-hit communities in New England was Providence, Rhode Island, where travel became nearly impossible and Governor Joseph Garrahy ordered all businesses except grocery stores closed. Few of these stores had any food in stock, and eventually, supplies had to be airlifted in to Providence College. Similar conditions were found in areas of Boston, and looting broke out in some spots. Governor Michael Dukakis banned all cars from the roads because stuck vehicles were making it impossible for snow plows to clear the streets. In the end, 56 deaths between February 5 and February 8 were attributed to the blizzard. Thousands more people were left homeless. In one tragic incident, a young child died after becoming lost in the snow—although he was only yards from his home, he could not be located. This was the worst blizzard to hit New England since 1888.

FARM TANK

Tweets of the Day

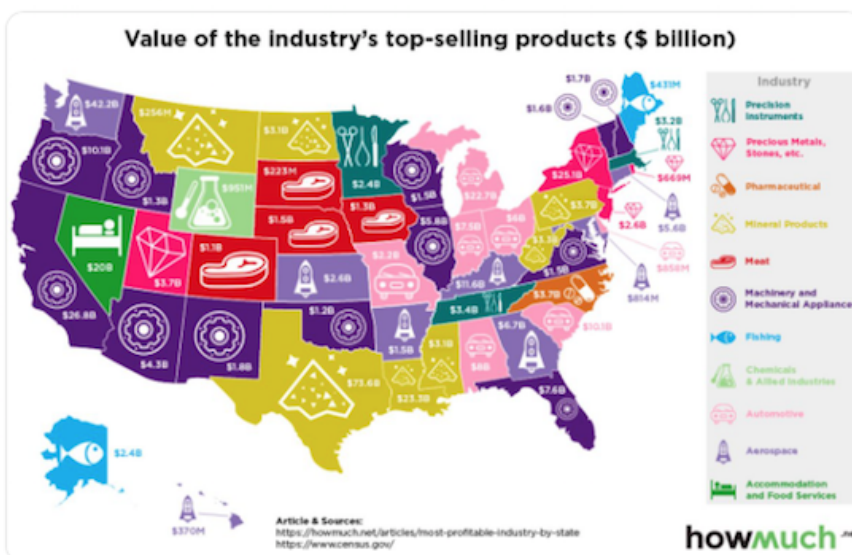


Visual Capitalist ✓
@VisualCap

Following

The Most Profitable Industry in Every U.S. State

visualcapitalist.com/most-profitable-industry-by-state



Upcoming Events

Fri. 02/08 - Crop Productions, USDA Supply & Demand

Mon. 02/11 - Export Inspections

Thurs. 02/14 - Valentine's Day

Fri. 02/15 - Retail Sales, NOPA Crush

Mon. 02/18 - President's Day (Some Markets Closed)

Tues. 2/19 - Full Moon, Export Inspections

Wed. 02/20 - Housing Starts & Pmts

Thur. 02/21 - Jobless Claims

Fri. 02/22 - Export Sales, Cattle on Feed/Cold Storage

Mon. 02/25 - Export Inspections

Thurs 02/28 - Export Sales, Jobless Claims

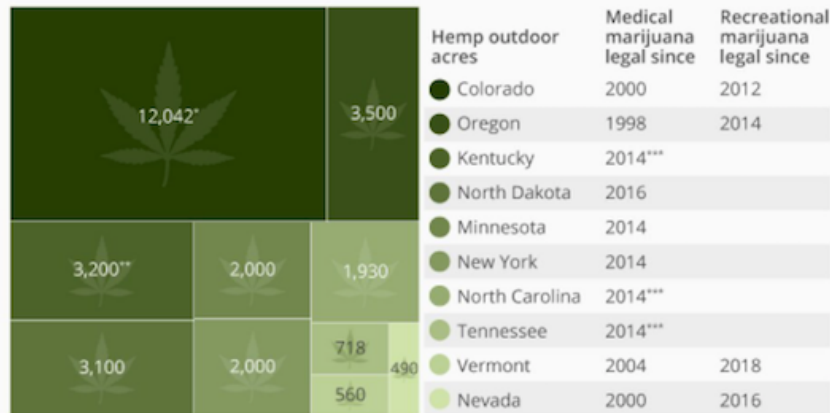
Kevin's Song of the Week

Legalization of #hemp growing mostly went together with the legalization of THC variety #cannabis for medical and later for recreational purposes.

statista.com/chart/16891/st...

Hemp Growing in the United States is Now Legal

Outdoor acres in the biggest producing U.S. states where non-THC hemp is cultivated



* plus 2.35 million square feet indoors
** 9,600 more acres licensed but not planted
*** only CBD extract

@StatistaCharts Sources: Hemp Industry Daily, NORML, media reports

statista

WHAT I'M LISTENING TO:



Rodney Atkins
"Caught Up In The Country"

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



Douglas Marangon
@DouglasMarangon

Following

Bom Futuro Farm - Sapezal - MT 🇧🇷

Translate Tweet



the thorough manner in which Kevin evaluates every economic aspect, both nationally and internationally, that influences commodity prices. His analysis and conclusions are highly thought out and conveyed in layman's terms so that the reader can comprehend the numerous and often complex interrelationships that impact the markets. Kevin is a real attribute to the agricultural sector."

A.M., FDIC

"As a national federal farm policy administrator and commodity producer, I find it critical to keep updated with what is going on in the real world of agriculture and with the domestic and global markets. Of all the services I've have been privy to or have subscribed to over the past 20 years I've found in the past several months of engaging in your "Farm Direction" services to be the best perception and analysis of what is really happening in today's world. Not only here in the United States, but across the globe as well. US farmers need this type of help and information to assist them in their daily efforts. I commend you for a job well done. Please let me know if I can ever be of any help or assistance to you in the future..."

**L.T., Assistant Deputy Administrator
for Farm Programs USDA**

My Own Personal Truisms

"Not To Trade, is often considered a good trading decision..."

"First Rule of HOLES: When you are in one stop digging..."

"Every looser in Vegas, always walks away from the table thinking he could have done better, the winners on the other hand leave while on top..."

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

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

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

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

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



Jeremy Hughes

@JeremyH750

Following



Another cold ND morning. Awesome sun dog shinning as I clear snow. Sitting here thinking of #plant19. #agtwitter. #agchat. #northdakota



Farm Direction
RECIPES

★ **FAMILY** ★
FAVORITES

-SENT IN BY OUR READERS-



*Deep Dish Skillet
Pizza*

CLICK TO SEE RECIPE



Colin Chopelas

@c_chopelas

Following



Just need a couple of sunny days to dry out!
#plant19 #nextweek #corn #southtexas





The Bull Riding HOF

@BullRidingHOF

Following



Bill Kornell on 54 of Harry Knight's - Ft. Worth, Texas 1963.

Also in 1963 at the age of 19, Bill became the youngest World Champion Bull Rider in history, a record that still stands today.

Bill Kornell - Class of 2017 Inductee - The Bull Riding Hall of Fame
Ferrell Butler photo





Lee Duran
@leedur

Following



Happy Thursday aka 🍻 🏋️ 🏃 🧘 🧘 🧘 .
A good plan violently executed today is
better than a perfect plan next week. Do
something today... succeed... fail... do
Make it a great day! #execute #dreambig
#beinvolved #happythursday
#24hourfitness #gymday #bonitafalls
#waterfallsofinstagram



neuro mining



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

this helps provide a little daily fun and exercise. The answer to each riddle or puzzle will be located at the bottom of the report.

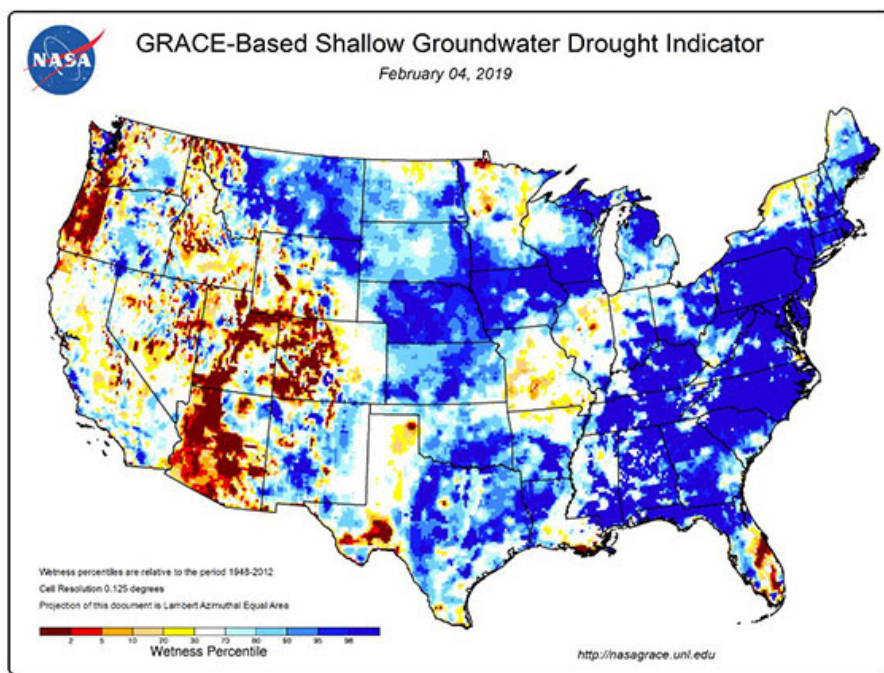
TODAY'S RIDDLE:

I am weightless, but you can see me. Put me in a bucket, and I'll make it lighter. What am I?

Weather over the past days has centered around rain, ice and snow that has engulfed much of the nation's mid-section. Now, however, at the end of the week cold, mostly dry weather will engulf the entire country, except for lingering warm in the Southeast. Early next week, temperatures will quickly rebound to above normal levels in the Deep South, but cold air will remain deeply entrenched across the North and West. Widespread precipitation will return early next week across the central and eastern U.S., with additional snow expected across the northern and central Plains and upper Midwest.

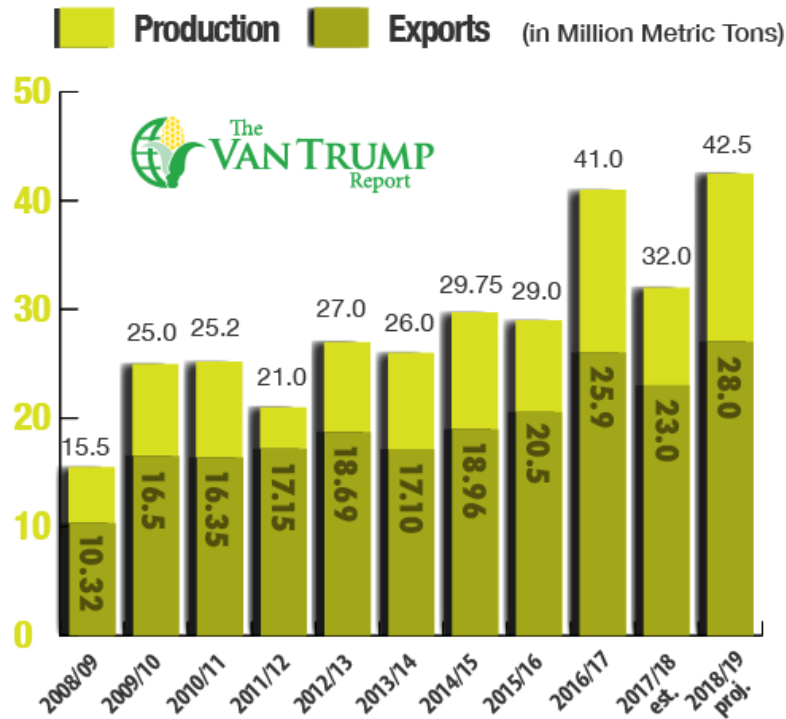
Predicting Drought With Groundwater Data: *This maps shows the current dry or wet conditions, showing the probability of occurrence expressed as a percentile. Obviously lower values are red and mean dryer than normal and higher values are blue and mean wetter than normal. Interesting to see that large swaths of Missouri and Illinois that are indicating dryness and possible drought come springtime.*

Groundwater Percentile Maps for February 4, 2019



Corn traders are extremely eager to see today's USDA reports. There's really no reason to waste time and or talk about anything else. The biggest question looming are... How big of a reduction will the USDA make to old-crop average yield? How many acres will go unharvested? Will there be a reduction in their U.S. export estimate? How much further will they reduce their corn used for ethanol forecast? Will corn used for feed be lowered because of more alternative backing up in the pipeline? Will there be any change to South American production? Will the Ukraine corn production estimate be raised higher? As producers, we have to make certain we are prepared for potential extreme volatility as the market tries to quickly readjust to the updated USDA data. Any major move to the upside and I will be looking to reduce additional risk. A major knee-jerk reaction to the downside and I may look to re-own some previous sales. As a spec, I'm waiting to react to the market. I see no need in trying to out guess the USDA, there's simply too many moving parts and pieces being dropped on the market all at once. I will provide additional thoughts following the release of the data. *"Aim low, they might be ridding shetlands..."*

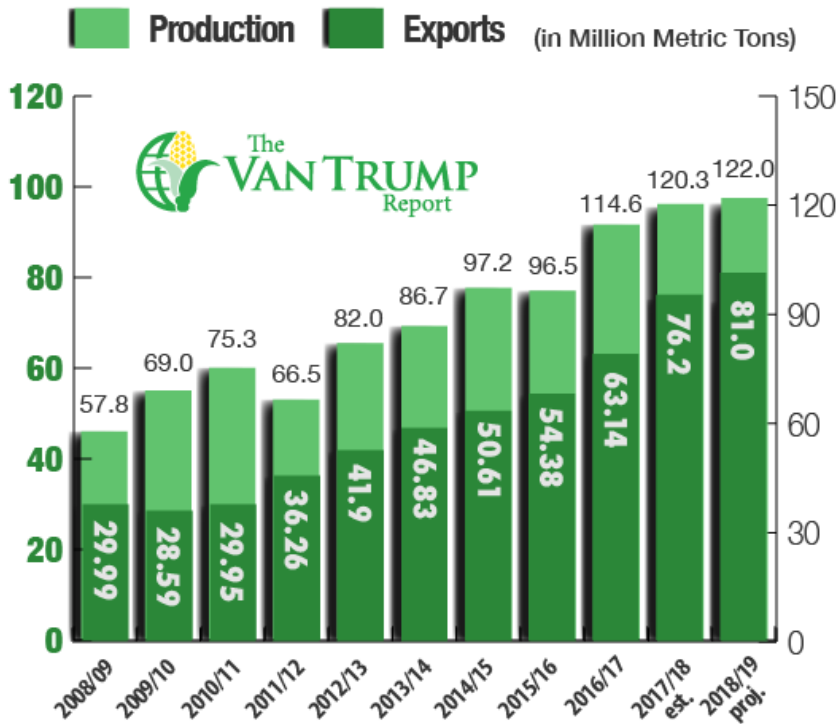
Argentina Corn Production & Exports



Source: USDA, NASS

Soybean traders are not only battling uncertainties surrounding Chinese trade, but also uncertainty surrounding today's USDA data dump. The market backpedaled yesterday on rumors that President Trump would not be meeting with Chinese President Xi anytime soon. To paraphrase, a senior leader in Washington said, there was still a lot of work that needed to be done and hurdles cleared before the two leaders get together. They don't see that happening anytime soon. President Trump also confided similar sentiment. The big question, is this simply more political jockeying ahead of next week's meeting with U.S. trade representatives or are we really talking about a significant delay in finding a trade compromise? Here at home today, it's all about the USDA reports. How far will they lower U.S. old-crop yield? How many harvested acres will be taken out of the equation? How will they interpret Chinese demand and the current trade conflict? Will they aggressively lower U.S. exports and/or Chinese imports? How big of a reduction will be made to South American soybean production? Bottom-line, there's a ton of uncertainty and some subjective interpretation coming our direction. As producers, we have to make certain we are comfortable with our current risk profile. As a spec, similar to corn, I like the thought of placing my bets after the market's reaction, rather than trying to outguess the USDA. In other words, I'm hoping the trade overreacts to the data in one direction or the other, then I'll be looking to perhaps fade the initial wave. Be careful if you're swimming in the water today, don't let yourself get too far out from the shore.

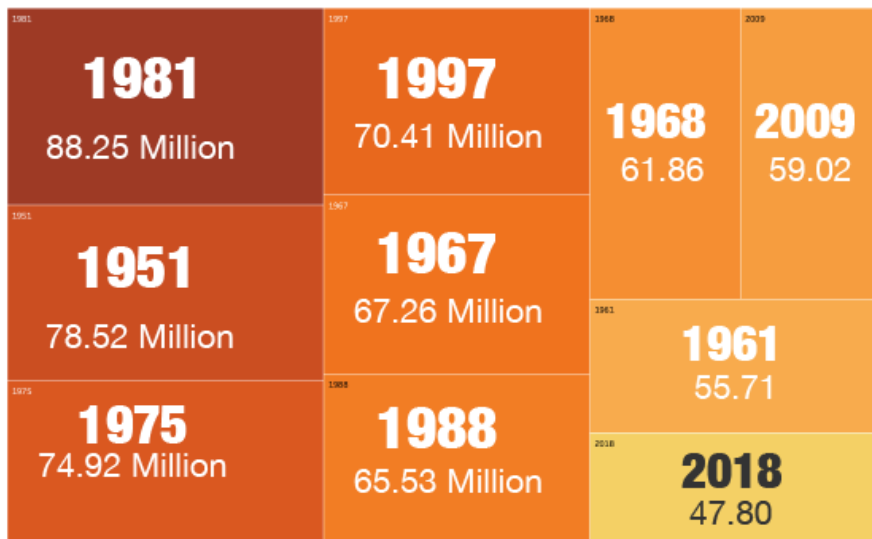
Brazil Soybean Production & Exports



Source: USDA, NASS

Wheat continues to dance to the beat of "two-steps forward" followed by "two-steps back". In other words, we continue to go nowhere and remain stuck towards the lower-end of the range. There was again disappointment as an Egyptian wheat tender was filled by supply from France and Romania. This allows the bears to continue pointing to burdensome U.S. supply and thoughts that the USDA will again be cutting their export estimate and perhaps bump ending stocks up closer to 1.0 billion bushels. On the flip side, bulls are hoping to see the USDA make a fairly significant cut to planted U.S. winter wheat acres. As a spec, I will be looking to add to my current bullish position if the market should make a significant knee-jerk reaction to the downside. I just feel like the downside risk is much less than that associated with potential upside reward. Bottom-line, I think we probably break off the headlines, but it might be tough to keep this market underwater for an extended period.

U.S. Wheat Planted Acres



2018 U.S. Production

	Jan. #	Avg. Guess	Trade Range	USDA Nov.
Corn Yield	???	178.0	176.7 - 179.9	178.9
Corn Production	???	14.538	14.343 - 14.800	14.626
Corn Harvested Acres	???	81.668	80.850 - 82.100	81.767
Soybean Yield	???	51.8	51.5 - 52.4	52.1
Soybean Production	???	4.572	4.505 - 4.620	4.600
Soybean Harvested Acres	???	88.189	87.364 - 88.509	88.343

Dec. 1 U.S. Grain Stocks

	Jan. #	Avg. Guess	Trade Range	USDA Sep. 1, 2018	USDA Dec. 1, 2017
Corn	???	12.097	11.975 - 12.400	2.140	12.567
Soybeans	???	3.752	3.414 - 3.872	0.438	3.161
Wheat	???	1.960	1.900 - 1.985	2.379	1.873

U.S. Winter Wheat Seedings

	Jan. #	Avg. Guess	Trade Range	USDA 2018
Total Winter	???	32.279	31.513 - 33.300	32.535
Hard Red Winter	???	22.727	22.125 - 23.620	22.923
Soft Red Winter	???	6.019	5.643 - 6.210	6.076
White Winter	???	3.486	3.211 - 3.700	3.536

U.S. Ending Stocks

	Jan.#	Avg. Guess	Trade Range	USDA Dec.
Corn	???	1.694	1.579 - 1.787	1.781
Soybeans	???	0.904	0.798 - 0.980	0.955
Wheat	???	0.987	0.950 - 1.028	0.974

World Ending Stocks

	Jan.#	Avg. Guess	Trade Range	USDA Dec.
Corn				

	???	307.32	305.50 - 310.00	308.80
Soybeans	???	114.36	111.80 - 117.00	115.33
Wheat	???	268.22	264.00 - 269.70	268.10

South American Production

	Jan.#	Avg. Guess	Trade Range	USDA Dec.
Brazil Corn	???	94.31	93.50 - 95.50	94.50
Brazil Soybeans	???	120.13	116.00 - 122.50	122.00
Argentina Corn	???	42.39	41.50 - 43.50	42.50
Argentina Soybeans	???	55.29	54.00 - 56.00	55.50



> World Food Prices Rise in January: *World food prices rose in January, buoyed by a rebound in dairy prices and stronger showings for vegetable oils and sugar, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. The index, which measures monthly changes for a basket of cereals, oilseeds, dairy products, meat and sugar, averaged 164.8 points last month against 161.8 in December. Despite the rise, the index was still 2.2% below its January 2018 level. (Source: UN FAO)*

> Tyson Foods Misses on Quarterly Earnings: *The largest U.S. meat processor -- Tyson Foods -- missed Wall Street estimates for first-quarter revenue as the company was hit by lower average prices of pork, denting its sales. Sales in the company's pork business fell 8.1% as prices fell on average 4.6% compared to last year. Analysts point to China's retaliatory tariffs of more than 60% on pork having resulted in oversupplies of hogs in the U.S. as fewer producers ship them for Chinese consumption. (Source: Reuters)*

> How U.S. Ethanol can Reach China Tariff-Free: *Current tariffs make direct transfers of U.S. ethanol to China unprofitable, but the fuel can enter China tariff-free if it arrives with a blend of at least 40% Asian-produced material, according to trade rules established by the regional economic and political body, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The trip for U.S. ethanol-to China now takes about two months and includes a ship-to-ship transfer and a stop in Malaysia before it arrives. The journey reflects a broader shift in global ethanol flows since the trade war with China begun last spring. Remember, China slapped retaliatory tariffs up to 70% on U.S. ethanol. (Source: Reuters)*

> U.S. Cotton Growers May Catch Business on India's Low Production: *India's cotton production has fallen to a 9-year low due to dry weather and pests, prompting imports to hit 2.7 million bales. I'm told that India may export just 5 million bales of the fiber, a 27.5% plunge from last year's shipments, opening doors for U.S. cotton producers to move more product.*

> USDA Generates 166 New Inventions in 2017: *According to the latest Report on Technology Transfer, USDA generated 166 new inventions and 68 patent applications in 2017. Innovations include tornado "safe rooms" built of cross-laminated wood, soybean germ plasm with heat-tolerant genes and tires fo rubber made from a flowering desert shrub. (Source: [USDA](#))*

> Japan Culls 15,000 Hogs Due To Swine Fever Outbreak: *Up to 15,000 hogs may be killed to quell an epidemic of classical swine fever, a highly contagious disease found in five prefectures. According to officials, this swine fever outbreak has nothing to do with the outbreak that China has been dealing with for months now.*

> Haagen-Dazs Announces Alcohol Infused Ice Cream Line: *The collection includes five new flavors: Irish Cream Brownie, Rum Tres Leches, Bourbon Vanilla Bean Truffle, Stout Chocolate Pretzel Crunch, Bourbon Praline Pecan as well as Irish Cream Cookie Squares. It also includes a non-dairy options, Amaretto Black Cherry Almond Toffee. Each product contains less than 0.5% alcohol per volume. Because of the alcohol content, buyers must be 21 years or older to purchase the product in the U.S. (Source: CNBC)*

> Sears Gets Another Chance: *Sears was granted a new lifeline on Thursday as its sale to Chairman Eddie Lampert, through an affiliate of his hedge fund ESL Investments, was approved by Judge Robert Drain. ESL has said the \$5.2 billion deal to buy the company will save 425 stores and roughly 45,000 jobs.*

> IHOP Name Change Last Summer Generated Sales: *Results are in from last year's media buzz where IHOP teased that it would change its name to IHOb. From what I'm told, the company sold 500,000 burgers a week at its peak, four times as many as normal. Parent company Dine Brands reported that IHOP same-store sales grew by 1.2% during its third quarter, which ended Sept. 30.*

> Amazon Invests in Self-Driving Car Start-Up Aurora: *Thursday Aurora announced that it has raised more than \$530 million in funding, from investors including Amazon, Sequoia and the investment arm of energy giant Shell. Amazon spokesperson was quoted saying "We are always looking to invest in innovative, customer-obsessed companies, and Aurora is just that." "Autonomous technology has the potential to help make the jobs of our employees and partners safer and more productive, whether it's in a fulfillment center or on the road, and we're excited about the possibilities."*

> Uber Eats Already Delivering Billions: *Uber CEO said "Uber Eats is on track to deliver some \$10 billion worth of food worldwide this year, up from an estimated \$6 billion-plus last year... it could generate at least \$1 billion in revenue this year, or an estimated 7% to 10% of the total. That means Uber Eats is already among the planet's largest food-delivery services." (Source: Forbes; DataTrek)*

> Johnson & Johnson will start giving the list price of its prescription drugs in TV ads, *becoming the first pharmaceutical company to do so. First up would be blood thinner Xarelto, with commercials by late March ending with the drug's price plus typical out-of-pocket costs - \$450-\$540 per month without insurance. The Trump administration has been pushing for this sort of disclosure, but drugmakers have argued back that few actually pay such high list prices. All seven major pharmaceutical players have agreed to testify to the Senate on February 26 about drug pricing. (Source: SeekingAlpha)*

> Fastest Growing Jobs in Each State: *According to Yahoo Finance, the future is in not with robots, but with Solar Panel Installers. That is the fastest growing job in 8 states (California, Florida, Hawaii, New Mexico, North Carolina, Missouri, and surprisingly, Minnesota and New Jersey). The gig pays \$19 per hour or \$39,5k per year, and is projected to grow 105% till 2026 -- much faster than the national rate. Other clean energy jobs include Wind Turbine Technicians in Texas, Colorado. Nebraska and Iowa. Also interesting to see that Statisticians are growing in Massachusetts, Illinois, Kentucky and Wisconsin as big data and number crunching has a bright future. (Source: Yahoo)*

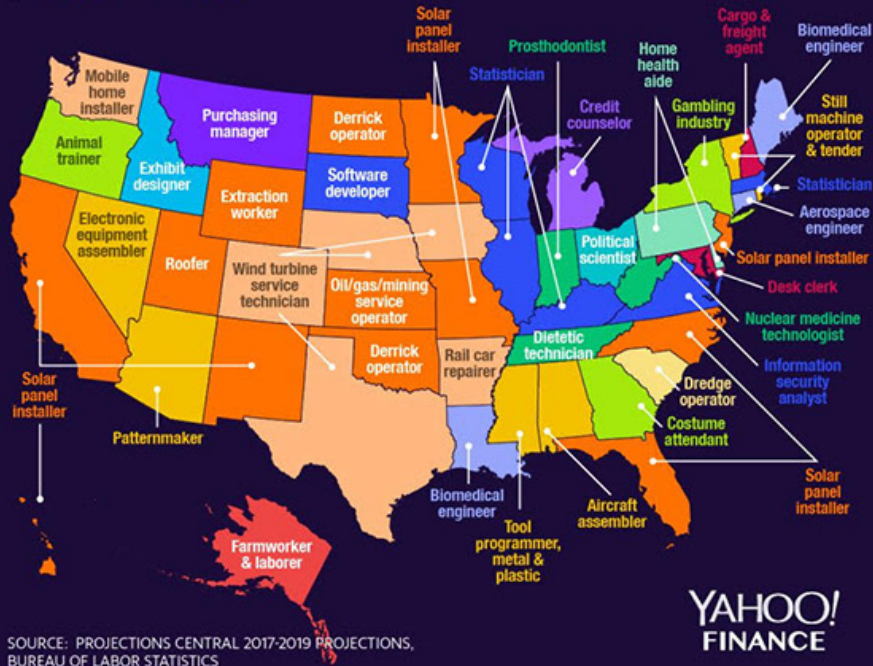
FASTEST-GROWING JOBS IN THE U.S.

CATEGORIES

ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING
ARTS, DESIGN, ENTERTAINMENT,
SPORTS & MEDIA
BUSINESS & FINANCIAL OPERATIONS
COMPUTER & MATHEMATICAL
CONSTRUCTION & EXTRACTION

FARMING, FISHING & FORESTRY
HEALTHCARE PRACTITIONERS & TECHNICAL
HEALTHCARE SUPPORT
INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE & REPAIR
LIFE, PHYSICAL & SOCIAL SCIENCE

MANAGEMENT
OFFICE & ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT
PERSONAL CARE & SERVICE
PRODUCTION
TRANSPORTATION & MATERIAL MOVING



FROM THE FIELD

Southcentral Kansas – I wanted to follow up on the winterkill concerns that I have read from some guys. The wheat in our area looks good. We got some nitrogen on a few days back when it was warmer and followed that with a nice shower to push it in. We generally don't have issues with winterkill unless the wheat is small and dry. Typically, if there's adequate moisture you will not see issues unless it drops to an unheard-of coldness. The only time winter kill is even a problem is when wheat comes out of dormancy and then the temperatures drop below freezing again.

Southcentral South Dakota – We are running cattle on corn stalks. They have been on the corn stalk since we were able to get the fence up after harvest. Surprisingly as cold as it been the cows are either maintaining or gaining weight. We decided to throw some hay out there when the temperatures dropped a few weeks ago but outside of that we have really just kept an eye on them. We are going to try and stretch the corn grazing to save money in feed and the cost of spreading manure. Normally we bring them home around the 25th of January, but we are going to run them another 3 weeks from today.

Southern Wisconsin – We had issues with too much rain this year like most guys in our area. We didn't think we needed fungicide and a we had a bunch of corn down by the end of harvest. We were told by our agronomist that the problem was disease. We saw more planes in the air than any other year, but we didn't want to spend the money to fly anything on and there was no high boys available to spray on fungicide. We are going to rotate our crops pretty much the same as normal besides we picked up a quarter of ground that will need to go beans so we will have about 150 acres more beans then last year.

CROSSING WIRES

A place to share intelligent thoughts...

Why Some Consider 2019 The Year of the Mushroom: *Mushrooms have been a staple food in international cuisines for thousands of years. Though most people are only familiar with a handful of varieties, there are at least 350 species of fungi collected and eaten around the world. These species represent only a fraction of what ultimately rolls up to be a whole kingdom (not phylum, class, order or family) of potential. I should mention that the sale of specialty mushrooms have increased over 240% over the last six years. With less meat being eaten recently, dollars typically spent on meat are going towards innovative substitutes and plant-based alternatives. Keep in mind, last year, sales of plant-based foods increased by 20%, reaching a total of \$3.3 billion, and overshadowing the 8% growth seen in 2017. But most meat replacements, while tasty and useful as transitional foods, have yet to be refined into healthy alternatives. Mushrooms, on the other hand, are a high-protein alternative to meat, holding their own on the center of the plate; think portabella steaks, or mushroom-based curries, tacos, soups and sautés. Mushrooms might even be more satiating than meat. Read more [HERE](#) how the fungi market is primed to continue its explosive growth.*

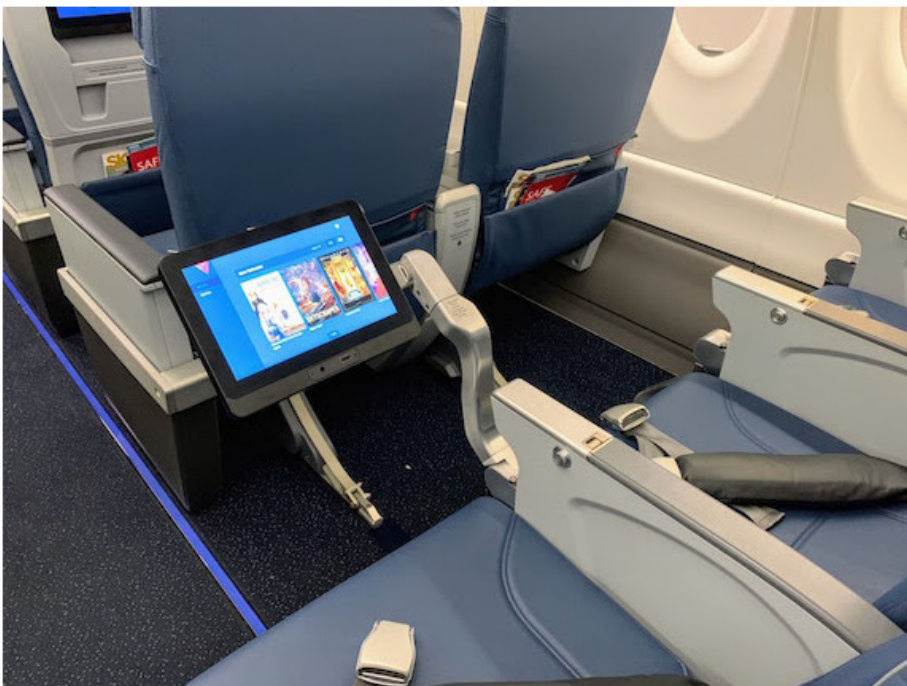
What the Autonomous Vehicle Industry can Learn from Elevator History: *If you work in an office or live in an apartment building, you probably ride in an elevator several times a day without even thinking about it. You push the button for your floor, the doors close and off you go. It's totally normal. But it didn't seem so in America a century ago: most people were not prepared to travel in an elevator without an operator. At the time, most lifts needed to be started and stopped manually. It took a bit of skill to align a lift with a particular floor, so a lift operator was required to guide it to its destination, and opened and closed the doors. In the 1890s, some buildings attempted to introduce fully automatic push-button elevators. But they failed to gain traction. Some people flat-out refused to ride in the operatorless kind, considering them unsafe. Moving forward to today, that bit of history can offer a valuable lesson to designers of driverless cars today. As with elevators, many people are reluctant to get into a car without a driver: 73% of Americans say they are afraid to travel in an autonomous vehicle. Riders need reassurance that they are safe. For the time being, autonomous vehicles have safety drivers or attendants who can take control if needed. But eventually the plan is to phase them out. Read more [HERE](#) on the interesting comparison.*

Scientist's Search for the Origins of Consciousness: *Humans have learned to travel through space, eradicate diseases and understand nature at the breathtakingly tiny level of fundamental particles. Yet we have no idea how consciousness – our ability to experience and learn about the world in this way and report it to others – arises in the brain. In fact, while scientists have been preoccupied with understanding consciousness for centuries, it remains one of the most important unanswered questions of modern neuroscience. Now our new study, published in Science Advances, sheds light on the mystery by uncovering networks in the brain that are at work when we are conscious. It's not just a philosophical question. Determining whether a patient is "aware" after suffering a severe brain injury is a huge challenge both for doctors and families who need to make decisions about care. The reason it is so difficult to study conscious experiences is that they are entirely internal and cannot be accessed by others. For example, we can both be looking at the same picture on our screens, but I have no way to tell whether my experience of seeing that picture is similar to yours, unless you tell me about it. Read more [HERE](#) on research being conducted in this space.*

Amazon's Scout Hoping to Serve All Income Levels: *Amazon recently unveiled Scout, a six-wheeled blue robot that delivers packages, with the hopes they can become more profitable by replacing their main expense—human labor. I should mention that as the behemoth company seeks to increase revenues, they have a significant challenge, expanding memberships to lower-income households. A recent report from analysts at UBS found 66% of US households earning \$100,000 or more were Amazon Prime members, compared to 54% of households earning \$40,000 to \$99,000. Just 38% of households earning less than \$40,000 subscribed to Prime. Some analysts fear that if Amazon can't sell lower income households on Prime, its US market share will be tapped out. Read more [HERE](#) on Amazon's attempts at growth in this sector.*

Delta's New A220 Flying High With New Features: *Delta Air Lines' new Airbus A220 jets have finally taken off, the carrier's latest offensive in the battle for business travelers. Delta is the first U.S. operator to offer the roomier, fuel-efficient planes. "We're looking forward to a modern regional jet," said Clayton Wagar, a 47-year-old software salesman based in Atlanta who flew to New York just to fly on the plane's first*

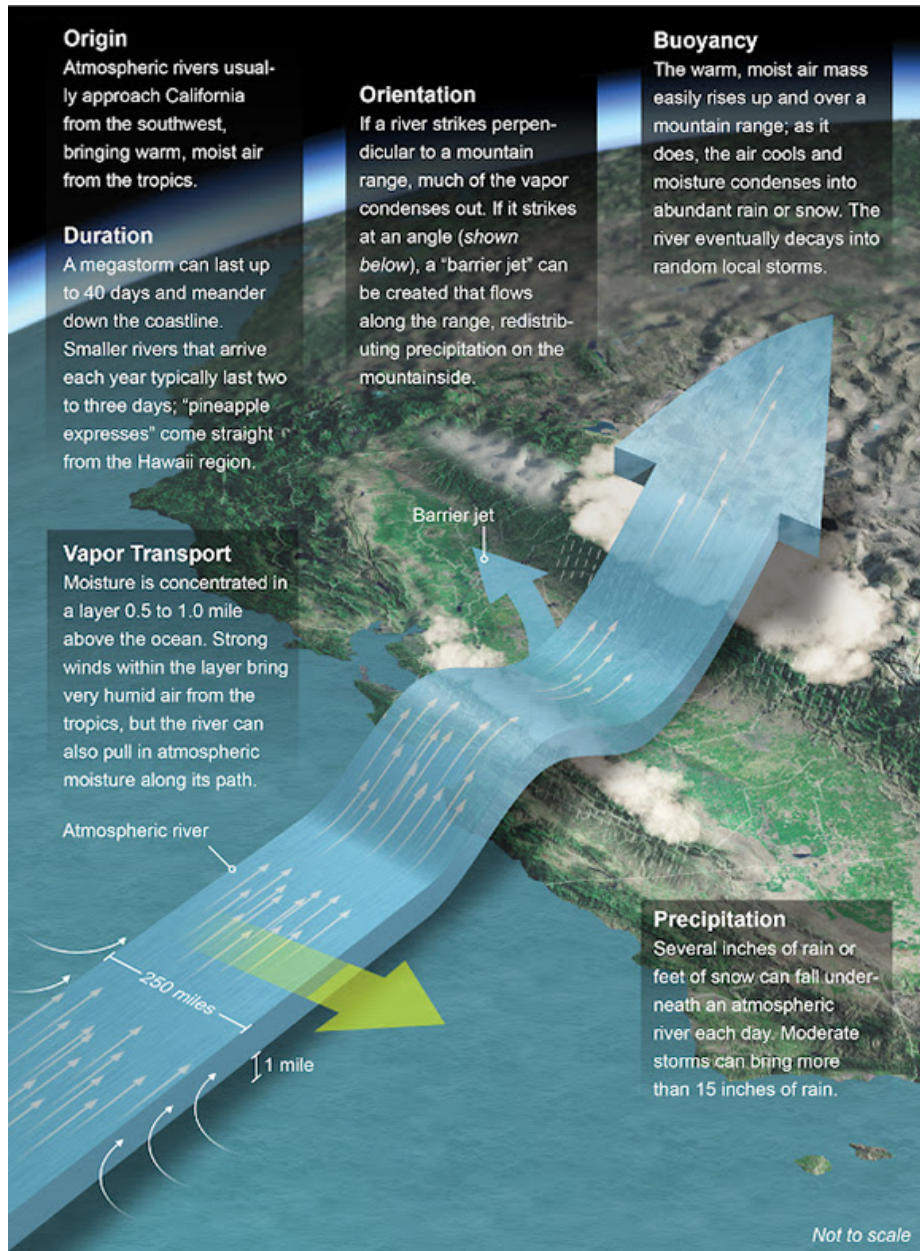
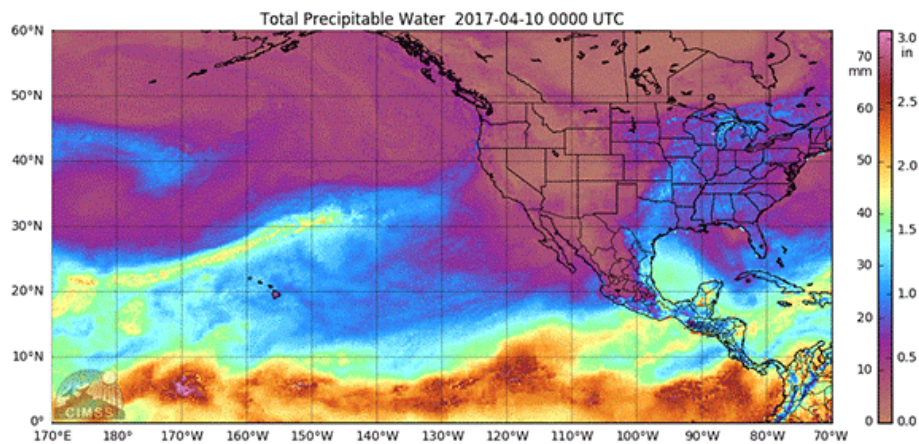
flight to Boston. He said he and other aviation enthusiasts dubbed some of the smaller, older and more cramped regional jets "Satan's chariot." The planes feature passenger perks like spacious overhead bins, big windows — even in the bathroom — as well as wider seats. In the A220s coach cabin, the seats are 18.6 inches wide, a tenth of an inch wider than on Delta's second-widest seats, which are on its Boeing 777s. Definitely looks like flying regionally could be more comfortable! Read more [HERE](#).





Something I've Never Heard of... Dangerous Rivers In the Sky

Several times year an atmospheric river -- a long, narrow conveyor belt of storms that stream in relentlessly from the Pacific Ocean -- drops inches of rain or feet of snow on the U.S. west coast. Such a system triggered floods and mudslides in central and southern California recently. Yet only in the past few years have weather forecasters been able to better understand, identify and predict roughly how strong the imminent storms may be. Now there's a new rating system to help forecasters -- and the public -- understand what an income atmospheric river might unleash. They are calling it the "atmospheric river scale" and it ranks severity and impacts, from category-1 (weak) to category-5 (exceptional). Understand, an atmospheric river flows through the sky about a mile above the oceans surface, and may extend across a thousand miles of ocean to the coast. Some bring routine rains but the more intense systems can carry as much water as 15 Mississippi Rivers. The series of storms striking land can arrive and stay for days or, occasionally, weeks on end. They hit west-facing coastlines worldwide, although the U.S. experiences more than most other national coasts. This will greatly help assess how serious potential flooding might be -- or, at times, if the rain or snow will actually be advantageous or extremely dangerous. Understand, atmospheric rivers aren't always hazardous. Many farms, particularly out West, can and do find atmospheric rivers help revive dry soils and fortify municipal water supplies. As for predicting atmospheric rivers, that is another big challenge. Scientists need to better understand how atmospheric rivers fit within the larger weather systems around them. From what I understand, the American Meteorological Society is already training weather casters on ways to use the new tool. It's crazy how quickly technology is advancing in the weather space. In just the past few years I feel like we've seen some major leaps forward. (Source: Phys.org)



REMINDER... Don't Forget Valentine's Day!

Valentine's Day is just around the corner and as "trendy" as it may seem to shun the holiday, there is a slew of relationship experts that warn against it! No doubt, it has evolved into a money-making machine for a number of industries. Some like to argue that love should be celebrated every day, and commercializing that somehow cheapens it. There is also the very common sentiment that Valentine's Day is a holiday for "young love," not long-time couples. But Valentine's Day is not about you - it's about the ones you love and a great excuse to remind them how much they matter. It's estimated that Americans will spend nearly +\$20 billion this year doing just that, including almost \$4 billion on jewelry, over \$3 billion on dining out, nearly \$2 billion on flowers and another \$2 billion

on candy. I personally like doing something bit different, like planning an event or trip somewhere. A couple of my biggest hits have been big concert events or quick getaways out of town. My wife loves going to concerts and loves to travel. You can kill two birds with one stone by purchasing tickets to one of the nations country music festivals. Several I included below are actually located on the ocean with an amazing view. I'm telling you now, you will be a big hit with a gift like this. Below are some of the cooler venues and music events:

My Favorite Outdoor Venues... *I included some pics down below*

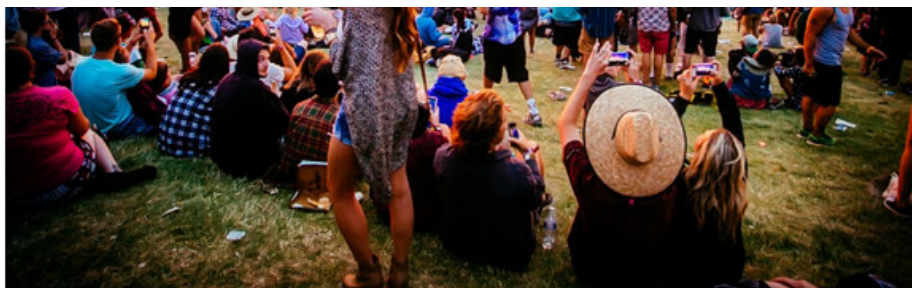
- Red Rocks Colorado
- Gorge Amphitheater George, Washington
- Mountain Winery - Saratoga, Calif.
- Hollywood Bowl - Los Angeles, Calif.
- Harveys Outdoor Arena - Lake Tahoe, Nev.

Best Country Music Festivals

- **Rock The South** — Cullman, Alabama - May 31 - June 1 - This yearly event in North Alabama brings out the stars. This years lineup includes Kid Rock, Florida Georgia Line, Brooks & Dunn, Jake Owen, Morgan Wallen, and more. Click [HERE](#)
- **We Fest** - Detroit Lakes, MN - August 1-3 - Held in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, this annual party will celebrate its 37th year at Soo Pass Ranch with acts like Chris Stapleton, Keith Urban, Brooks & Dunn, Billy Currington, Jake Owen, Big & Rich, and more. The award-winning event features a 50,000-seat "natural" amphitheater, VIP campgrounds, contests and a karaoke roundup. Click [HERE](#)
- **Pilgrimage Music and Cultural Festival** — Franklin, Tennessee - September 21 - 22 - OK, I'll admit that this isn't totally a country music festival. However, that being said, this yearly event has featured many of the music industries top stars such as Chris Stapleton, Willie Nelson and Marty Stuart, Sheryl Crow, etc...this years lineup is not yet released, but I hear it's a super cool venue just outside of Nashville. Click [HERE](#)
- **Watershed** — George, Washington - August 2 - 4 - Live Nation took the idea of the outdoor festival and tried it out in the Washington area back in 2012. This has now become one of the can't-miss musical events of the season. With the natural beauty of the Gorge and the Columbia River, it's a sonic and a visual treat. Click [HERE](#)
- **CMA Music Festival** — Nashville, Tennessee - June 6-9 - A part of country music culture since 1972 – when it was known as Fan Fair – this four-day event brings out the stars like no other. Held at the home of the NFL's Tennessee Titans, the yearly event is a salute to all things Country – past and present. You might see collaborations between today's hottest artists, a legend, or an impromptu cover of a classic. Click [HERE](#)
- **Windy City Smokeout** - Chicago, Illinois - July 12-14 - This big-city-meets-country event is a feast for the senses. Get a double dose of pleasure with entertainment from top country music acts and barbecue from Chicago's best restaurants. Bring your appetite! Click [HERE](#)
- **Key West Songwriters Festival** - Key West, Florida - May 8-12 - To celebrate its 23rd year, this annual country songwriters shindig will host more than 50 shows by 200-plus performers over the course of five days and nights. Featured acts take the stage at an array of the island's most popular beaches, bars, and historic theaters. One of the best things about the #KWSFW is getting to hear world-famous songwriters perform in intimate venues. Click [HERE](#)
- **Gulf Coast Jam** - Panama City Beach, Florida - August 30 - Sept 1 - A three-day event held over Labor Day weekend, this party takes place in one of Florida's most beautiful locations, Panama City Beach. Bring your own folding chairs for comfortable seating! Click [HERE](#)
- **Carolina Country Music Festival** - Myrtle Beach, S.C. - June 6-9 - Situated with the picturesque Atlantic Ocean as a backdrop, the city of Myrtle Beach becomes country music central for a few days each June. Close to 40,000 people will show up this year to hear music from acts such as Alabama, Dierks Bentley, Thomas Rhett, Brothers Osborne, Midland, Florida Georgia Line and more... This great country music festival also features a stage devoted to rising talent, such as Mitchell Tenpenny and Jimmie Allen. Click [HERE](#)
- **Tortuga Rock The Oceans Music Festival** - Fort Lauderdale, Florida - April 12-14 - Held on the white sands of Fort Lauderdale Beach Park in a beautiful oceanside setting, Tortuga Music Festival is a 3-day, multi-stage music festival featuring some of the biggest names in country, rock and roots music. Jason Aldean, Kenny Chesney, Thomas Rhett, Flo Rida, Sheryl Crow, Kane Brown, Dustin Lynch, David Lee Murphy, Cody Johnson and more... Click [HERE](#)
- **Stagecoach** - Indio, California - April 26-28 - One of the highest-grossing music festivals anywhere, this yearly event brings about 75,000 country music fans to Indio, Calif. Over the eleven-year history of the event, the artists who have been featured on the stage read like a 'Who's Who' of country music artists. This year, the lineup will include Jason Aldean, Luke Bryan, Sam Hunt, Cole Swindell, Luke Combs, Kane Brown, Old Dominion, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Bret Michaels, Scotty McCreery, Joe Diffie, and Cody Johnson. Click [HERE](#)







SAVE THE DATES!

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The Grammy Awards and My Wife's Favorite Love Song

My wife always likes to watch the Grammy's. We are hoping this year it won't be too far "left leaning" to enjoy. Many reference the Grammy's as "music's biggest night". This will actually be the 61st annual Grammy Awards. The big event will be held this Sunday, February 10th, at the Los Angeles' Staples Center airing on CBS at 7 pm CST. Alicia Keys will be the host of this year's awards ceremony, replacing James Corden, who hosted the show in 2017 and 2018. Keys, is a 29-time

Grammy nominee and 15-time winner, she will also be the first woman to host the Grammys since 2005. One change to this year's awards is the Recording Academy is expanding the four major categories including album of the year, record of the year, song of the year, and best new artist from five to eight nominees. The reason behind this is to make room to acknowledge a broader range of artists and genres. This year Kendrick Lamar leads the pack of nominees with eight nominations after winning five awards last year, while Drake doesn't follow far behind coming to the award show with seven nominations. Performances at this year's Grammys will include Maren Morris, Little Big Town, Ricky Martin, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Post Malone, Brandi Carlile, Miley Cyrus, Camila Cabello, Cardi B, Dan+Shay, Shawn Mendes, Janelle Monáe, and Kacey Musgraves. The Recording Academy will also honor Dolly Parton as their 2019 "Person of the Year". Parton will be honored this year with a tribute performance from artists including Katy Perry, Miley Cyrus, Shawn Mendes, Kacey Musgraves, Willie Nelson, Leon Bridges, Don Henley, Pink, Mavis Staples, Chris Stapleton, Garth Brooks, and Trisha Yearwood. The special guest performers will cover many of Parton's biggest hits with Dolly herself performing the headlining set. My wife loves Dolly, so I'm sure we will be tuned in. She is also looking forward to the honoring of Diana Ross' and a special 75th birthday performance. The Grammys plans to honor the icon and celebrate the rich history of her greatest musical accomplishments. Click [HERE](#) to watch one of my wife's favorite love songs. I'll bet her and I have listened to this song over a thousand times through the years. Remember, we've been together since she was just 14 years old and I was only 16. Let's just say it's been a long time, and I wouldn't trade a single moment for all the world, she's the best! I'll give you a clue on the song, it's a duet... Below are the nominees for a few major Grammy categories. I also included a couple of early pics of Michelle and I going to a couple of high school dances!

Record Of The Year

- *I Like It* by Cardi B, Bad Bunny, and J Balvin
- *The Joke* by Brandi Carlile
- *This is America* by Childish Gambino (Favorite)
- *God's Plan* by Drake
- *Shallow* by Lady Gaga & Bradley Cooper
- *All the Stars* by Kendrick Lamar & SZA
- *Rockstar* by Post Malone & 21 Savage
- *The Middle* by ZEDD, Maren Morris, and Grey

Album of the Year

- *Invasion of Privacy* by Cardi B
- *By the Way, I Forgive You* by Brandi Carlile
- *Scorpion* by Drake
- *H.E.R.* by H.E.R.
- *Beerbongs and Bentleys* by Post Malone
- *Dirty Computer* by Janelle Monáe (Favorite)
- *Golden Hour* by Kacey Musgraves
- *Black Panther* by Various Artists

Song Of The Year

- *All the Stars* by Kendrick Lamar & SZA
- *Boo'd Up* by Ella Mai
- *God's Plan* by Drake
- *In My Blood* by Shawn Mendes
- *The Joke* by Brandi Carlile
- *The Middle* by ZEDD, Maren Morris, and Grey
- *Shallow* by Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper
- *This is America* by Childish Gambino (Favorite)

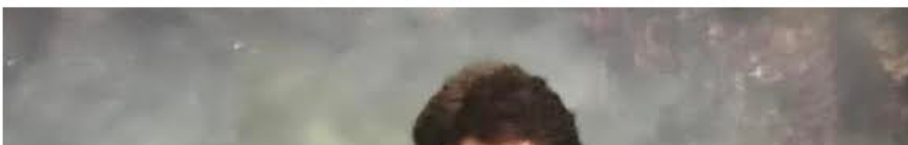
Best New Artist

- *Chloe X Halle*
- *Luke Combs*
- *Greta Van Fleet*
- *H.E.R.*
- *Dua Lipa* (Favorite)
- *Margo Price*
- *Bebe Rexha*
- *Jorja Smith*

Best Country Album

- *KELSEA BALLERINI* -- *Unapologetically*
- *BROTHERS OSBORNE* -- *Port Saint Joe*
- *ASHLEY MCBRYDE* -- *Girl Going Nowhere*
- *KACEY MUSGRAVES* -- *Golden Hour*
- *CHRIS STAPLETON* -- *From A Room: Volume 2*



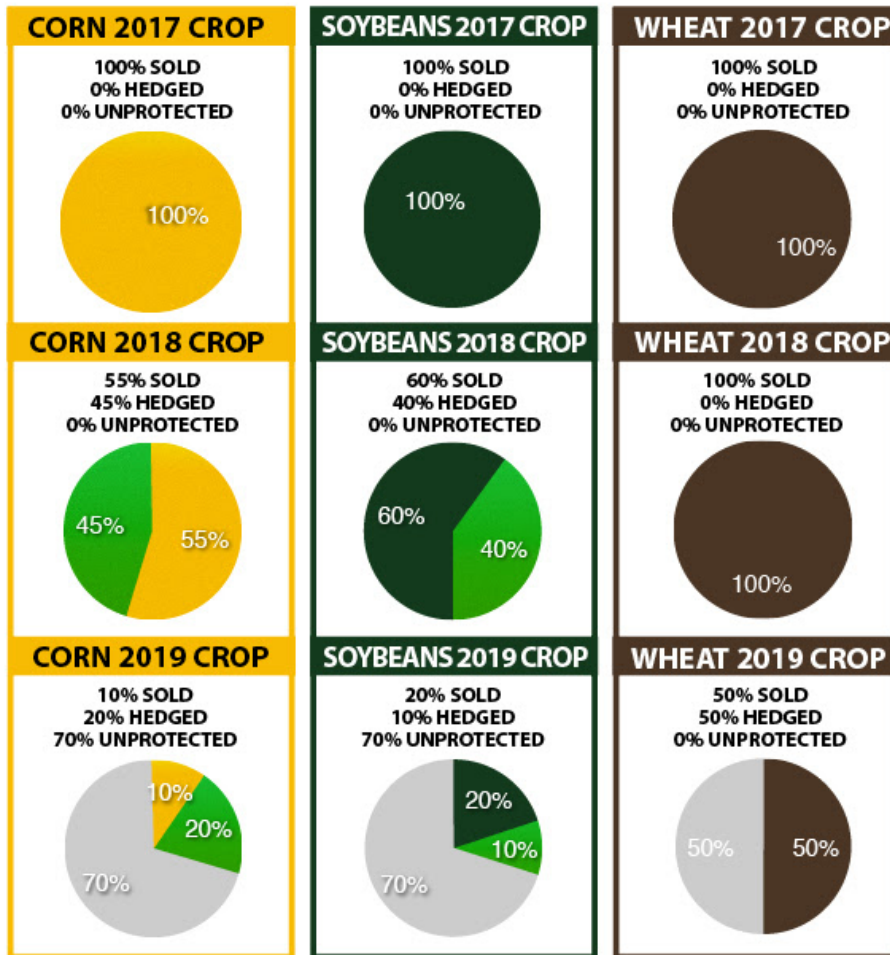




ANSWER to riddle: A hole.

CASH SALES & HEDGING TOTALS

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