

GOOD MORNING: 02/15/19 Farm Direction - Van Trump Report

1 message

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

Fri, Feb 15, 2019 at 7:30 AM

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Today In History

"As I hurtled through space, one thought kept crossing my mind - every part of this rocket was supplied by the lowest bidder." - John Glenn

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2019
[Printable Copy](#) or [Audio Version](#)

Morning Summary: Stock are steady this morning as President Xi Jinping says that U.S.-China trade talks will continue in Washington next week. This leaves traders debating the next move and the markets rebound back to higher ground. Is it simply a bearish bounce or bull trap like some argue? Or is this the start of another long-term bullish leg higher? Personally, I feel both side are offering up compelling testimony about their respective position. Bulls point to a much more relaxed, flexible and less hawkish Fed. It seems that central bankers around the globe have also become more accommodative. Bulls are also pointing to a compromise in Washington regarding the budget, and perhaps significant progress in regard to U.S. and Chinese trade negotiations. In fact, I know several large bullish money-managers who think U.S. corporate earnings and growth could start to again improve in Q2 or perhaps Q3 of 2019. If that proves to be the case, current stock valuations will be considered cheap. Bears on the other hand aren't buying the argument and believe there are simply too many headwinds and hurdles in the road ahead to mount a longer-term extended rally higher. The S&P 500 is up +10% in the past 8-weeks and they say it's simply a bearish bounce, believing we will soon see another round of heavy sell pressure and ultimately retest the December lows. Bears see global growth as clearly slowing, bigger problems with the Chinese economy than just U.S. trade tariffs, a strong U.S. dollar, geopolitical tensions rising in the Middle East, and U.S. corporate margins starting to be squeezed. Yesterday's December Retail Sales numbers obviously raised some concerns. The data showed the weakest growth in retail sales since 2009. Keep in mind, Amazon has guided down for two consecutive quarters. Meaning perhaps U.S. consumers are starting to slow down spending and economic data points are starting to weaken? Bulls see the recent retail sales data as simply a "one-off" and not an accurate sign of the current economy. They argue that when the market takes an aggressive step backwards, so does the U.S. consumer. Now that the stock market has rebound back higher, the U.S. consumer should again start gaining more momentum. Technically, we will also be running into stiffer resistance on the charts up between 2800 and 2850. I continue to like the thought of lightening the load on the rally higher. As for today's economic news, the trade will be digesting some updates from the European Union and China. Here at home, we've got some manufacturing numbers and Michigan Consumer Sentiment. The trade is also eager to hear any fresh or new headlines regarding Chinese trade negotiations and or politics in Washington. As for next week, the trade will be looking at a wave of U.S. housing data. But probably more impactful will be the Fed "minutes" from the most recent meeting. Most inside the trade want to know exactly what the Fed sees inside the data that made them make such an aggressive turn? If the market isn't satisfied, it will get another look when Fed Chair Powell is scheduled to testify before the Senate and House the following week, February 26th and 27th. The last week in February is also when President Trump is scheduled to meet again with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. That week is also the current deadline for U.S. and Chinese trade ceasefire. Don't forget, the U.S. markets will be closed on Monday, Feb. 18, in observance of Presidents Day. There will be no economic or supply and demand releases on Monday, as all federal and state agencies and offices will be closed. Commercial banks will also be closed. Cryptocurrency exchanges, which normally operate 24/7, are expected to be open, as will equities markets in Europe and elsewhere outside the U.S. My next report will be released Tuesday morning... Have a great weekend!



1898, The Maine Explodes -

A massive explosion of unknown origin sinks the battleship USS Maine in Cuba's Havana harbor, killing 260 of the fewer than 400 American crew members aboard. Commissioned in 1895, this was the first United States Navy ship to be named after the state of Maine. Originally classified as an armored cruiser, she was built in response to the Brazilian battleship Riachuelo and the increase of naval forces in Latin America. Maine and her near-sister ship Texas reflected the latest European naval developments, with the layout of her main armament resembling that of the British ironclad Inflexible and comparable Italian ships. Her two gun turrets were staggered en échelon, rather than on the centerline, with the fore gun sponsored out on the starboard side of the ship and the aft gun on the port side, with cutaways in the superstructure to allow both to fire ahead, astern or across her deck. She dispensed with full masts thanks to the increased reliability of steam engines by the time of her construction. Despite these advances, Maine was out of date by the time she entered service, due to her protracted construction period and changes in the role of ships of her type, naval tactics and technology. It took nine years to complete, and nearly three years for the armor plating alone. The general use of steel in warship construction precluded the use of ramming without danger to the attacking vessel. The potential for blast damage from firing end on or cross-deck discouraged en échelon gun placement. The changing role of the armored cruiser from a small, heavily armored substitute for the battleship to a fast, lightly armored commerce raider also hastened her obsolescence. Despite these disadvantages, Maine was seen as an advance in American warship design. One of the first American battleships, the Maine weighed more than 6,000 tons and was built at a cost of more than \$2 million. Ostensibly on a friendly visit, the Maine had been sent to Cuba to protect

President Trump to Declare National Emergency to get the Wall: *President Donald Trump will sign spending legislation to prevent a government shutdown while declaring a national emergency to try to build his proposed border wall, the White House confirmed Thursday. According to White House representatives, the President will declare a national emergency to ensure we stop the national security and humanitarian crisis at the border. Keep in mind if Trump does follow through, lawmakers and the White House would dodge their second partial shutdown since December, sparing about 800,000 federal workers from more financial pain. But the emergency declaration could quickly spark lawsuits challenging the president's authority, creating yet another fight over his key campaign promise. By declaring a National Emergency, it allows Trump to redirect funds from other parts of the government to the project without congressional approval. Read more [HERE](#).*

Venture Capital is Still Very Much a Boys' Club: *Women make up just 9.5% of decision-making spots in venture capital firms, according to a new Axios analysis. The breakdown was 105 female decision-makers out of an industry total of 1,088. That's up from 8.93% in a similar analysis last year, and 7% in 2017. The 2016 mark was 5.7%. Read more [HERE](#)*

How the Autonomous Car Race is Shaping Up: *Self-driving cars promise to change cities, mint billionaires, and push robots into the everyday lives of millions of people. The only problem is, no one knows quite when or how. And with all the research and development locked up inside private companies, the public has little information to judge the progress of the technology, aside from the occasional PR reveal or disaster. We have one (imperfect) yardstick, however: the numbers that the California Department of Motor Vehicles requires that any company testing an autonomous vehicle in the state file every month. Those are rolled up and released in January of each year. Though people in the industry don't like what they see as the uneven comparisons between companies, this is the best we've got. The data include two primary numbers: the number of autonomous miles driven, which gives a rough indication of the scale of a program in the state, and the number of disengagements, or when a human driver takes over for the computer. For every year of these disclosures, Waymo, the self-driving-car project within Google's parent company, Alphabet, has been the leader by a wide margin. Read more [HERE](#) why Waymo may soon be looking in the rearview mirror.*

JP Morgan Introduces the "JPM Coin": *The first cryptocurrency created by a major U.S. bank tied to the US Dollar is here and JP Morgan is the company doing it with the "JPM Coin." The bank said its digital currency based on blockchain technology and is intended to enable the instantaneous transfer of payments between institutional accounts. In addition, the "JPM Coin" has a value equivalent to one US dollar and can only be exchanged by JP Morgan clients. The bank seems to be getting in the space to gain a competitive advantage, believing cryptocurrency can work at the same speed for real-time transactions instead of a wire transfer's lag. Keep in mind, the pilot of the "JPM Coin" will be on a fairly small scale and is expected to start trials within a few months. It does have some of the traditional crypto's worried about what happens when some of the biggest banks in the world jump in the space?*

Is GM Going Back to it Roots? *Some of GM's earliest automotive brands started out in the 1890s as bicycle companies, like the Rapid Motor Vehicle Company, forerunner to GMC. GMC – or the Grabowsky Motor Company – was founded as a bicycle maker in 1897. And Louis Chevrolet, co-founder of the eponymous car company, was a champion bicycle racer in his native France, and, along with his two brothers, he created a company that made Frontenac-branded bicycles. Now, General Motors has revealed ARIV as the name of its new e-bike brand. The ARIV Meld is a compact e-bike, and the Merge is a folding model. The brandname was selected following a global crowdsourcing campaign announced last year. The two pedal-assist e-bikes feature proprietary GM technology created at the corporation's engineering and development center in Oshawa, Ontario. GM has been working on the e-bikes since 2015 when GM's CEO Mary Barra said in a press conference that a concept e-bike would be "designed to help people stay mobile in an increasingly difficult-to-navigate urban landscape." Interesting to see such a big company adapt to change and pivot when needed. Read more [HERE](#).*

the interests of Americans there after a rebellion against Spanish rule broke out in Havana in January. An official U.S. Naval Court of Inquiry ruled in March that the ship was blown up by a mine, without directly placing the blame on Spain. Much of Congress and a majority of the American public expressed little doubt that Spain was responsible and called for a declaration of war. Subsequent diplomatic failures to resolve the Maine matter, coupled with United States indignation over Spain's brutal suppression of the Cuban rebellion and continued losses to American investment, led to the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in April 1898. Within three months, the United States had decisively defeated Spanish forces on land and sea, and in August an armistice halted the fighting. On December 12, 1898, the Treaty of Paris was signed between the United States and Spain, officially ending the Spanish-American War and granting the United States its first overseas empire with the ceding of such former Spanish possessions as Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. In 1976, a team of American naval investigators concluded that the Maine explosion was likely caused by a fire that ignited its ammunition stocks, not by a Spanish mine or act of sabotage.



1933, FDR Escapes Assassination in Miami - On

this day in 1933, a deranged, unemployed brick layer named Giuseppe Zangara shouts Too many people are starving! and fires a gun at America's president-elect, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Roosevelt had just delivered a speech in Miami's Bayfront Park from the back seat of his open touring car when Zangara opened fire with six rounds. Five people were hit. The president escaped injury but the mayor of Chicago, Anton Cermak, who was also in attendance, received a mortal stomach wound in the attack. Several men tackled the assailant and might have beaten him to death if Roosevelt had not intervened, telling the crowd to leave justice to the authorities. Zangara later claimed I don't hate Mr. Roosevelt personally, I hate all officials and anyone who is rich. He also told the FBI that chronic stomach pain led to his action: Since my stomach hurt I want to make even with the capitalists by kill the president. My stomach hurt long time. Zangara's extreme action reflected the anger and frustration felt among many working Americans during the Great Depression. At the time of the shooting, Roosevelt was still only the president-elect and had yet to be sworn in. His policies remained untested, but reports of Roosevelt's composure during the assassination attempt filled the following day's newspapers and did much to enforce Roosevelt's public image as a strong leader. Unsubstantiated reports later claimed that Zangara's real target had been Cermak and hinted at Zangara's connection to organized crime in Chicago. Zangara was initially tried for attempted murder and sentenced to 80 years in



FARM TANK

Tweets of the Day



prison, but when Mayor Cermak later died of his wounds, Zangara was retried and sentenced to death. Zangara died on the electric chair on March 5, 1933.



1998, Victory at Last for Earnhardt at Daytona - On February 15, 1998, after 20 years of trying, racing great Dale Earnhardt Sr. finally wins

his first Daytona 500, the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) season opener and an event dubbed the "Super Bowl of stock car racing." Driving his black No. 3 Chevrolet, Earnhardt recorded an average speed of 172.712 mph and took home a then-record more than \$1 million in prize money. Following his victory, crews from competing teams lined the pit road at the Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Florida, to congratulate Earnhardt, who drove his car onto the grass and did several celebratory doughnuts, or circles. Earnhardt, whose tough, aggressive driving style earned him the nickname "The Intimidator," was born on April 29, 1951, in Kannapolis, North Carolina. The son of a racecar driver, the younger Earnhardt dropped out of high school to follow in his father's footsteps. He went on to become one of NASCAR's most successful and respected drivers, with 76 career victories, including seven Winston Cup (now known as the Sprint Cup) Series championships, a record he shares with Richard Petty. Despite his success as a driver, victory at the Daytona 500—a 200-lap, 500-mile event first held in 1959—eluded Earnhardt for years. At the 1997 Daytona 500, Earnhardt's car flipped upside down on the backstretch; however, he managed to escape serious injury. His win in February 1998 represented Earnhardt's sole Daytona victory. Tragically, on February 18, 2001, Earnhardt died at the age of 49 during a crash at that year's 43rd Daytona 500. After being cut from his car, he was taken to a hospital where he was pronounced dead of head injuries. As it happened, the race which cost Earnhardt his life was won by Michael Waltrip, who was driving for the Dale Earnhardt Inc. (DEI) racing team. Earnhardt's son, Dale Jr., also a DEI driver at the time, took second place. Three years later, on February 15, 2004, Dale Earnhardt Jr. won his first Daytona 500, with an average speed of 156.341 mph.

Upcoming Events

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

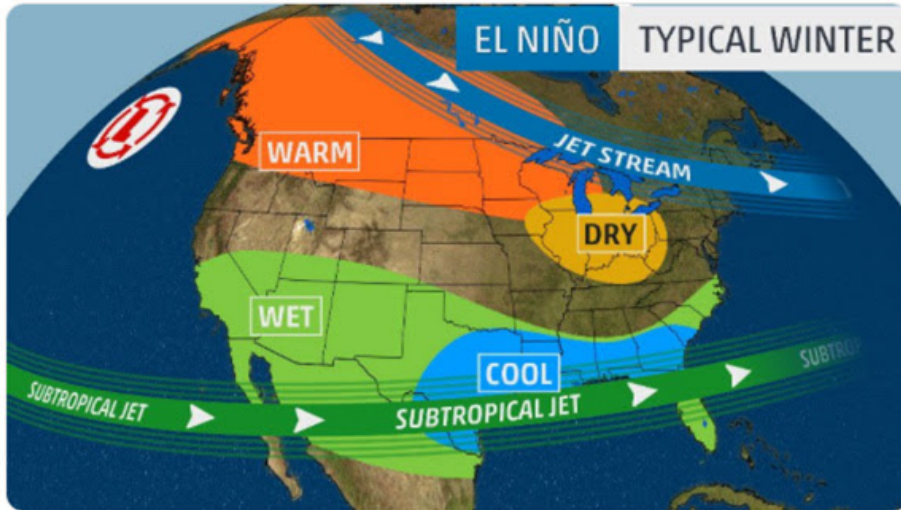


The Weather Channel

@weatherchannel

Following

A weak El Niño has developed and will likely last through spring 2019: [wxch.nl/2SD2Qzn](https://www.wxch.nl/2SD2Qzn)



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



Kevin's Song of the Week

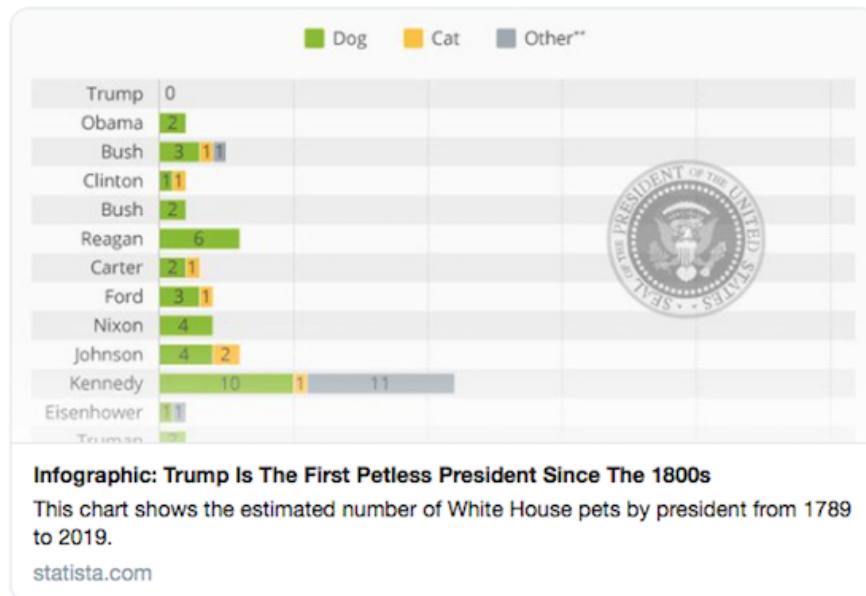


Statista

@StatistaCharts

Following

#Trump is the first petless president since the 1800s





Chad E. Colby
@TheChadColby

Following

Exciting day for @Case_IH as they launch the next generation #Magnum



Colin Chopelas
@c_chopelas

Following

FINALLY!!! #Plant19 #SouthTX #Corn



NEXT level THINKING



My goal at "The Van Trump Report" is to help readers better identify the moving parts and dynamics associated with the financial markets, geopolitical events, economics, media and culture that is currently influencing and shaping the direction of the agricultural markets. I like to believe I "Challenge the Traditional" and encourage our readers to think outside the box.

I use story telling techniques that are written in an easy to read format to help convey my current thoughts about business, markets, technology, weather, sports and life. I also like to include links, filter the noise, and pass along in-depth research and information that I believe could challenge your current thought process and help you make more informed decisions. In addition I include valuable lessons I have learned from other traders, executives and investors, along with an occasional inspirational piece about life, family and faith.

What I do not do in "The Van Trump Report" is give specific financial advice or tell individuals how to invest or how to specifically hedge. Remember, this information is being read by hedge fund managers, bankers, CEO's, and Ag leaders around the globe, therefore it's NOT tailored to fit your specific individual needs. For specific investment or hedging advice please seek the help of a licensed representative that can better understand your particular situation, individual needs and overall risk tolerance. This information should ONLY be used for educational and entertainment purposes.

My family and I would like to thank you again for your support!

Kevin Van Trump

What Others Are Saying

"I am a recent subscriber to Kevin's newsletter, but I'm a long-time reader of many other high-profile marketing services. I am particularly impressed with the thorough manner in which Kevin evaluates every economic aspect, both nationally and internationally, that 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



THROWBACKTRUCKS

@THROWBACKTRUCKS

Following

#Chevy



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.



80s Sports N Stuff

@80sSportsNStuff

Following

Simple scoreboards with beer and cigarette signage was the American way...





Sports Motivation
@Sports_HQ

Following

Actions are louder than words.

**MAKE TIME FOR IT. JUST
GET IT DONE. NOBODY
EVER GOT STRONG OR
GOT IN SHAPE BY
THINKING ABOUT IT.
THEY DID IT.**

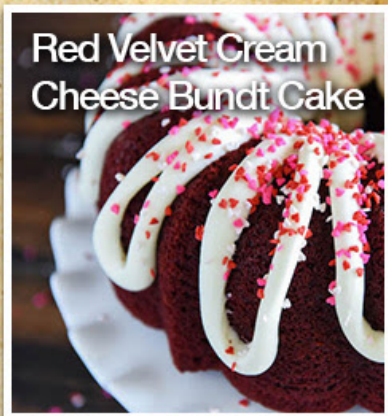
- JIM WENDLER

Farm Direction
RECIPES

★ **FAMILY** ★
FAVORITES

- SENT IN BY OUR READERS -

Red Velvet Cream
Cheese Bundt Cake



CLICK TO SEE RECIPE

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:

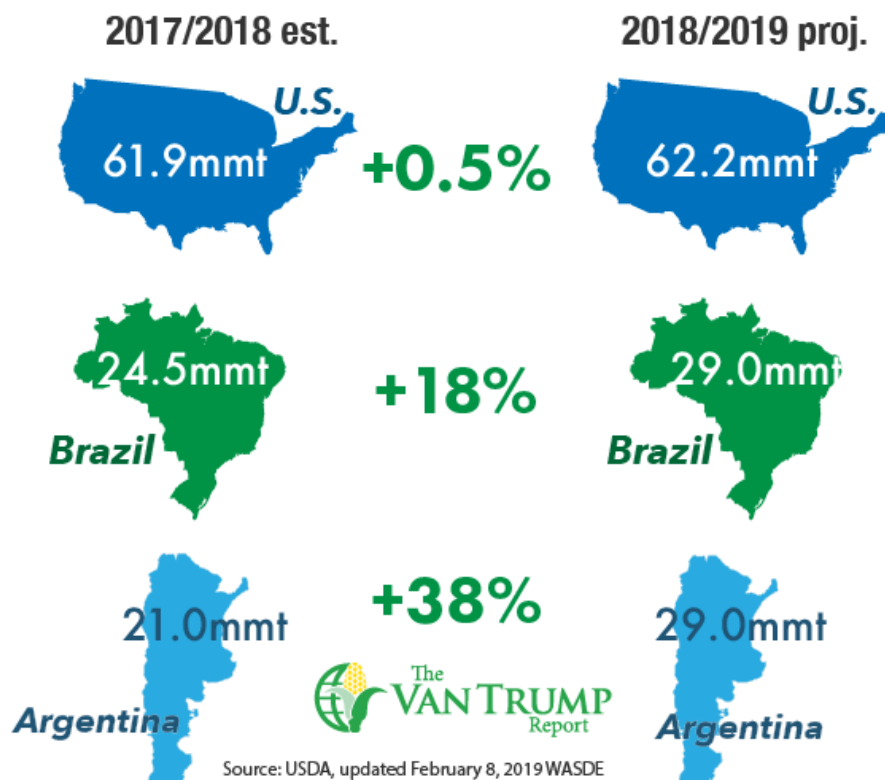
Half of those who read this riddle, I am your best friend. I depend on you, but it's you I will defend. What am I?

Corn prices continue to go nowhere. We opened the week right around \$3.75 per bushel in the MAR19 contract and here we are once again. The DEC19 new-crop contract opened the week just under \$4.00 and we are currently trading right around the same level. Technically, all the corn contracts continue to oscillate right around their 100-Day Moving Average, There's just not a lot in the way of fresh headlines, hence we continue to trade in this narrow range. Bulls are disappointed by lack of a Chinese trade deal, ethanol's struggle to stay profitable, increasing export competition coming online

from South America and continuing competition from Ukraine. Bulls also continue to battle headwinds surrounding the possibility of more U.S. corn acres in 2019. Bears see Argentine production estimates starting to move higher. I was actually a bit surprised when the USDA bumped their Argentine estimate aggressively higher in last Friday's report. In case you missed it, they pushed it from 42.5 to 46.0 MMTs. Now we are starting to see more talk and headlines of the Argentine crop getting larger. Keep in mind, last year Argentina produced only 32.0 MMTs. Also keep in mind, the estimate for Brazil is currently 94.5 MMTs, and several sources are starting to bump that number higher as well, citing good planting conditions and cooperative weather. That compares to Brazil producing 82.0 MMTs last year. In other words, we could be looking at +25 to +30 MMTs of more South American corn than was produced in 2018. Here at home, we continue to hear debates about U.S. planted acres in 2019. Most sources inside the trade seem to be throwing around estimates in the 91 to 94 million acre range. Last year it was estimated that we planted about 89.1 million acres, harvesting about 81.7 million. I'm still having a hard time getting a planted acreage estimate much above 90 million in 2019. I should note, some areas east of the Mississippi are reporting weaker nitrogen prices as of late. Some of the dry products like DAP, MAP, urea, etc... have all recently retreated from their highs. I'm not sure much of this is being passed through to the end-user as of yet, but I wanted to mention we are starting to see some movement. I'm still worried that fertilizer risk could be to the upside as we get closer to planting season in the Midwest. Remember, just a couple of weeks ago data was circulating that showed all eight of the major fertilizers higher compared to last year. In some cases much higher than last year. MAP, DAP and potash were all up between +8% and +13% compared to last year; Urea and 10-34-0 were being reported at +12% to +16% higher; Anhydrous and UAN were more like +20% higher than last year. Bottom-line, make sure you're keeping a close eye on fertilizer costs. If you happen to catch a pullback in your area you might want to think about locking in some supply.

Top 3 Corn Exporters

(in million metric tons)

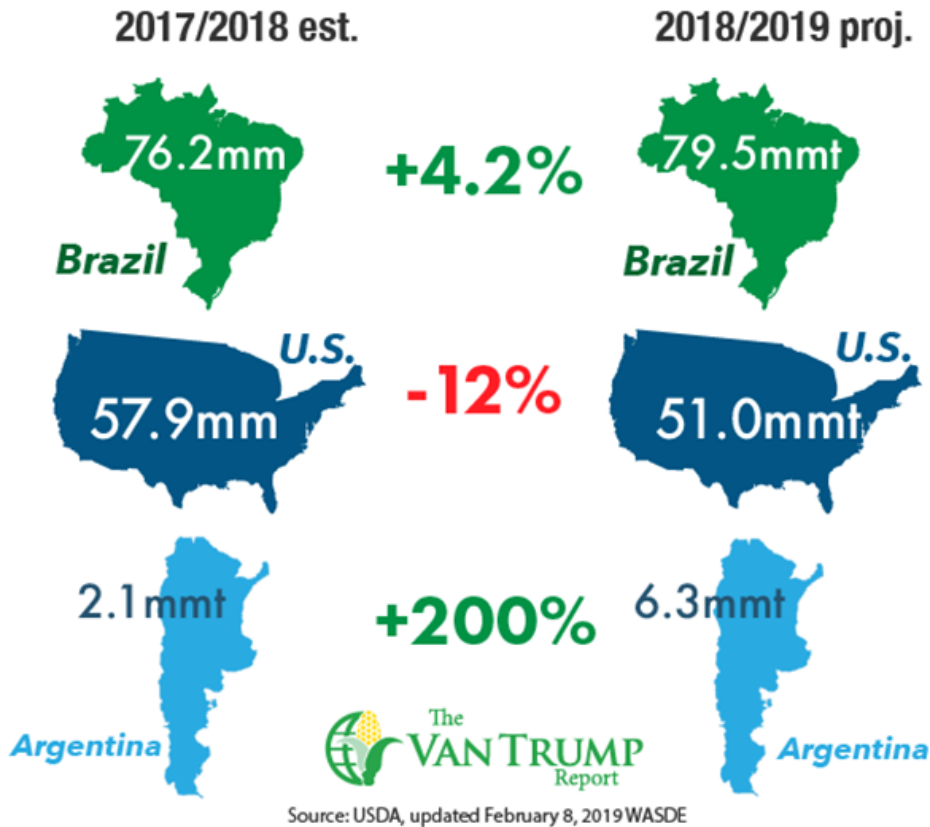


Soybean are slightly higher this morning, but bulls backpedal fairly aggressively yesterday as Chinese trade and U.S. exports remain in question. Yesterday's export sales data from the USDA shook the bulls a bit as Chinese cancellations showed up in the numbers. There was also customs data floating around that showed China imported 7.38 MMTs of soybeans in January, down about -1 MMTs from the year prior. Actually, that number wasn't as bad as some had anticipated. There wasn't a whole lot of fresh news out of South America. The Rosario Grains Exchange raised their Argentine production from 50.0 MMTs to 52.0 MMTs, but that's still below the current USDA estimate of 55.0 MMTs. Keep in mind, last year the Argentine soybean crop was only 37.8 MMTs. Last year, the Brazilian soybean crop was reported at 120.8 MMTs vs, the

current USDA estimate of 117.09 MMTs. In other words, the production we have lost in Brazil compared to last year, looks like it will be more than offset by the gains being made in Argentina. Here at home, NOPA is scheduled to release their soybean crush data for January at around 11am CST. The average guess is just under 170 million bushels, which would be up by about +4% compared to last January and more than likely a new record for the month.

Top 3 Soybean Exporters

(in million metric tons)



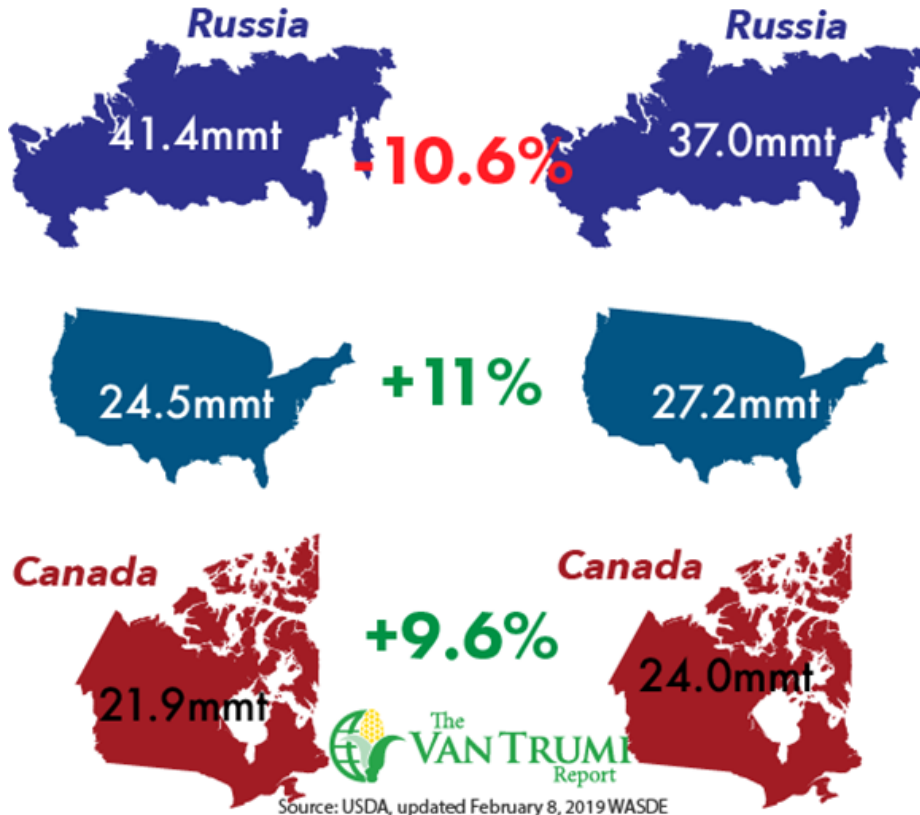
Wheat takes a step backwards on less weather worries and another round of weak export data. Bears are pointing to still no U.S. buying from the Chinese, Russian new-crop prices getting cheaper, headwinds from a strong U.S. dollar, and the technical picture turning more dark. I always remember a tip I received from an old veteran trader when I first got in the business. Bears don't necessarily have to eat everyday, but bulls do... There's just very little fresh or new for the bulls to chew on. Hence, when the bears wake up and want to eat, there's very little the bulls can do to defend themselves. Without weather worries or significantly increased buying of U.S. exports, we will continue to play this game. If the bears continue to pressure prices lower for an extended period, I will be looking to add to my current bullish position. As a producer, I continue to stay patient and have no interest in pricing more cash bushels on the break.

Top 3 Wheat Exporters

(in million metric tons)

2017/2018 est.

2018/2019 proj.



> **Corn and Soy Planted Acres Tweaked:** IEG Vantage adjusted its corn planting projection up slightly from 87,000 acres to 91.591 million acres and lowered its soybean planted acreage estimate by 160,000 acres to 86.044 million acres, according to Reuters. The firm also shaved 381,000 acres off its all wheat plantings estimate for 2019 that now stands at 46.782 million acres.

> **China Soybean Imports Down in January:** China's soybean imports fell 13% in January, compared to a year ago this time. For January of this year soybean purchases from China totalled 7.38 MT, compared to the 8.48 MT in 2018. Tariffs on US soybeans as well as a decrease in demand due to illnesses that swept through livestock, were blamed for the shortfall.

> **Brazil's Subsidies Could Double:** Brazil could double spending on subsidized farm insurance in 2020 and may expand subsidized loans, the country's agriculture policy secretary said on Thursday, even though the new government's economic team has pledged to cut spending. But while subsidized insurance payments are expected to rise, that will not correspond to a cut in subsidized loans for the next crop year, Agriculture Policy Secretary Eduardo Sampaio Marques said in an interview with Reuters.

> **South Korea Buys 85,000 tonnes U.S. Wheat:** Two flour mills in South Korea this week purchased about 85,000 tonnes of milling wheat to be sourced from the United States, European traders said on Thursday. About 50,000 tonnes was bought for shipment between May 16 and June 15 and another 35,000 tonnes was bought for shipment between May 10 and June 10, they said. I'm told the purchases involved a range of different wheat types. (Source: Reuters)

> Tyson Hedging Meat Business with Packaged Foods: *Tyson Foods Inc. is hoping packaged foods will help it absorb many of the brutal swings in the meat business. The poultry giant is trying to transform itself into "the Procter & Gamble Co. of the meat case," the Wall Street Journal reports, which means selling prepared meals as well as chicken parts. I'm told that U.S. meat production hit record levels last year, creating a glut that is cutting into profit margins and driving down prices, as are disputes with key overseas buyers such as Mexico and China.*

> Warren Buffet Changing Stock Positions: *Buffett moves... New 13F filings show Berkshire Hathaway took a new stake in software maker Red Hat valued at \$733M at the end of December and reduced its holdings in Apple by about 1%. The group also dumped its entire stake in Oracle only months after revealing its \$2B investment, and reduced holdings in United Continental and Phillips 66. ORCL -2.9% premarket. (Source: Seeking Alpha)*

> Fed Has Record Haul From Individual Taxes: *The federal government collected a record \$1,665,484,000,000 in individual income taxes in calendar year 2018, according to the Monthly Treasury Statements for the year, which the Treasury finished publishing today with the belated release of the December statement. Keep in mind, calendar year 2018 was the first full tax year after President Donald Trump signed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act on Dec. 22, 2017. Previously, the record year for federal individual income tax revenues was in 2017, when the Treasury collected \$1,656,171,550,000 in individual income taxes. (Source: cnsnewa)*

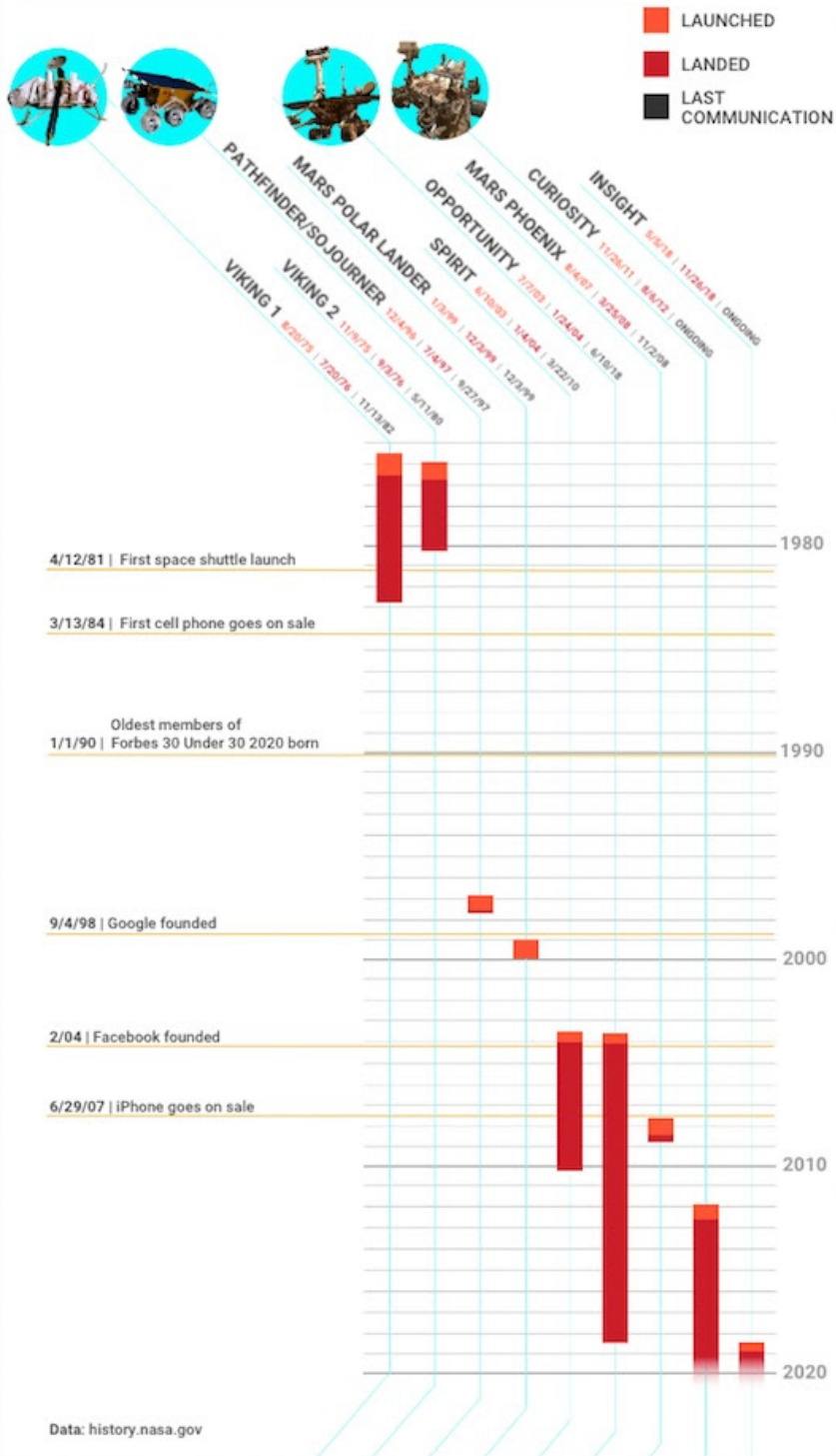
> Seattle Has More Snow Than Denver?? *When you think of the weather in Seattle you probably picture either fog or rain instead of snow. But an unusual weather pattern has allowed back-to-back storms to drop record snow across the Pacific Northwest this month. Since Feb. 3 the airport in Seattle has recorded 20.2 inches of snow, making it the snowiest month in 50 years for Seattle's official weather station. Unusual as it is, Seattle has more snow this year than Denver, which has recorded 17.5 inches of snow so far this season at Denver International Airport and Denver's has and 19.1 inches of snow at the old weather station in Stapleton*

> Amazon Has Officially Pulled Out of New York: *Amazon is calling it quits on its plans to launch an NYC-based HQ2 in Long Island City, citing less-than-supportive city leaders as the primary reason. Though 56% of New Yorkers supported the move, Amazon says "a number of state and local politicians have made it clear that they oppose our presence and will not work with us."*

> Black Leopard Confirmed in Africa for First Time in 100 Years: *San Diego Zoo Global researchers captured footage of a black leopard there in early 2018 and published their research in late January 2019, in the African Journal of Ecology, in what is believed to be the first sighting since 1909 of the rare type of animal in Africa since 1909 published in scientific literature. Separately, wildlife photographer Will Burrard-Lucas captured high-quality photos of a black leopard there last month. You can see them [HERE](#). (Source: NPR)*

> Opportunity's Rover Mission Has Officially Ended: *On Wednesday, NASA officially concluded the mission of its Opportunity rover. The spacecraft, which first landed on Mars in January 2004, was continuously operating on Mars providing valuable scientific data until NASA lost contact with it during a dust storm in June 2018. That's not bad for what was intended to be a 90-day mission. Opportunity wasn't alone, either. NASA has sent a total of ten other landers/rovers to Mars since 1976. All but one landed successfully, and most were carrying on with new discoveries long past the end date of their initial planned missions. Below, you can find a timeline of all of the landers and rovers that NASA has sent to Mars, which shows when they launched, when they landed on Mars, and when NASA finally lost contact with them.*

Timeline: NASA's Mars Rovers



FROM THE FIELD

Northcentral Kansas – We farm a couple thousand acres of corn, soybeans and wheat. This year we are not growing wheat because harvest pushed us back far enough that we were not able to get the wheat planted. We usually don't plant wheat because it's a cash crop for us but rather we get 10% better yields on corn following wheat the next year. This year we are 100% row crops. We are debating on double cropping, but

we are still on the fence since the beans might be flowering right in the middle of the summer heat and if that doesn't happen we might get an early frost that doesn't allow them to fill properly.

Northern Illinois – We have had a pretty wild winter so far. We went weeks where the temperatures didn't creep above 15 degrees. Now we are seeing temperatures in the middle of February in the 50's and the snow is melting quickly. Now we are looking at another extended cold front coming through for at least the balance of the month. I am starting to believe that weather like this fall might be the new norm. We are just going to figure out how to farm around it. I would bet we have another wet spring and the planting is going to be a lot like harvest. Unpredictable and wet.

Northern North Dakota – We had to sell most of our wheat last week for several reasons, but I noticed that basis improved just a little, so we just dumped the last 20%. The elevator stopped paying for higher protein wheat a while ago, so we missed that boat. We heard that one elevator was paying a premium for low quality wheat. They were paying 5 cents a 5th for any wheat under 13% because they had to blend off all the higher protein wheat. Most guys had wheat between 17-18% protein which isn't ideal for milling.



AI Food Intelligence Startup says Restaurants are Leaving \$9 Million on the Table: A Tel Aviv-based firm that uses artificial intelligence to help make predictions on the next big thing in food says U.S. restaurateurs are leaving up to \$9 billion on the table by not serving up more veggies and healthy food options. Tastewise, a new subscription-based website and "AI-powered food intelligence startup," studied 13 million menu items, 1 million recipes and more than 250 million social media conversations to determine what's trending now and what's ahead. For example, a Tastewise report, released Wednesday, says consumers in Boston, Fort Lauderdale and Washington, D.C., would gobble up \$100 million more in vegan fare if it were available. Meanwhile, diners in San Antonio, Dallas and Seattle hunger for more "hand-crafted food," or "artisanal food that is created in a less industrial setting," according to the report. The study's \$9 billion figure comes in part from comparing how much consumers talk about eating healthy at home with how much they say they're eating healthy when they are out on the town. And it assumes that if more healthy options were offered at local eateries, they'd be consumed. So if you broil it, they will come. Read more [HERE](#) on how restaurants can grow their business with the right data.

New Industry is Emerging to Remove Space Junk: As the satellite industry booms, a Japan-based venture is working to prevent space-debris collisions that could paralyze transport, defense and telecommunications systems. Astroscale Holdings Inc. is preparing to rendezvous with, capture and dock a test satellite early next year to show how its technology can help clear orbiting junk, Miki Ito, 36, general manager of Astroscale's Japan unit, said in an interview. Astroscale is competing in a niche that has drawn urgent attention and funding from companies and governments including those in the U.S., Japan, Singapore and the U.K. The venture has raised about \$103 million, including money from Japan's state-backed INCJ Ltd., as it vies with rivals to invent an affordable way to prevent a chain-reaction of collisions known as the Kessler effect. With an estimated 750,000 bits of old satellites and rockets circling the Earth at about 18,000 miles per hour, a collision could instantly shatter a multimillion dollar satellite, and with Commercial launches under 500 kilograms are forecast to jump 10-fold to more than 5,600 in the 10 years to 2027, compared with the previous decade, consulting firm Euroconsult estimates in its report on prospects for the small satellite market. Read more [HERE](#) on this emerging need.

Americans Are Starting to Feel Very Good About Things: Half of the respondents in a recent Gallup poll say they are in better financial shape now than they were a year ago. This is the first time since 2007 that at least half of the public has reported a generally positive state of current finances. More people are feeling optimistic about their own finances, according to Gallup. In a recent poll, nearly 7 out of 10 participants said they expected to be "better off" financially by this time next year. The company surveyed 1,017 U.S. adults by phone in January. This level of optimism hasn't been seen in 16 years, according to Gallup. From what I understand, the stock market could be a factor for some percentage of the those Americans who are invested in the space, which is a little over half the public. The relatively positive state of things likely is driving that confidence. Only 26% of Americans reported being "worse off" this year than in the past year. Read more [HERE](#).

Digital Healthcare Gaining Traction Across All Patient Groups: In its 2019 Digital Health Consumer Survey, Accenture found that while 85% of the "Silent Generation," or people born between 1928 and 1945, have a primary care physician, just 55% of Generation Z (people born in 1997 or after) have one. Two-thirds of Millennials have a primary care physician, which puts them far below the 84% of Baby Boomers (people born between 1946 and 1964) and 76% of Generation X (people born between 1965 and 1980) who have opted for a primary care physician, according to the study. When Accenture dug into the data, the company found that younger people are generally "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied" with the state of traditional health care. Those younger generations are looking for more "effectiveness, convenience, efficiency, and transparency," according to Accenture. Across all patient groups, digital care has become an appealing option. In fact, 70% of respondents said that they would rather choose a doctor who will provide follow-up care over e-mail or with a text message. Looking ahead, Accenture believes the health care industry is entering a major shift, thanks in no small part to Millennials driving that change. Read more [HERE](#) another disrupted space by Millennials.

Virgin Voyages' Scarlet Lady's Maiden Voyage Coming Soon: Want a spot at "Richard's Rooftop" a members-only club named for Virgin's founder, Sir Richard Branson aboard Virgin Voyages' first cruise ship? Then you'll have to book one of its 78 suites when tickets go on sale next month. The suites dubbed RockStar Suites will have a retro style, featuring black, mirror-like wall sections, gold accents, and mounted guitars, an homage to Virgin's roots as a record company. The suites make up a small fraction of all cabins aboard The Scarlet Lady ship, and Virgin Voyages wouldn't say how many cabins the ship will have, but it will carry around 2,700 passengers. The ship will sail from PortMiami in 2020 and I'm told the suites will come in eight variations. The largest room, at 2,147 square feet, will sleep six and have a private outdoor shower, and a dining table with a staircase for easy scaling/dancing. The smallest suite, at 352 square feet, will have a bathroom with a window, a cruising rarity. Each suite will have a record player and a full bar and I haven't seen prices per cabin just yet. Could be a great gift to secure for momma! See more pics and a video inside the ship [HERE](#).





Can Container Farms Find a Spot in Agriculture?

Consumer desire for "locally grown" produce has attracted many new participants looking to grow in controlled environments, including greenhouses – both on the ground level and rooftop, which also includes 40 to 53-foot shipping containers re-purposed for agriculture. As investors are now taking a closer look at the indoor farming space, there are more questions starting to be asked. Keep in mind the consumers desire for year-round, locally grown, more nutritious food isn't changing, but some are questioning whether current end users will continue to pay the "premium" being asked. It's worth noting, there are significant costs to grow in a shipping container, including the purchase of the retrofit container, labor to grow the produce, and the cost of power needed to maintain the lighting, hydroponics and optimum internal environment of the

container. From what I understand, the leafy greens which are largely what is grown in containers today, are at best four times as expensive per pound to grow in a container farm and more likely over 10x as expensive compared to traditional farming methods. Taking a deeper look at the industry, it appears that much of the buzz surrounding the space may have come from the supply-side, meaning from those who touted a need for more "local farmers" in the market, investors seeking returns in the space, entry to market with limited capital, time to market, and the limited footprint. Not that any of that isn't true, but when you can purchase the same products from say a greenhouse within a day's drive at significantly less costs, it becomes somewhat of a marketing game. Moving forward, many investors are not sure the current message or the premium that goes along with it, will continue to be paid for by the consumers. No doubt there is great need for controlled-environment agriculture, as it allows produce to be grown locally and delivered to the consumer in a very quick post-harvest period. I suspect as technological innovations improve, the efficiency of container farming will start to come down. But the big question is, will "locally grown" find other less expensive ways to scale and provide the same great feel-good story in a less costly manner? Personally, I am very interested in the indoor growing space and have suggested that our traditional farming partners and friends consider dedicating some acres on current operations. In my opinion, consumer trends are going to remain strong around "locally grown". Click [HERE](#) to take a deeper dive on the comparisons of the various forms of farming. (Source: [igrow.com](#), Agfunder)

	Traditional Farming	Greenhouse (Ground or Roof)	Fully Contained Structure	Shipping Container
Proximity to Customer	Farthest	In-between	In-between	Closest
Cost per Delivered Pound	Lowest	In-between, close to lowest	In-between	Highest
Taste	Worst	Function of consumer distance	Function of consumer distance	Best
Seasonality	Yes	Some	None	None
Variety of Produce	Most	2nd to traditional farming	Least	Least
Environmentally Friendly	Most	2nd to traditional farming	Least	Least



Markets Will Be Closed Monday, but which President's Birthday are we Celebrating?

President's Day seems like a simple enough concept - it's a day to commemorate the birthday's of Presidents George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, right? Once you dive into the history of the day, it's actually kind of a confusing holiday. But then again, what part of politics isn't? Going back to the founding of America, Washington's birthday has almost always been commemorated in some way. It was made an official federal holiday back in 1885. Lincoln's birthday was never a federal holiday. However, it was celebrated by most individual states. And here is where things start to get confusing. In 1968, the federal government passed the Uniform Holidays Bill, which was intended to create more 3-day weekends for federal employees by moving holiday observances to a designated Monday. Remember, Lincoln's birthday was not a federal holiday, so it was just the holiday for Washington's Birthday that was moved to the

third Monday in February. Officially it's still designated as Washington's Birthday. That's right, there is no federal holiday named 'President's Day'! It became known as that because of a fake newspaper article spoofing President Richard Nixon, which said he wanted to reinvent Washington's Birthday as a day for "celebrating all Presidents, including myself." As crazy as it might seem, the fake "President's Day" holiday name stuck and that is what nearly everyone now calls it! As for Lincoln's birthday, some individual states still celebrate it, but most gave up closing schools and government agencies once the federal holidays of Columbus Day (1934 proclaimed federal holiday) and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (1983 became law) were added. Below are a few fascinating and widely known bits of Presidential history that The Smithsonian had posted recently: (Sources: Snopes, Smithsonian Magazine)

George Washington Owned A Profitable Whiskey Distillery: *Whiskey was one of Washington's most important business ventures at Mount Vernon. At peak production in 1799, the distillery used five stills and a boiler and produced eleven thousand gallons of whiskey. With sales of \$7,500 that year, it was perhaps the country's largest distillery.*

James Madison Held The First Inaugural Ball: *Although there was a ball in 1789 to honor the election of George Washington, the first official inaugural ball did not occur until 1809, when Madison took office. Madison was sworn in at the U.S. Capitol. That evening his wife, Dolley Madison, hosted a gala at Long's Hotel.*

Gerald Ford Was A Fashion Model: *Ford's first love was a woman named Phyllis Brown, a gorgeous blonde who became a fashion model. Brown persuaded Ford to invest in a modeling agency and to do some modeling himself. Together they appeared in ski resort spread of Look magazine (1940) and on a cover of Cosmopolitan (1942). Ultimately, the pair broke up. She wanted to continue modeling in New York and he decided to forego the runway and begin his law career.*

Warren Harding Had The Biggest Shoe Size: *Harding wore a size 14. Unfortunately, those big feet did not ensure that his administration would be on firm footing. It turned out that Harding's trusted advisors were not so trustworthy, and his presidency was riddled with scandal.*

Theodore Roosevelt Wore A Lock Of Lincoln's Hair During His Inauguration: *Roosevelt wore a ring with a lock of Lincoln's hair in it on March 14, 1905, at his second inauguration. He was given the ring by John Hay, who had worked for Lincoln in the White House.*

Lincoln Attended Seances At The White House: *Lincoln's wife, Mary Lincoln, became interested in seances after their young son Willie died in 1862. At the White House, she engaged mediums, who conducted "spirit circles" or ceremonies during which those who attended could communicate with their loved ones who had crossed over into the next world. It is not clear if Lincoln participated to appease his wife or out of real interest and belief.*



It Still Feels Like Winter... But here's what You Need to Know About this Weekends "Daytona 500"

This will be the 61st running of the historic NASCAR race in Daytona Beach, Florida. I've included below some things you might not know about the race as well as some insight that might help you pick this year's winner:

The Race: *200 laps covering 500 miles. Race coverage will be shown on Fox this Sunday, February 17th and begin around noon. The actual race starts at around*

1:30 pm CST. You will also be able to stream the race on Fox Sports Go & fuboTV and listen to it on the radio on Motor Racing Network & SiriusXM NASCAR Radio.

Interesting Story: The driving force behind the establishment of NASCAR was William "Bill" France Sr. (1909-1992), a mechanic and auto-repair shop owner from Washington, D.C., who in the mid-1930s moved to Daytona Beach, Florida. The Daytona area was a gathering spot for racing enthusiasts, and France became involved in racing cars and promoting races. After witnessing how racing rules could vary from event to event and how dishonest promoters could abscond with prize money, France felt there was a need for a governing body to sanction and promote racing. He gathered members of the racing community to discuss the idea, and NASCAR was born, with its official incorporation in February 1921.

The First Cars & Tracks: In the early years of NASCAR, competitors drove the same types of cars that people drove on the street--Buicks, Cadillacs, Oldsmobiles, among others--with minimal modifications. (Today, the cars are highly customized.) In 1950, the first NASCAR-based track, the Darlington Raceway in South Carolina, opened. More new raceways followed, including the Daytona International Speedway, which opened in 1959.

First Daytona Winer: Lee Petty won the first Daytona 500, which was run on February 22, 1959. The Daytona 500 became NASCAR's season opener and one of its premier events.

Most Daytona Wins: Lee Petty's son Richard Petty, who began his racing career in 1958, won the Daytona 500 a record seven times and became NASCAR's first superstar before retiring in 1992.

T.V. Coverage & First Big Fight: On February 18, 1979, the first live flag-to-flag coverage of the Daytona 500 was broadcast on television. An end-of-the-race brawl between drivers Cale Yarborough and Donnie and Bobby Allison was a huge publicity generator and helped boost NASCAR's popularity on a national scale.

One Of The Worst Days At Daytona: February 18, 2001 - Seven-time NASCAR Winston Cup champion Dale Earnhardt dies in a crash on the final lap of the 43rd Daytona 500.

Completed The Most Daytona Races: Bill Elliot actually finished 16 races. Terry Labonte has actually traveled the most miles at 14,892.5 miles or 5,957 official laps.

Lowest Starting Position by a Winner: Matt Kenseth actually won the race in 2009 starting from the 39th position.

Fastest Winning Speed: Believe it or not, Buddy Baker has the fastest speed at 177.602 mph, set back in 1980.

Oldest Winner: Bobby Allison in 1988 at 50 years, 2 months and 11 days old.

Youngest Winner: Trevor Bayne in 2011 at 20 years, 0 months, and 1 day old.

Driver Leading the Fewest Laps and Winning: Kurt Busch led the race for 1 lap and won the 2017 Daytona 500.

The Grand Marshall: Houston Texans defensive end J.J. Watt is set to become the first NFL player to give the command to start engines and serve as a grand marshall in the history of the Daytona 500.

A Daytona 500 Engine: According to Factinate, it's a different ball game for the NASCAR engines, as they can only last for one full race. The engine of an average NASCAR car wears out after 200 laps in the Daytona 500.

Driver's License: According to Jacksonville, drivers aren't required to have a state driver's license to enter the race. Strange right? A NASCAR driver can hit a high speed on the race track but can't attempt such on a public road.

Odds of Winning... I'm Deciding Between "Clint Bowyer" and "Kyle Busch"

Brad Keselowski 7/1

Joey Logano 8/1

Clint Bowyer 10/1

Denny Hamlin 10/1

Kevin Harvick 10/1

Aric Almirola 12/1

Chase Elliott 12/1

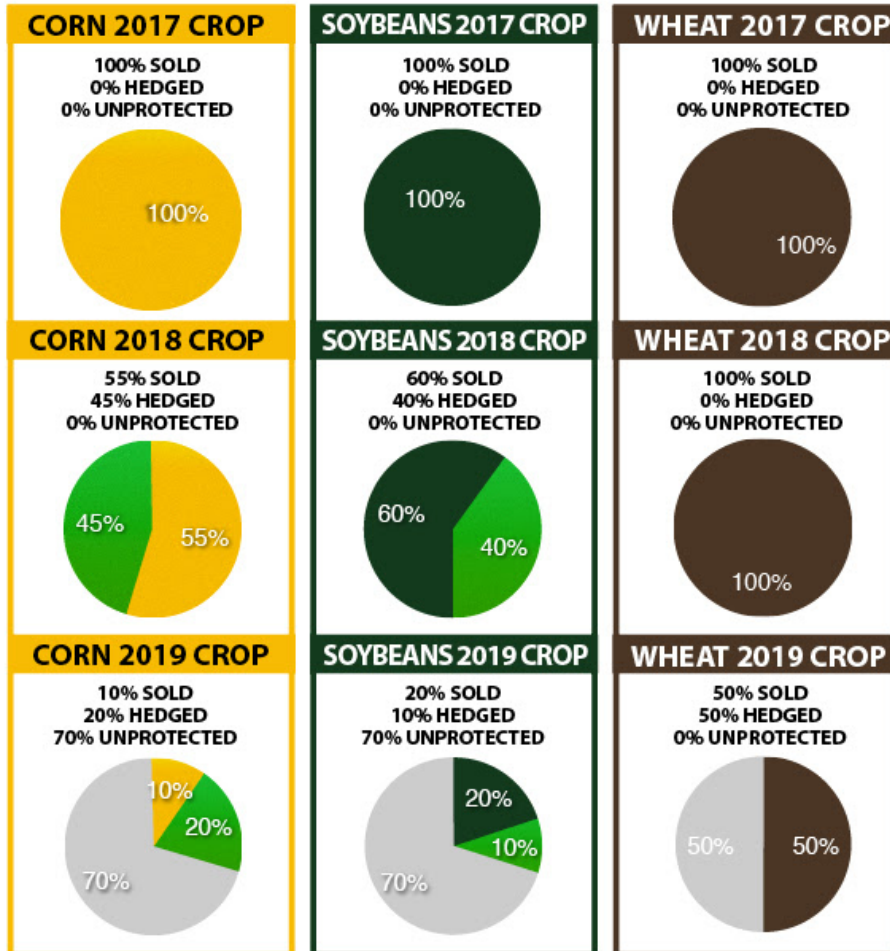
Kyle Busch 12/1
Martin Truex Jr. 14/1
Ricky Stenhouse Jr. 14/1
Ryan Blaney 14/1
Kurt Busch 16/1
Alex Bowman 20/1
Daniel Suarez 20/1
Jimmie Johnson 20/1
William Byron 20/1
Erik Jones 22/1
Paul Menard 28/1
Austin Dillon 33/1
Kyle Larson 33/1
Darrell Wallace Jr. 40/1
Ryan Newman 40/1
Daniel Hemric 50/1
Matt DiBenedetto 66/1
Michael McDowell 66/1
Ryan Preece 66/1
Chris Buescher 80/1
David Ragan 80/1
Ty Dillon 100/1



ANSWER to riddle: A dog (man's best friend).

CASH SALES & HEDGING TOTALS

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