



Josh Knight <josh@farmdirection.com>

GOOD MORNING: The Van Trump Report 3-3-20

1 message

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

Tue, Mar 3, 2020 at 5:30 AM

Reply-To: Jordan <reply-feb8107973620174-1142_HTML-68584704-100003450-8@vantrumpreport-email.com>

To: josh@farmdirection.com



"The heart has its reasons, which reason knows not." – **Blaise Pascal**

Tuesday, March 3, 2020

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Morning Summary: Stock bulls are thinking the fever might be breaking and fears surrounding coronavirus starting to ease... I however remain cautiously optimistic! Yesterday's record-setting rebound with the Dow gaining +1,290 points, was largest ever one-day point gain. Insiders are saying some of those gains are related to statements made by central banks and other key organizations promising to prop up the global economy. Bears on the other hand are saying the rebound won't hold, pointing to the growing number of infections around the world and the threat it poses to global economic activity, particularly supply chain bottlenecks and forward earnings guidance. Bears also doubt central bank policies can do much to solve basic supply and demand dynamics that are being thrown into a tailspin amid the outbreak. The full impact is still impossible to determine and economic data reflecting it is only just now starting to trickle out from China, where both manufacturing and service sector readings have plummeted to record lows. Here in the U.S. the Institute for Supply Management said its manufacturing index dipped to 50.1% last month from 50.9%. Executives surveyed for the report said the harm resulting from the outbreak is in its early stages and many still see things getting worse before they get better. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on Monday said that the world economy now faces its "greatest danger" since the

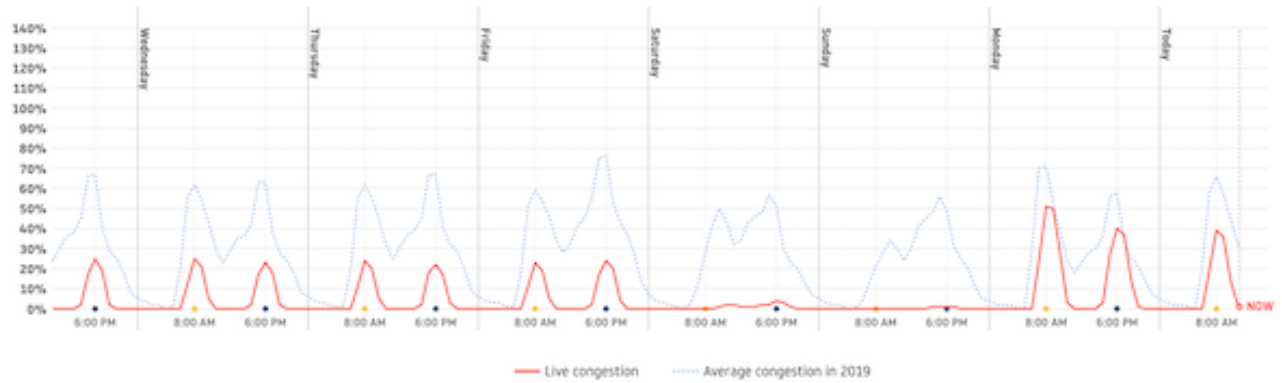
financial crisis more than a decade ago. With global growth already on course for its weakest pace since 2009, the group said a "longer lasting" outbreak could result in recession-like expansion of just +1.5% this year. In its "best case" scenario the global economy would grow by +2.4% this year, down from the 2.9% expansion projected before the viral outbreak. The research body is forecasting a rebound during 2021, assuming the outbreak is contained over the coming months. They note, however, that recovery won't be immediate, and it's possible some lost output would never be recovered. Today, leaders from the G7 (composed of the U.S., U.K., Canada, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan) plan to hold discussions on how to limit the damage. U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell are slated to take part in the call before U.S. stock markets opens this morning. There is some speculation on Wall Street that the meeting could lead to a coordinated rate cut among the world's major central banks. Meanwhile, Mnuchin and White House Economic Adviser Larry Kudlow are backing the idea of an emergency cut by the U.S. Fed. Yesterday's stock market rebound also came in spite of a growing death toll from the virus in Washington state where 6 coronavirus patients have now died, up from just 2 on Sunday. Health officials expect the number of cases in Washington and around the rest of the country will continue to increase. So far, 10 states, including California and New York, have confirmed or presumed cases. The other major issue investors are wrestling with is the U.S. Presidential election, which really ramps up today with "Super Tuesday." It's one of the most important days in the lead up to the November election, with 1344 of the 1991 delegates needed to win the Democratic nomination up for grabs. The Democratic field continues to narrow with Amy Klobuchar announcing she was dropping out of the race yesterday. She and former rival Pete Buttigieg, who ended his bid this past weekend, are both reportedly endorsing former Vice President Joe Biden. Most polls indicate that Bernie Sanders still holds a lead over Biden nationally. There are no significant economic reports due today but there are a few earnings worth noting, including AutoZone, Hewlett Packard, Kohl's, Nordstrom, Ross Stores, Target, and Urban Outfitters. Overall I still remain overly cautious and only deploying more capital on deeper breaks in price. I am still not interested in chasing rallies while in this environment and market mindset. I suspect there will be many upcoming days when the market tests my discipline.

Interesting Data: Traffic Picking Up in China, But... *I've been getting good satellite data from TomTom GPS as of late that shows traffic flow in almost all major cities around the globe. As you can see in the graphics below workers are starting to come back online in Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen. Unfortunately, weekend traffic still remains extremely weak, meaning the Chinese consumer may still be offline and hunkering down. You can also see in the graphics the city of Wuhan is still a ghost town and there's very little movement. I searched Milan, Italy and a few other European cities and found very little traffic variation. In other words, it doesn't seem like a lot has changed in those cities. I included the link to the TomTom site we use so can stay up to date and track your own cities and locations you may be traveling to in the future. Click [HERE](#)*

Beijing traffic

LAST 48 HOURS

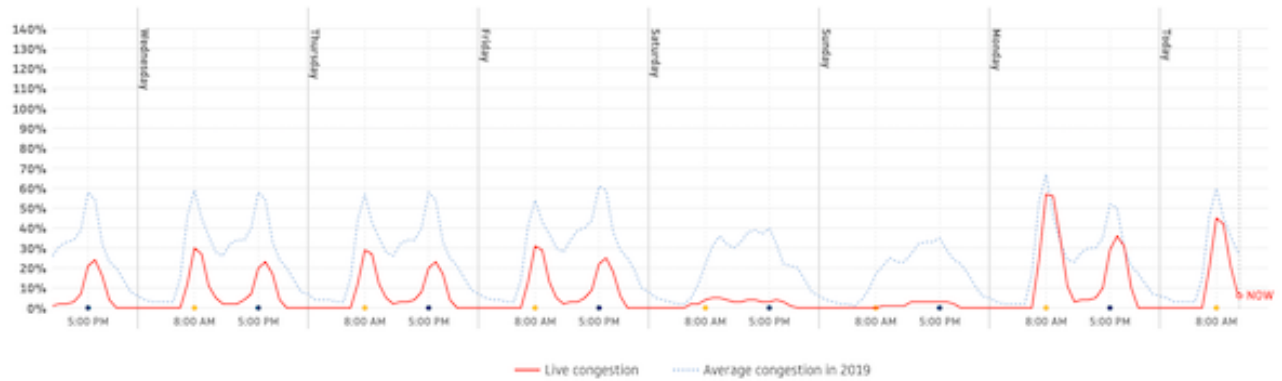
LAST 7 DAYS



Shanghai traffic

LAST 48 HOURS

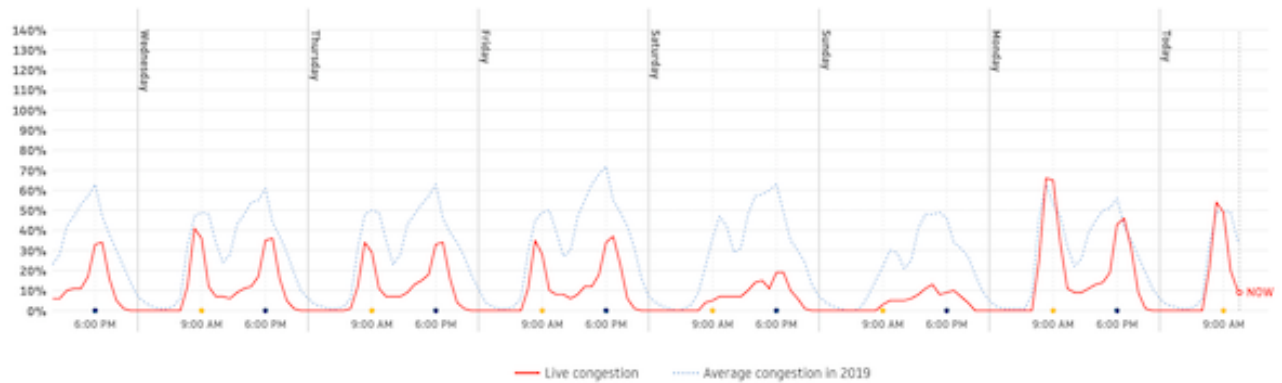
LAST 7 DAYS



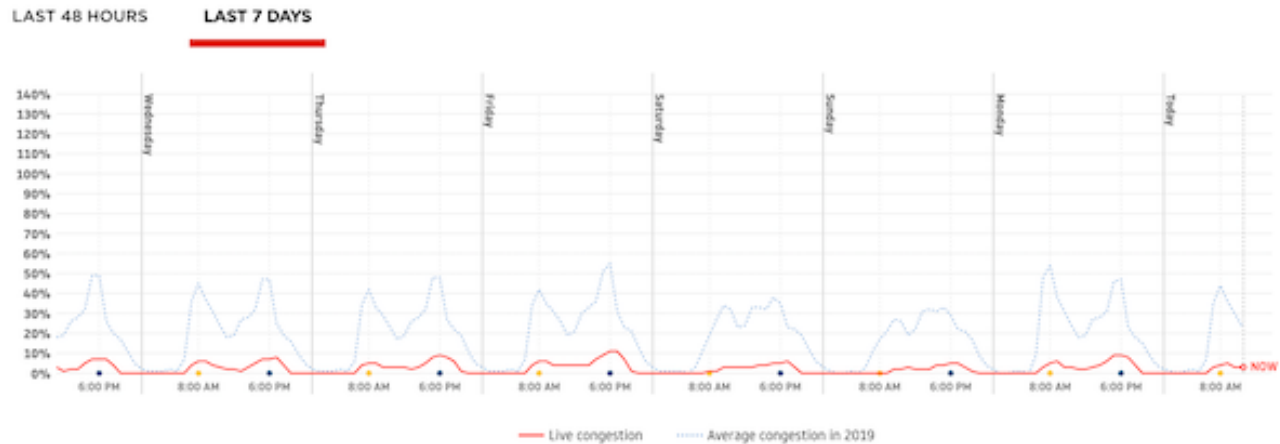
Shenzhen traffic

LAST 48 HOURS

LAST 7 DAYS



Wuhan traffic



For Signs that the Stock Panic is Over, Keep an Eye on Bonds: Investors wanting to see if the worst is over for the dramatic selloff in stocks should look to U.S. Treasuries for clues, as an ebbing in the considerable demand for the safe-haven bonds needs to be seen first to show that risk appetite is improving. The Treasury market has been flashing warning signs about global growth since the beginning of the year, even as stocks charged to record highs. Treasuries are viewed as one of the world's safest investments and gain as investors flock to safety during times of uncertainty. A continued strong demand for these assets reflects that risk appetite remains low, which is negative for stocks. Bank of America strategists Michael Hartnett and Tommy Ricketts said in a report sent on Friday to watch for a decline in Treasuries and gold "to signal panic (is) over." How investors react to any potential cut in interest rates will also be key for risk sentiment as the coronavirus throws into doubt that lower rates will be enough to offset a global economic slowdown. Read more from [Reuters](#).

Amazon Struggles to Keep Up with Panicked Shoppers: Amazon on Monday warned customers that both Prime Now and Amazon Fresh delivery services would have limited availability, meaning orders are being delivered more slowly than usual. The company hasn't reduced the number of people or trucks dedicated to either service, but it has seen a surge in demand that's straining its delivery capacity. Analysts speculate it's due to customers panicking over the coronavirus. One Amazon delivery driver who spoke on condition of anonymity said the company has seen a surge in demand for bottled water. (Source: Bloomberg)

Robinhood Trading App Crashes on Heavy Trading Day: Trading on Robinhood, a stock trading app popular with millennials, was down on Monday, preventing its customers from buying and selling shares in a session that saw the market stage a major rebound from last week's slump. The interruption came on a day of much higher-than-usual volume as Wall Street rebounded from last week's sharp sell-off. About 14 billion shares changed hands during Monday's session, compared with a 9.5 billion-share average for the last 20 days. The technical problems took up most of the trading day and were not fixed before the close. Robinhood clients missed out on the biggest one-day point gain in the Dow Jones Industrial Average in history. News of Robinhood's outage came a week after Fidelity and Charles Schwab said they had technical difficulties amid an 800-point plunge by the Dow Jones Industrial Average. TD Ameritrade also said some of its clients were experiencing technical issues at that time last week. One factor possibly contributing to these platforms' technical issues could be higher-than-average trading volumes, which were also witnessed late last week. Read more

from CNBC)

Natural Gas Continues to Tumble Under Multiple Blows to Demand: *Fears that the new coronavirus might slow the global economy have sent already-depressed natural gas prices tumbling to their lowest level in years. The virus marks the latest force of nature to slam U.S. gas producers, who were already contending with abnormally mild winter weather across the Northern Hemisphere. And it shows how tightly tied to overseas economic activity the U.S. gas market has become after functioning in isolation for decades. Back in 2016, just the domestic market was flooded as a big ramp in the number of facilities that load ships with liquefied natural gas, or LNG, was just beginning. Now, thanks largely to those export terminals, the global market is glutted. Analysts still generally expect global LNG demand will grow and lift U.S. gas prices from their depressed levels, but probably not this year. "The global gas glut will persist through at least 2021," said Francisco Blanch, an analyst at Bank of America, which in January reduced its 2020 price estimate to \$1.99 from \$2.35. Meanwhile, Goldman Sachs Group analysts last week cut their 2020 price forecast for U.S. gas to \$2.20, from \$2.50. Rystad Energy reduced its forecast to \$2.26, down from \$2.50, and slashed its expectations for prices in Europe and Asia by -29% and -27%, respectively. Read more from [The Wall Street Journal](#).*

U.S. natural gas futures

\$5.0 per million British thermal units



Source: FactSet

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Tweets of the Day



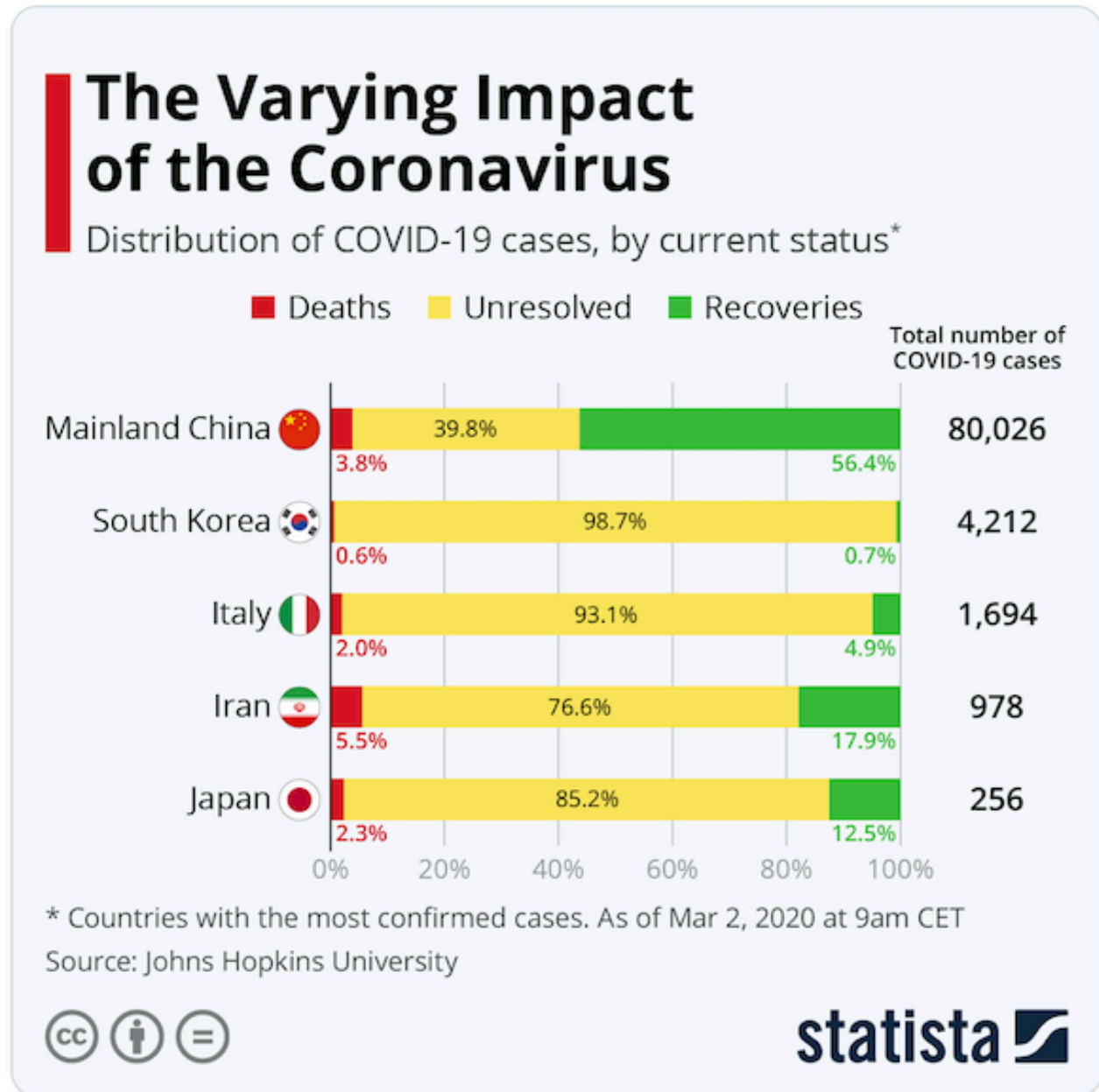
Statista
@StatistaCharts



The US has reported their first 2 deaths from the [#coronavirus](#), but the number of infected people is still quite low. [#Iran](#) and [#China](#) are still facing criticism as

quite low. [Iran](#) and [South Korea](#) are still facing criticism as many believe they are vastly under reporting their actual figures.


[statista.com/chart/20980/di...](https://www.statista.com/chart/20980/distribution-of-covid-19-cases-by-current-status)



Charlie Bilello ✓
@charliebilello

CNBC is running its 7th "Markets in Turmoil" special since last Monday. We haven't seen this many in such a short

time frame since August 2011. **\$SPX**

@CharlieBilello		S&P 500 Forward Total Returns following CNBC "Markets in Turmoil" Specials						
Markets in Turmoil	S&P 500 Close	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	9-Month	12-Month	Cumulative
5/6/2010	1128	2.7%	-6.7%	0.3%	7.2%	17.6%	20.7%	236.1%
5/7/2010	1111	2.3%	-4.2%	1.5%	11.0%	19.8%	23.0%	241.3%
5/9/2010	1111	2.3%	-4.2%	1.5%	11.0%	19.8%	23.0%	241.3%
6/4/2010	1065	2.6%	-3.3%	2.9%	15.9%	25.9%	24.5%	255.3%
8/4/2011	1200	-2.2%	-1.9%	3.7%	13.3%	16.0%	18.5%	208.2%
8/7/2011	1199	-1.6%	-2.6%	5.7%	13.4%	16.1%	18.9%	208.4%
8/8/2011	1119	7.7%	7.3%	12.5%	21.7%	23.9%	28.0%	230.4%
8/9/2011	1173	1.8%	1.4%	8.1%	16.5%	17.5%	22.3%	215.4%
8/10/2011	1121	6.6%	3.2%	14.5%	22.0%	23.2%	28.0%	229.8%
8/11/2011	1173	-2.7%	-0.7%	5.4%	15.8%	17.3%	22.6%	215.2%
8/12/2011	1179	-4.6%	-0.3%	5.8%	16.0%	15.4%	21.8%	213.5%
8/14/2011	1179	-4.6%	-0.3%	5.8%	16.0%	15.4%	21.8%	213.5%
8/18/2011	1141	1.6%	5.8%	9.0%	20.7%	15.5%	27.1%	223.8%
9/22/2011	1130	2.8%	9.8%	10.7%	25.1%	20.2%	32.2%	226.4%
6/3/2012	1278	3.8%	7.0%	10.1%	11.5%	22.7%	28.8%	184.0%
8/23/2015	1971	0.9%	-1.3%	6.2%	-1.4%	5.7%	13.2%	72.0%
8/24/2015	1893	4.2%	2.6%	11.0%	3.1%	11.5%	18.1%	79.0%
8/25/2015	1868	2.5%	3.6%	12.3%	5.7%	13.8%	19.1%	81.5%
8/26/2015	1941	0.5%	-0.3%	8.2%	1.5%	9.5%	14.5%	74.6%
9/1/2015	1914	1.5%	0.7%	10.5%	5.4%	11.9%	16.0%	77.0%
1/18/2016	1880	-0.2%	2.7%	12.0%	16.5%	15.3%	23.3%	78.7%
2/5/2018	2649	0.3%	3.2%	1.4%	8.7%	4.3%	5.2%	21.6%
2/8/2018	2581	5.9%	8.1%	6.0%	11.6%	10.6%	7.1%	24.8%
10/11/2018	2728	1.5%	2.1%	-4.8%	7.6%	11.8%	11.0%	16.5%
10/24/2018	2656	2.1%	-0.7%	0.1%	12.0%	15.5%	16.1%	19.6%
12/27/2018	2489	1.8%	6.2%	14.5%	19.4%	20.8%	32.8%	27.1%
8/5/2019	2845	1.4%	3.5%	8.3%	17.1%	?	?	9.9%
8/14/2019	2841	3.0%	6.1%	9.3%	19.9%	?	?	10.0%
2/24/2020	3226	-4.2%	?	?	?	?	?	?
2/25/2020	3128	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
2/26/2020	3116	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
2/27/2020	2979	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
2/28/2020	2954	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
3/1/2020	2954	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
3/2/2020	3090	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
 COMPOUND	Average	1.6%	1.7%	6.9%	13.0%	16.0%	20.7%	150.6%
	% Positive	79%	57%	96%	96%	100%	100%	100%



Shaun McCoy
@Shaun_85



Tried some more Harvest '19 today- [@PioneerSeeds](#)
P7940AM and P7861R are down to 18% and 53lbs. The
snow is too deep in spots so we'll be waiting a couple
weeks hoping for some warm weather





Jarrod Hardke
@JHardke



Burning down rice ground getting ready for #plant20.
Getting warmer just needs to dry on out.





John 🚜
@KowalchukFarms



Great weather!

@FarmerBeary
#PositiveFarmer





Meanwhile in Canada
@MeanwhileinCana



Homes along Lake Erie are covered in ice following two days of gale-force winds. The ice covering the houses is up to 3 feet thick.

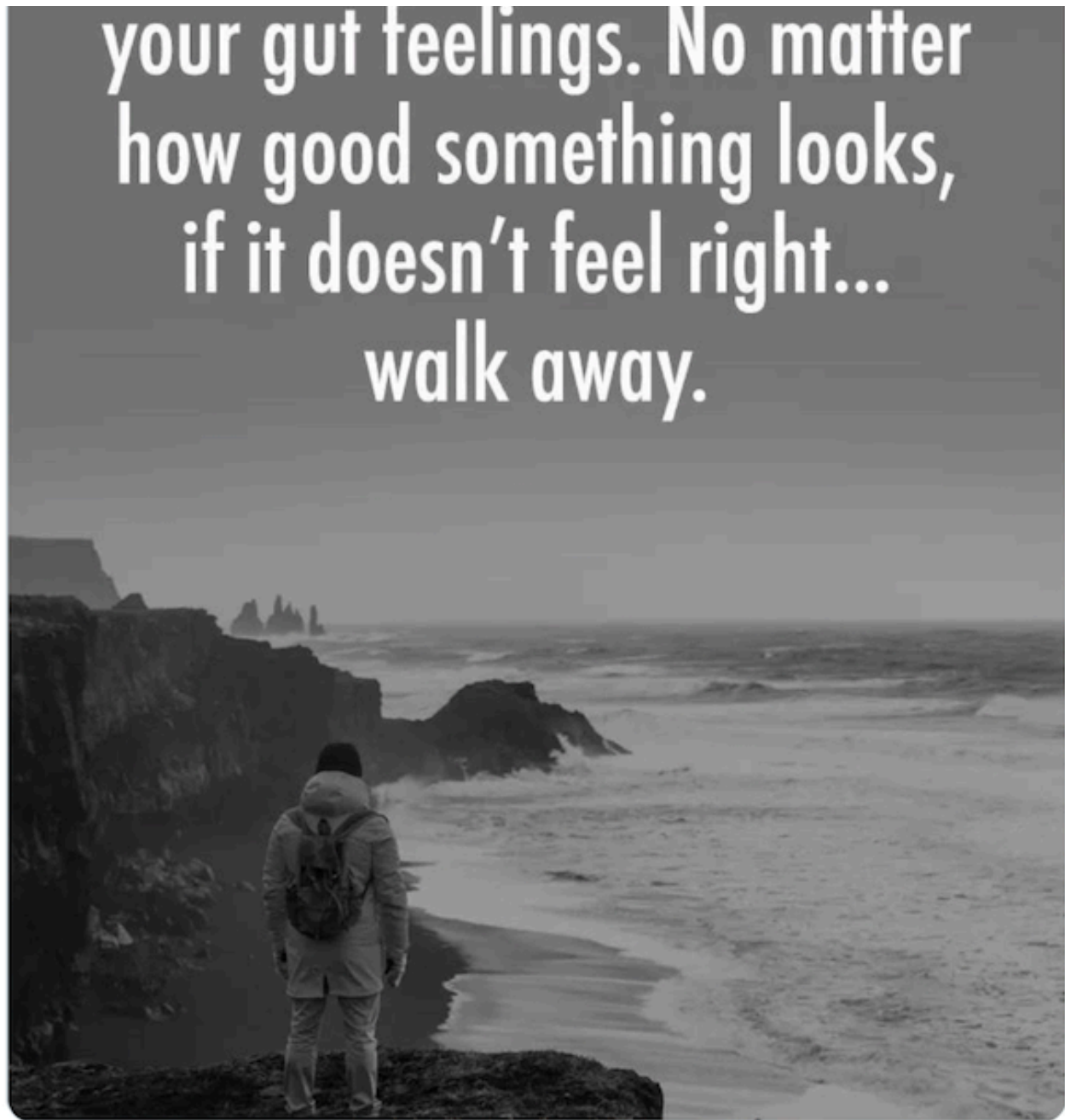


Inspirational Quotes
@QuoteloveU



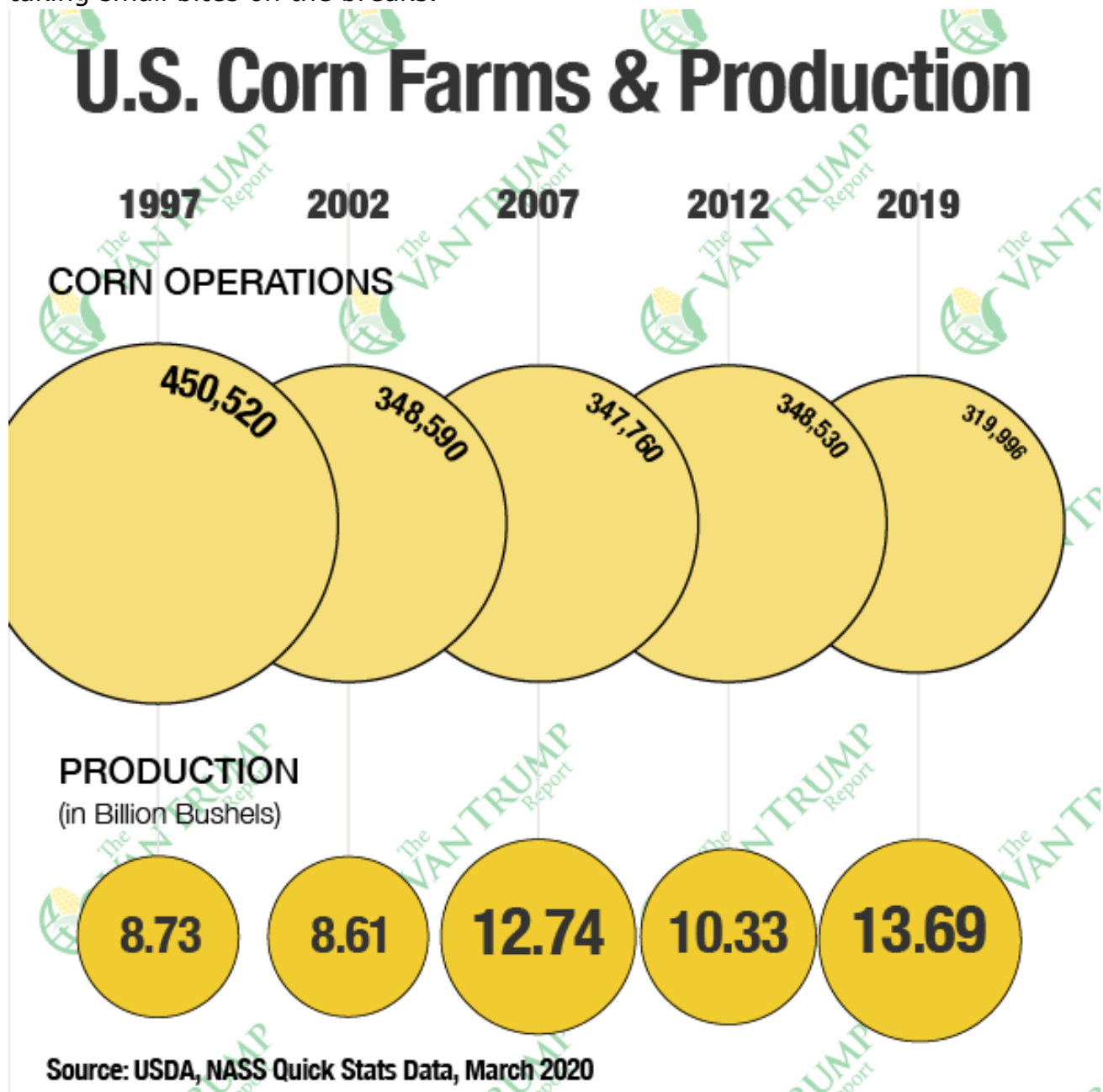
Pay attention to your gut feelings. No matter how good something looks, if it doesn't feel right.....
Walk away.

Pay attention to



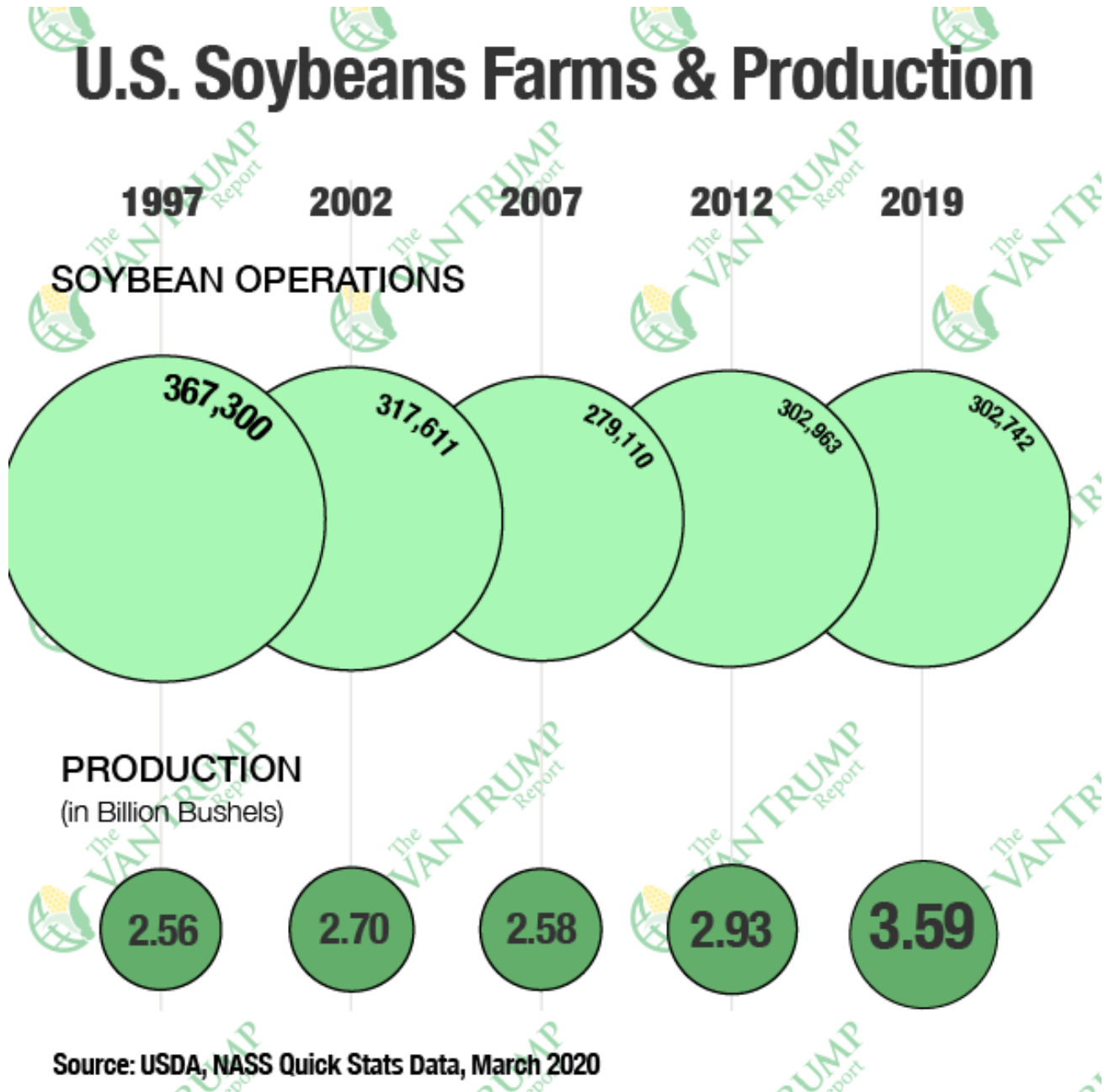
Corn prices are coming off the biggest one day gain since mid-January. Traders wonder if the rising tide simply lifted all boats and will be short lived or could a longer-term bull run be brewing? Many technical traders argue that corn prices may now be comfortably numb and content trading in a sideways channel between \$3.50 and \$3.95 per bushel until more is known about coronavirus, Chinese buying, and upcoming U.S. and South American weather. Bulls are pointing to dry weather and excessive heat in Argentina and what appears to be overly wet Spring conditions in many important parts of the U.S. On the flip side, bears continue to point towards "demand" uncertainty, macro market headwinds, more U.S. acres, and burdensome ending stock estimates. As a producer, I still think it's smart to

be taking advantage of the strong basis that's occurring in some areas. Price rallies should be used to help reduce longer-term price risk. End users should be taking small bites on the breaks.



Soybean bulls believe there could be a window of opportunity for U.S. suppliers as Argentine exporters and crushers struggle to source old-crop supply and heavy rains and port complications in Brazil create a few logistical constraints. Bulls are also pointing to some recent weakness in the U.S. dollar as another possible tailwind. Technically, the market has rebounded back a bit but still faces stiffer resistance ahead in the MAY20 contract up between \$9.10 and \$9.20 per bushel. The NOV20 contract is looking at stiffer resistance up in the \$9.20 to \$9.30 range. There's not a lot fresh or new to report... Chinese businesses appear to be coming back online, there are some questions regarding available supply coming out of

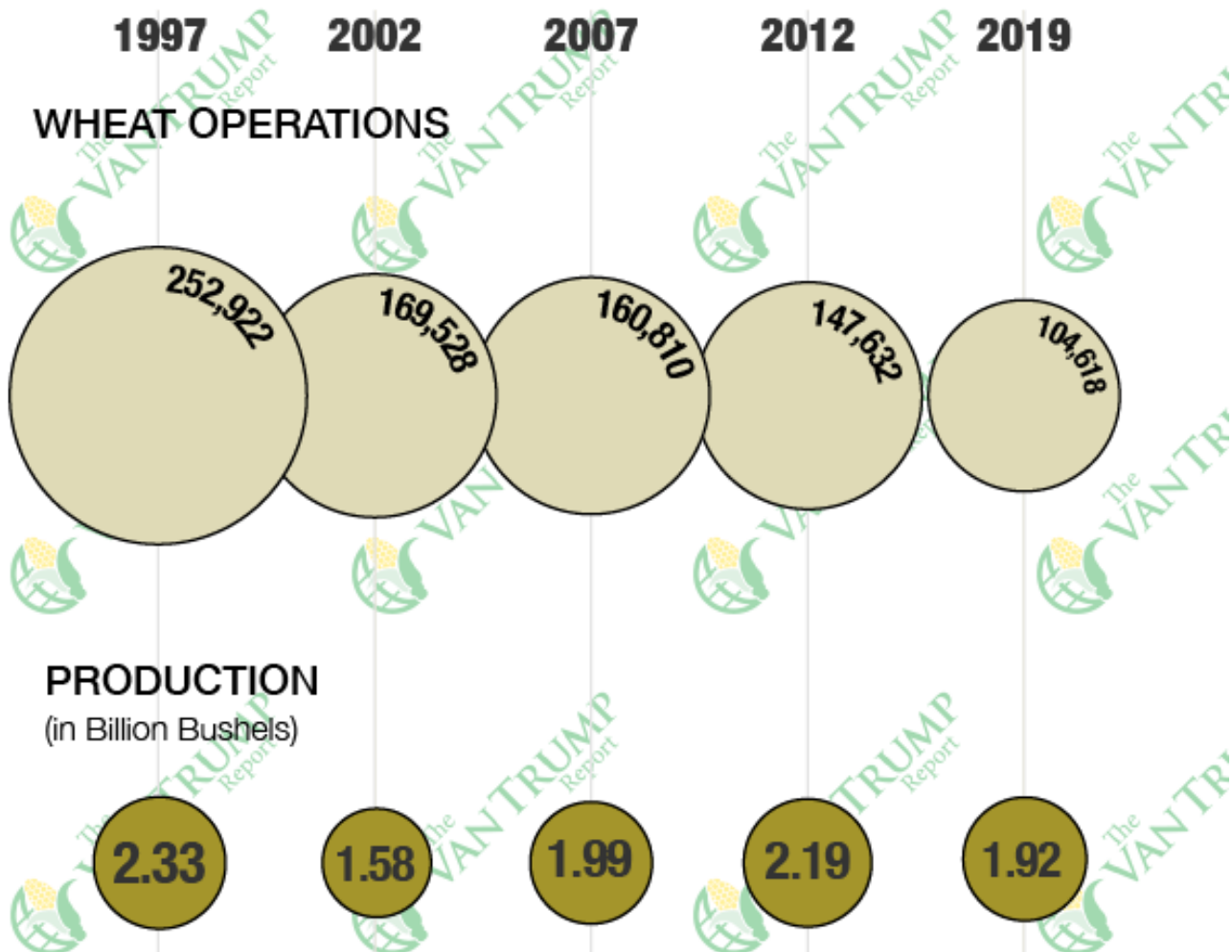
South America, and an entire U.S. weather season ahead. Bulls believe the trade might need to add a little more premium to accommodate for the tighter ending stocks number. There has also been a bit more rumor and talk of a vaccine for African Swine Fever being much closer. Bears, however, worry that Chinese buying of U.S. supply could still be a ways off on the horizon and that South American exporters will soon get their legs underneath themselves. As a spec, I feel myself siding with the longer-term bulls but am still not convicted enough about the argument to put good money at risk betting on a bullish position. As a producer, I want to remain patient believing better cash pricing opportunities are still ahead in 2020.



Wheat bulls are desperately wanting to see improved macro headlines and a

market less worried about the coronavirus. Here at home, bulls argue that warmer than normal weather could pull the crop out of dormancy and put more acres at risk if there's a late winter weather blast. There's also continued talk of overly wet conditions in some parts of the U.S. that will be creating complications. Globally, there's not a lot of fresh headlines. Bulls argue there are some overly wet conditions in parts of the European Union that are worth monitoring, but the market doesn't seem all that worried as EU wheat prices have come under some recent pressure. I continue to worry that nearby weather is not going to be a strong enough concern to do the heavy lifting needed to extend a significant price rally, especially with the global uncertainty surrounding coronavirus. As a producer, I'm taking a much longer-term perspective and waiting to price more new-crop cash bushels. As a spec, I still prefer the sideline, thinking we could see nearby price depreciation with lower nearby highs and lower nearby lows.

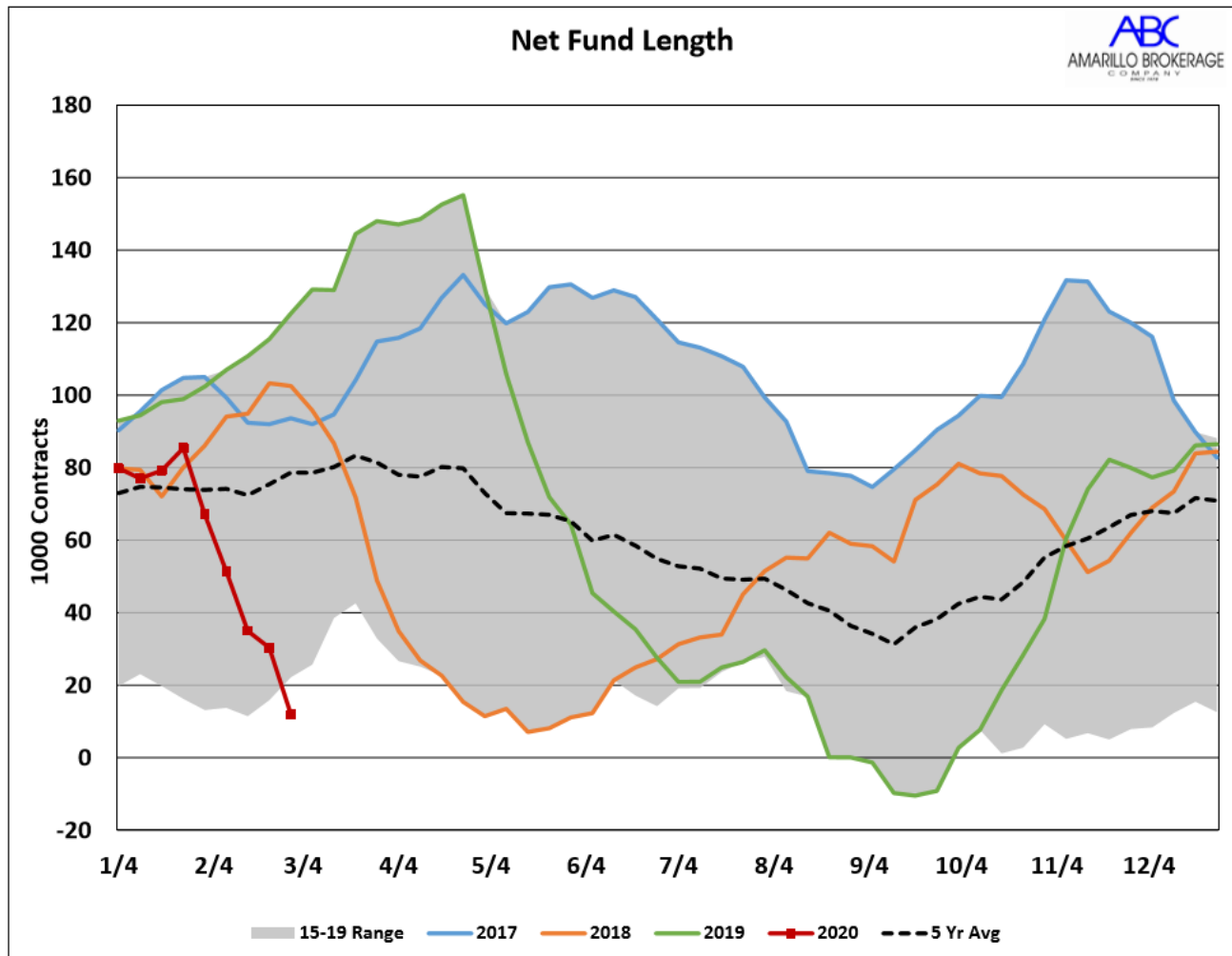
U.S. Wheat Farms & Production



Source: USDA, NASS Quick Stats Data, March 2020

Cattle: Much lower cash trade last week on moderate volumes. Most areas traded 4-5.00/CWT lower as a result of softer fundamentals and macro pressures in surrounding markets. The global health crisis and political uncertainty seemed to particularly spook the markets starting last Sunday night and continue to leave a wide wake as of now. So, what should we expect going forward? Short-term the cattle markets are no doubt oversold and due for a technical rally. Apr20 LC is spot as of today and with a 5.00 discount to cash will potentially support the nearby. Fund roll is on top of us and will see more sell Apr and buy Jun this week. The larger fund roll will come later in the week. Cash is potentially higher this week, but commercial hedgers will not let a strong basis slip away and thus could begin to see cash slip out at lower prices. The commitment of trader's report was released last week and showed a net non-commercial position as short for the first

time in quite a while. This move has less to do with increasing shorts and more reflective of the liquidating long. One thing to keep in mind in regards to the non-commercial net position is the last time they were net short was late Sep-early Oct 2019 and before that, it was May-Jun 2018. In both situations, the futures experienced sizeable rallies in the following weeks. Commercial hedgers are nearing the 40% hedged level as they have bought into the recent break which is seasonally low for the time period and rather early to be this underhedged. So many factors whirling about in the market place the moment. Making solid/wise business decisions for you and your operation remains vitally important. Trey Warnock - [Amarillo Brokerage Company](#)





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> **Perdue Reiterates No Further MFP, but Some Believe Otherwise:** *Ag*

Secretary Sonny Perdue, speaking yesterday at the National Farmers Union annual meeting in Savannah, Georgia, repeated something he has said several times in recent days—that farmers should not expect another Market Facilitation Program in 2020. He says once China starts buying, prices should improve, pegging late spring or summer as the likely timeframe for trade and price increases. But Minnesota Farmers Union president Gary Wertish isn't convinced. He thinks another round of MFP is likely. "We know we're going to get a market facilitation payment this year, because it's an election year," Wertish says. "We've got to be honest—it will come out. I don't see prices recovering fast." Wertish says his biggest concern is what happens next year. "It won't be an election year. The market facilitation payments, my guess is this will be the last year. It will get us through another year, but then after that, we're still trying to recover on prices." You can listen to both Perdue's speech and the interview with Wertish over at [Brownfield Ag](#).

> FDA Warns Coronavirus is Disrupting Supply Chains for U.S. Animal Drugs: *Six firms are seeing disruptions in the supply chain because of Covid-19 that could lead to shortages of animal drugs for the U.S. market, said the FDA in an update. Some 32 animal drug companies make finished drugs or buy active pharmaceutical ingredients in China for use in the United States, said FDA commissioner Stephen Hahn late last week. "The FDA has contacted all 32 firms and no shortages have been reported at this time. However, six of those firms have indicated that they are seeing disruptions in the supply chain that soon could lead to shortages. The FDA is working with these firms to help identify interventions to mitigate potential shortages." There were no details on how large a share of the animal drug market was held by the firms. Read more [HERE](#).*

> USDA Announces Aid for Sugar Beet Processors: *USDA will offer \$285 million in disaster aid to sugar beet processors who lost money in 2018 and 2019 due to heavy rain, snowstorms, and frost that caused some of the worst harvests on record. Frozen conditions in Minnesota and North Dakota damaged thousands of sugar beet acres last year, while a coldsnap that extended into the South hampered sugar cane production. Producers in counties that experienced D3-level drought or higher will be eligible for disaster assistance under WHIP+ program. Producers impacted by excessive moisture will be eligible for WHIP+ in counties with a secretarial or presidential disaster declaration. The application period will open on March 23. More details are available [HERE](#).*

> Federal Prosecutors Investigate California Marijuana Companies in Wide-Ranging Probe: *Federal prosecutors have launched a probe of cannabis companies in California, seeking a batch of records held by startup Weedmaps that functions as a Yelp for marijuana dispensaries, according to a grand-jury subpoena reviewed by MarketWatch. The subpoena covers documents related to cannabis businesses listed on Weedmaps, and records related to its ordering service. The*

government also sought documents and other records kept by Weedmaps related to its own staff, investors and accounting, according to the subpoena issued late last year. Included in the demand for records are those related to communications and payments to local, state and federal employees, as well as elected officials and any candidates for those offices. Dated Sept. 19, the document appears to be an attempt to determine whether a group of companies, including Weedmaps, has complied with California state cannabis regulations, the investigation's focus was not immediately clear, according to several lawyers and two former federal prosecutors who reviewed the subpoena. Among the companies prosecutors sought documents about in the subpoena was Terra Tech, which changed its name to Onyx Group Holdings after a recent merger. CannaCraft, one of California's largest distributors, was also among the 30 companies about which prosecutors sought records. Read more [HERE](#).

> General Motors to Provide In-Depth Look at its All-Electric Vehicle Plans: General Motors will use an "EV Day" as its hardest push to convince skeptics that the more than 110-year-old automaker can compete, if not thrive, against Tesla. During the event on Wednesday, the Detroit automaker will give a comprehensive and unprecedented look at its all-electric vehicle plans as well as show attendees roughly a dozen upcoming products, according to two people familiar with the event. It is typically considered an unusual move for an automaker to show investors so many products. Other expected discussions include GM's next-generation EV platform, charging infrastructure and business strategy, company executives have said. Since announcing plans to launch at least 20 new all-electric vehicles more than two years ago, GM hasn't moved as quickly as some expected into all-electric vehicles. GM has only launched three new EVs in China since then and sales of its only all-electric car in the U.S., the Chevrolet Bolt EV, have declined for two consecutive years. Read more [HERE](#).

> What Travel Insurance Covers for Coronavirus - and What it Doesn't: Americans planning to travel abroad may be looking nervously as coronavirus spreads to multiple countries and wondering how much protection they have if they want to change or cancel their travel plans. The most important thing to remember is that standard travel insurance does not cover you if you decide not to travel because of the outbreak. Nor does the type of insurance that comes with certain credit cards. Travel insurance can cover you, though, in case of a disruption while you're on your trip, such as a quarantine period. But you'll pay extra for a policy that allows you to cancel because of coronavirus. Travel insurance providers note that it does not matter if the U.S. State Department or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advise Americans to reconsider travel to a country or to not travel there. These advisories do not invoke coverage for standard travel insurance policy holders if they decide to cancel or change their plans. Learn more [HERE](#).

> This is How Much Exercise You Need to Benefit Your Brain: *What exactly happens to your brain when you break a sweat? What kind of exercise should you do if you want to get the most benefit to not only your body but also your brain? Most importantly, how long do you really need to move each week to be a more mentally resilient and productive individual? Fast Company caught up with two scientists who research exercise and the brain to find out. When it comes to the benefits of exercise, "there are immediate effects, long term effects, and prospective effects," according to Wendy Suzuki, a neuroscientist at New York University and the cofounder and CEO of BrainBody. Any kind of exercise that makes your heart rate go up immediately helps improve mood, while the long-term effect of exercise, according to Suzuki, has to do with its impact on the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex, the only two areas where new brain cells are born in adulthood. Read more [HERE](#).*

> The "Monday Effect" is Real and May be Impacting Your Amazon Delivery: *So says researcher Oliver Yao, a professor of decision and technology analytics in Lehigh University's College of Business. He's found that the "Monday Effect"—that letdown of returning to work after a weekend, which is documented to impact finance, productivity and psychology—also negatively affects supply chains. Yao found that process interruptions that occur when operations are shut down over the weekend, along with human factors like the "Monday blues," hurt supply chain performance on Mondays. That means a longer time between when a purchase order is received and when it is shipped, as well as more errors in order fulfillment. Weekends create bottlenecks at distribution centers that are tackled on Mondays as orders are processed, picked, staged and shipped to customers. Humans completing processing activities are impacted by adjusting to returning to work, more prone to errors and less efficient. Most supply chain managers are unaware of this impact, Yao said. But they can take steps to counteract the "Monday Effect." Read more [HERE](#).*

> UCLA Gymnast Nails a Jaw-Dropping Performance Set to Beyoncé Hits: *Footage of UCLA gymnast Nia Dennis' recent routine set to Beyoncé hits lit up the internet this weekend. Dennis, a college junior from Columbus, Ohio, performed to a medley of songs, including "Baby Boy," "Crazy in Love" and "7/11," and capped it off by pretending to crown herself. That work of art was scored a 9.975 out of a possible 10.000, tying her career-high in the event. Dennis was one of three members of her team that scored a 9.975 on the floor, with seniors Gracie Kramer and Kyla Ross getting the remaining two. Unfortunately, those performances were not enough for the Bruins to defeat their opponents, Utah, and UCLA narrowly lost in the final standings, 198.075-198.025. Dennis' routine is no less impressive, though. If you haven't yet seen it, Click [HERE](#).*

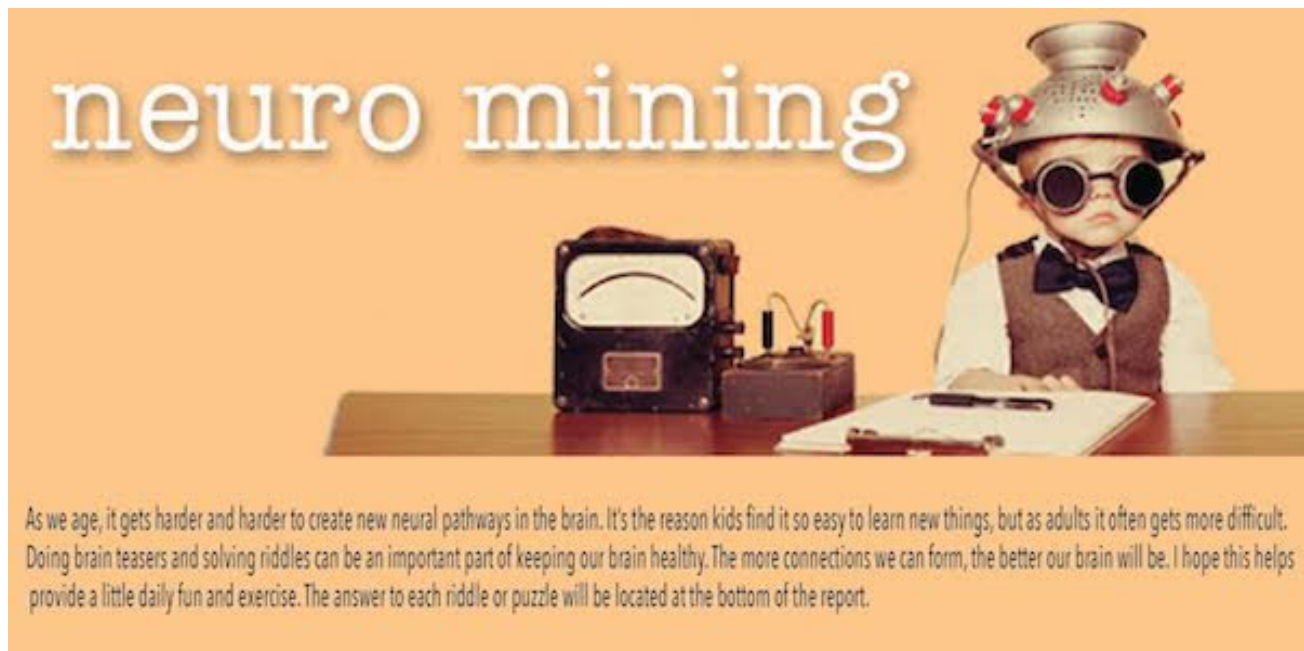


Western Missouri - Finally, we missed the rain. Looks as though we will be able to make it to the field later this week to top-dress wheat. At this point, we will probably try to just do one application for Nitrogen vs our normal 2 applications, as things will be very busy if we happen to miss the rain in 7 days. Lots of fertilizer and Anhydrous left to be applied before any corn goes in the ground. I would imagine one may see guys push the envelope on planting corn this year and I'm hearing talk of moving bean planting from Late May to early May if conditions are fit.

Northwest Minnesota - The temperatures are going to warm up over the next few days. It should be enough to bring the snow down to harvest. But, now we need to wait for the weather to turn back cold and get this darn corn out as quickly as possible. It looks like in a week we drop back down below freezing. We don't have a huge amount of acres, maybe 300. Getting everything planned out this time of year is a little more of a pain. We don't dare dig any entrance out until we are pulling into harvest because the warmer temperatures and sun will make it

too slick for the trucks. Last fall we took the end rows beside 2 rows thinking it would be a good enough snow fence. Turns out it wasn't and now we have drifts deeper in the field. All winter it's been haul corn or haul wheat. Not a bad problem to have but I'm ready to get the corn out and move forward to spring and planting. It will be wet enough here that fields with heavy tracks will not be planted. We will have to wait until the dirt dries and we fill them back up, otherwise it will be clots and nothing will grow anyway. Prevent plant will be more prevalent than most realize if we get even a damp spring, let alone a wet one.

Eastern Arkansas - *Things are wet here at the moment as we wait to plant our rice, corn, and beans. Yields were just below our averages last year for both the corn and rice. We are putting some new tech in play this year with our equipment, which we do every five to seven years. Our focus is to maximize revenue on the acres we have, versus trying to add some. I think it's one area where we can have an advantage in our operation. I know a couple of guys going down the hemp road and even have their own processing equipment, I'm just not sure who's going to be buying it. I'm also starting to see guys put in their own solar arrays to offset their electrical bills. There aren't many but I think it may very well catch on considering the tax break and possible grants that are available.*



TODAY'S RIDDLE: What five letter word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it?

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Startup Develops a Pollinator Robot that Could Replace Bees

Pollinator populations around the globe continue to decline, a scary problem when you consider that we depend on them for about three-quarters of our crops. Israeli startup Edete believes it has a viable solution with its new mechanical pollination

machine, which the company calls "a safety net for the world's food security."

Last winter, beekeepers in the U.S. lost 50 billion bees, or nearly 38% of their colonies. That's the highest loss rate in any year since a detailed bee survey began more than a decade ago. Unfortunately, there is still no clear cut explanation for what is causing the bee die-offs. Wild pollinators like bumblebees are in trouble too, with populations being hit by everything from climate change to habitat loss. Without an alternative to reduce our dependency on natural pollinators like honeybees, there are real concerns that food shortages could grow and send prices for staple crops skyrocketing.

That's where Edete hopes its mechanical pollen harvesting and pollination system can play a vital role. For now, the company is focusing on almonds. The process starts by harvesting flowers from blooming trees using shaking machines used to harvest the almonds. The pollen is separated from the flower and then can be stored for up to a year. That means growers can wait to use the precious powder at the perfect time to match the bloom cycle. When the time is right, the company's robotic pollinator disperses an optimal dose of pollen on target flowers. The robotic system obviously doesn't have any limitations on when it can work, unlike bees that struggle in cooler temps and are pretty much dormant after dark.

Edete has completed successful trials in almond orchards in Israel, where they showed a "substantially increased" yield. That productivity boost is due in part because honeybees aren't necessarily the most efficient pollinators. Eylam Ran, co-founder and CEO of Edete, explains that in order to pollinate an almond blossom, bees need to move between trees, but most of their movements are between blossoms on the same tree. What's more, if the trees that need to be cross-pollinated aren't in bloom, the bees are incapable of doing their job.

Ran doesn't see the Edete system replacing natural pollinators. In fact, he says it works better with their help, but the job can get done a lot faster and with fewer bees when combined with Edete's machine. Growers already spend over \$400 million per season on beehive pollination services. Edete's artificial pollination as a service (APaS) is expected to be priced in-line with those services. Their advantage, according to the company, is an estimated increase of 10%-20% in production and "much less volatility" from one growing season to the next.

The company will continue testing its new system in Israel and Australia, and has plans to begin working large-scale in California's almond orchards by 2022. Ran says if things go well, they will expand into other crops. The company says the pollination system already works on other crops in the almond family, such as apples and peaches. If you'd like to learn more, check out the Edete website [HERE](#). (Sources: Food Navigator, Fast Company, Edete)



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Robot bees? [#startup](#) Edete develops 'safety net for [#food](#) security' in face of pollinator decline



Robot bees? Edete develops 'safety net for food security' in face of pollinator ...
The food sector relies on pollinators – but populations are in decline. Israeli start-up Edete Precision Technologies has developed a mechanized artificial ...
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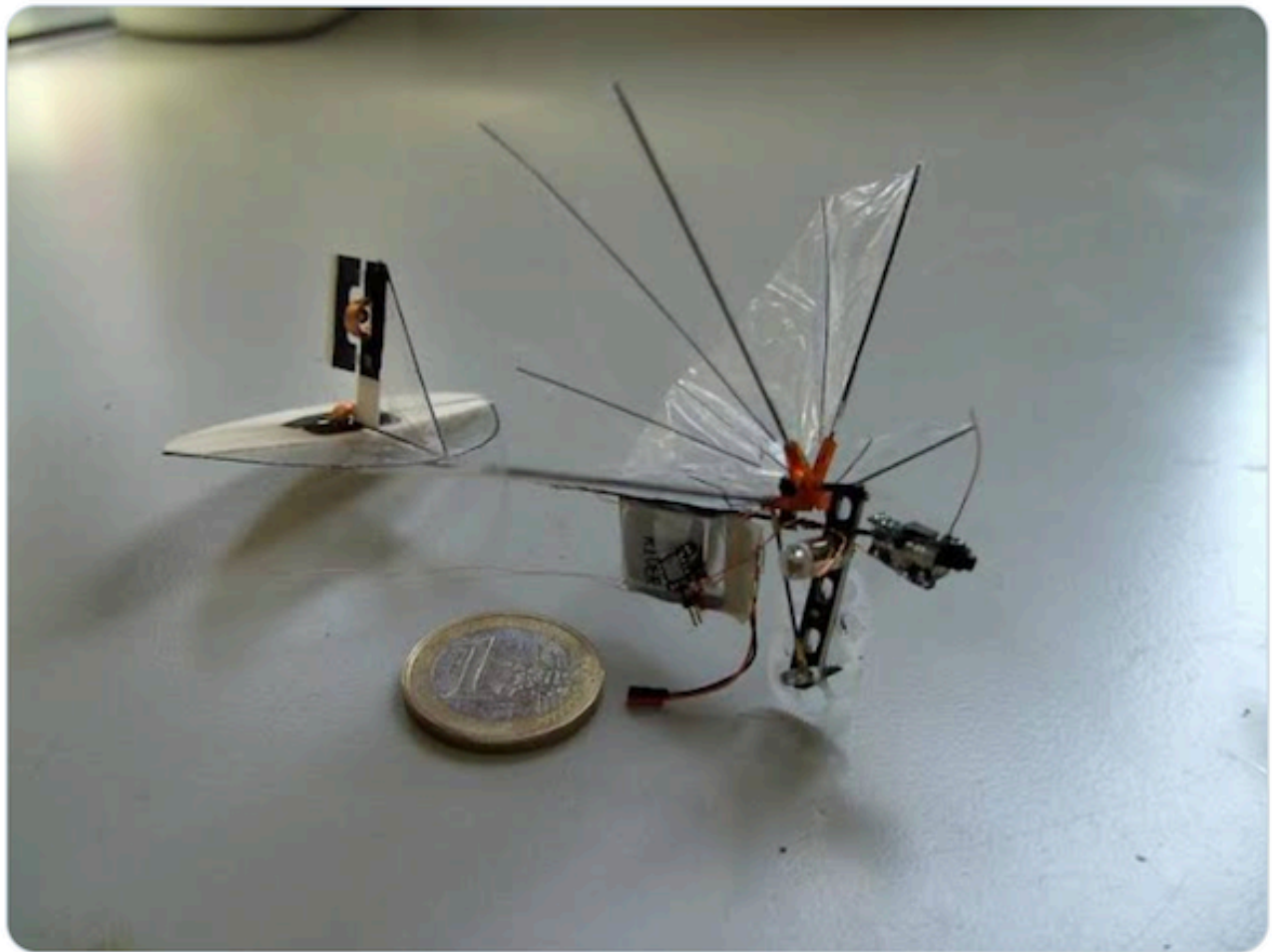
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...the population of bees.

In North America alone, over 700 species of bees head towards extinction.

Edete's technology relies on two advanced mechanical systems: one to harvest pollen, collecting it from flowers to build up a long-term storage of pollen stock, and...





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While [@nectarbuzz](#) technology can help beekeepers manage honeybee populations, Israeli startup Edete makes artificial pollination robots to help the bees pollinate (in this case, almond trees). bit.ly/327A0Zn
[#bees](#) [#agtech](#)



In our dystopian future, farmers will use these artificial pollination machines to... Wild bees are going extinct. Domesticated bees are trucked all over the country to pollinate crops at great cost. Could this robot be a better solution? And cou...
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Shamrock Shakes are Back with a Special Fundraiser for Ronald McDonald House

McDonald's is celebrating a special anniversary this year - the company's

Shamrock Shake turns 50! To mark the occasion, the fast food giant has unveiled a "Golden Shamrock Shake" ebay auction designed to raise money for Ronald McDonald House, along with a contest for customers to win special "bedazzled" cups that are worth \$90,000 each. Keep in mind, my wife Michelle spends a lot of time volunteering over at the Ronald McDonald House and really believes in what they do to help families in need, so this fundraiser has a special place in our household.

The auction is listed on the Ronald McDonald House Charity eBay page, a nonprofit whose mission is to "help families with ill or injured children stay close to the resources they need during difficult times." Running from February 25 until March 6, it features a diamond and emerald encrusted 18-karat gold cup, called the Golden Shamrock Shake. For those that can't swing the hefty price the cup is expected to fetch, McDonald's is running a sweepstake for a second Golden Shamrock Shake. Customers that order a Shamrock Shake or Oreo Shamrock McFlurry through March 6 using the "Mobile Order & Pay" feature in McDonald's app will be automatically entered into the contest. Details are available [HERE](#).

Fans of the minty, light-green concoction look forward to the limited Shamrock Shake season every year, which runs late-February through March in celebration of St. Patrick's Day. The shake has a serious cult following, coming in second only to McDonald's McRib in the history of the company's limited-time food promotions. The shake also has a really interesting history. Below are some fun facts and trivia that you might not know about the chilly green marketing machine. (Sources: CNBC, Vox, Chowhound)

Birth of the Shamrock Shake: *It was out of the single city, Chicago, that the Shamrock Shake emerged in 1970 as local franchisees sought a way to celebrate the city's unofficial Irish holiday. Chicago was already famous for dyeing the Chicago River a bright emerald green, a tradition that began back in 1961. The idea of dyeing a McDonald's vanilla shake green came along just a couple of years later and it was Rogers Merchandising that got the shake into local stores. Rogers was already a well-known name in the fast-food sector being involved in selecting toys and marketing materials for McDonald's Happy Meals as well as competitors like Burger King and Wendy's, too. The Shamrock Shake, though, was something new for the company as it was not a physical addition to an existing meal but a new drink altogether. Rogers Merchandising's James Byrne was inspired by a family milkshake recipe and adapted it to the McDonald's chain.*

Lemon-Lime Flavor: *When McDonald's launched the first promo in 1970, the shake was called the St. Patrick's Day Shake, made from a mixture of vanilla ice cream and lemon-lime sherbert. The sherbert was nixed in 1973 when the company decided to just dye the vanilla ice cream green. It wasn't*

until 1983 that McDonald's decided to add mint flavoring. Interestingly, there is much disagreement as to the current flavor of Shamrock Shakes, with some insisting it tastes like regular vanilla while others think it tastes like minty-fresh toothpaste.

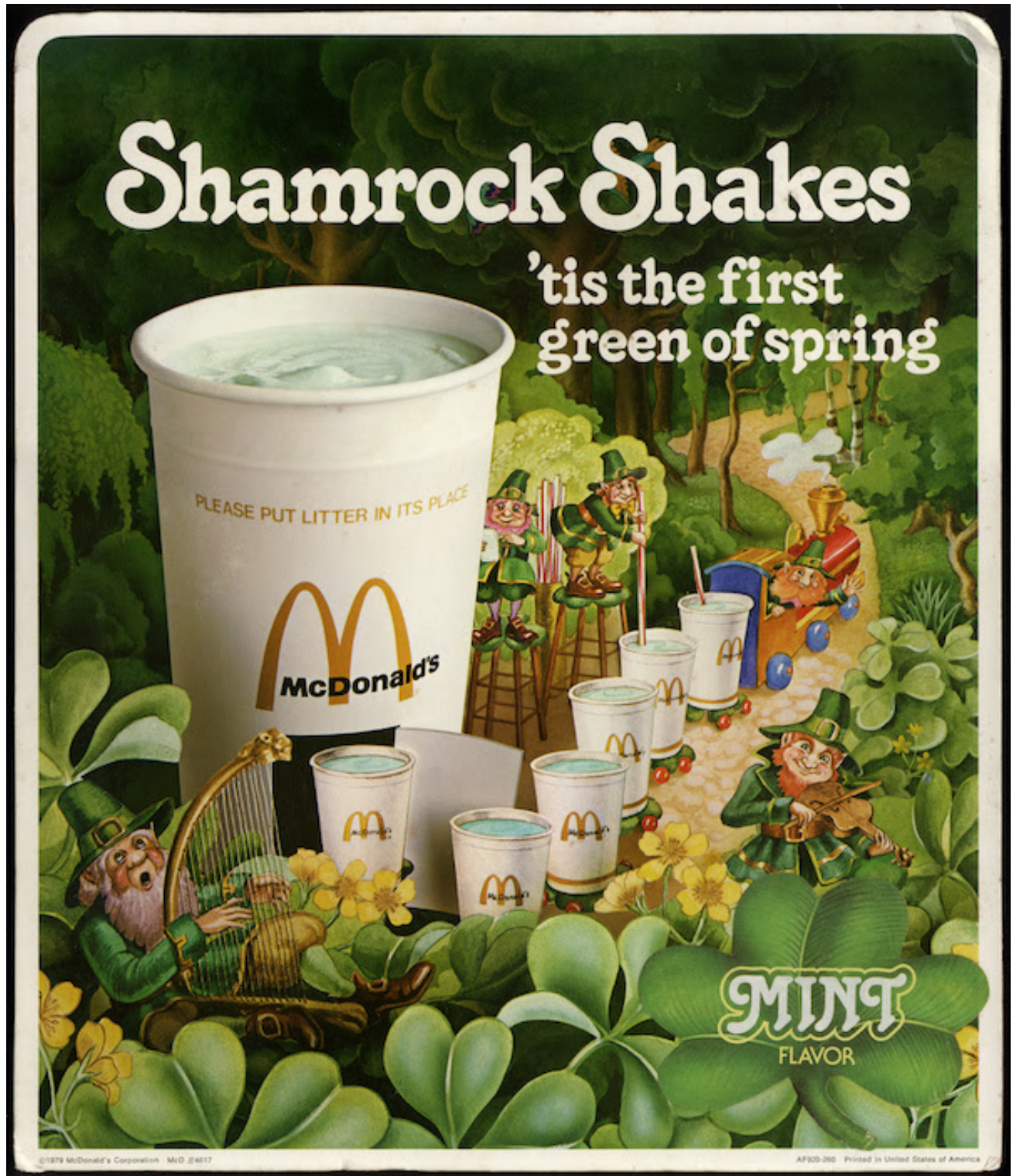
Uncle O'Grimacey: *McDonald's used a character called Uncle O'Grimacey as part of the Shamrock Shake's marketing campaign starting in 1977. The furry green mascot was the Irish uncle of Grimace, a big purple creature that was part of the McDonaldland fantasy world used in the company's marketing during the 70s and through the 90s.*

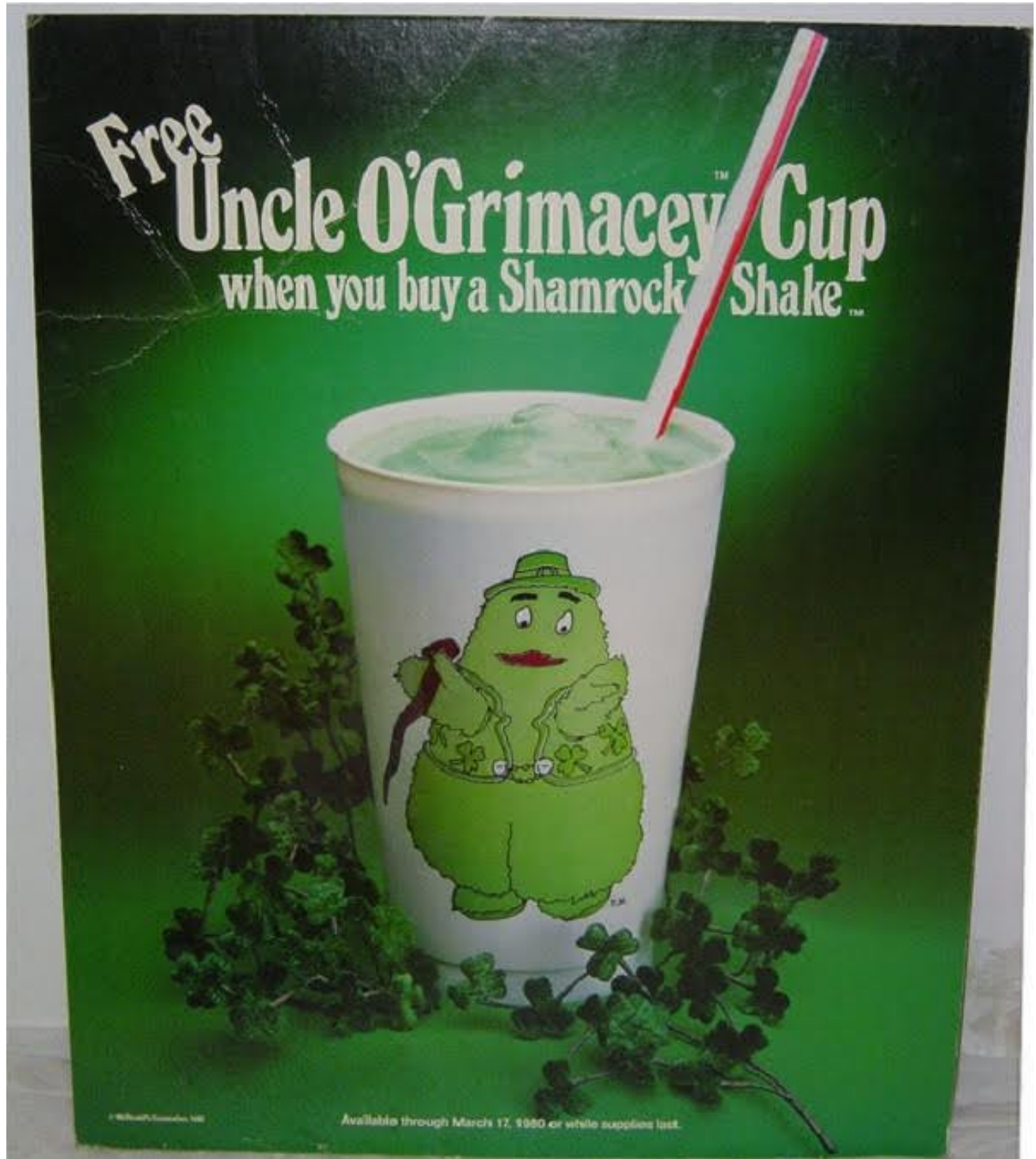
Shamrock Shakes Led to the Creation of Ronald McDonald House: *In 1974, the daughter of Philadelphia Eagles tight end Fred Hill was undergoing treatment for leukemia. He and his wife were alarmed at how many parents of other cancer patients had to spend their nights in the hospital, largely due to the fact that they couldn't afford hotels. Hill sought the help of teammates for a fundraising endeavor. The Eagles' general manager at the time, Jim Murray, reached out to a friend in advertising who was working on a McDonald's campaign and suggested a charitable partnership. At the time, there was a promotional push around the Shamrock Shake, and since green is the Eagles' team color, it seemed like a great match. The company decided to donate a proceed of the profits from the green milkshake towards this initiative. Together they raised enough to buy a four-story house in Philadelphia, which in 1974 became the first-ever Ronald McDonald House.*

Seasonality is Key to Success: *According to McDonald's, over 60 million Shamrock Shakes have been sold since it first launched in 1970. One of the key factors in its popularity is its limited availability each year and is a classic example of what's known as "artificial scarcity" in the marketing world. When done right, limiting the availability of an offering adds greater customer interest and encourages brand engagement, ultimately leading to higher sales.*

Shamrock Shake Recipes: *For fans craving a Shamrock Shake during the "off-season", check out this copycat recipe [HERE](#).*









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We Ultimately Strive for "Happiness"... But How We Respond to Our Immediate Problems Matter Most

I love the scene in the movie *City Slickers* where Billy Crystal's character, Mitch, is alone with Curly, played by Jack Palance. Curly is giving Mitch some advice and tells him the secret to life is just one thing. He says, "You stick to that and the rest don't mean s***."

Aristotle once wrote that "happiness" is the key to life. He believed that through all

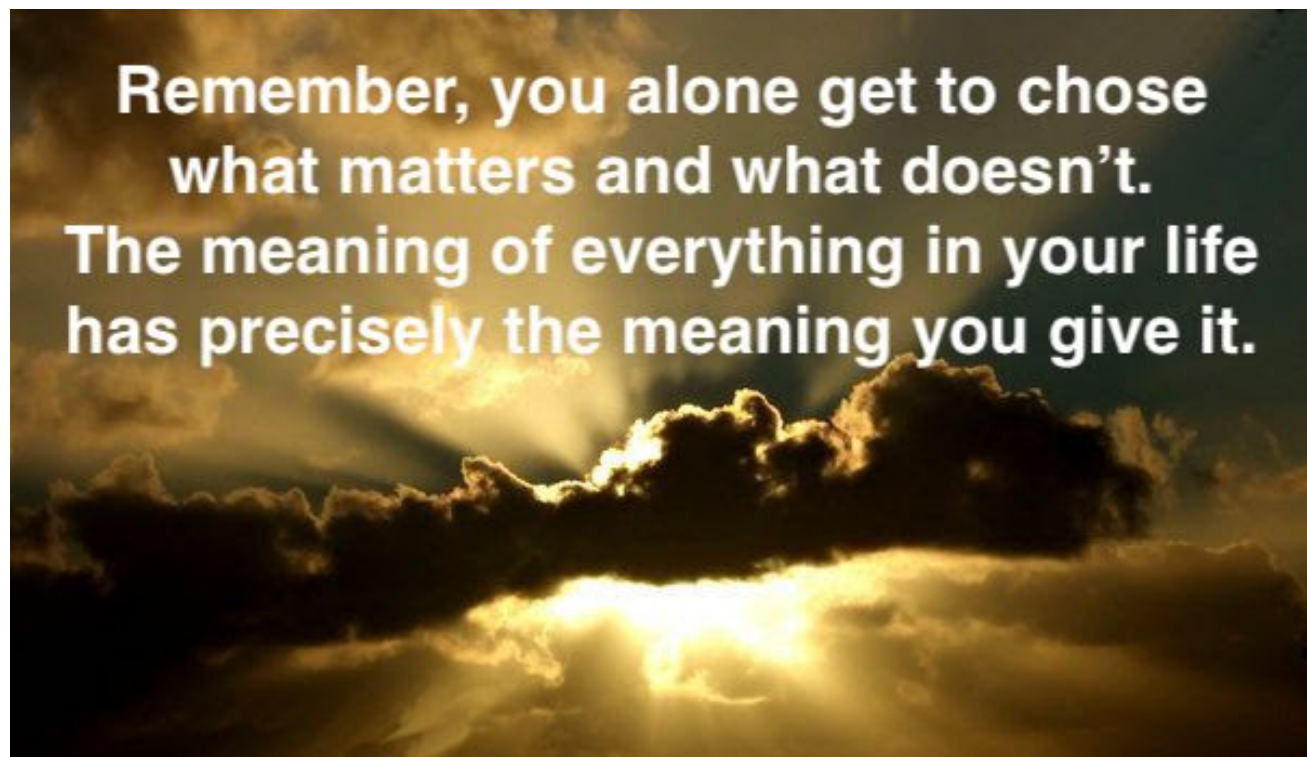
our daily actions, wants and givings we ultimately strive to be..."happy". As a result, he devotes more thought to the topic of happiness than any thinker prior to the modern era.

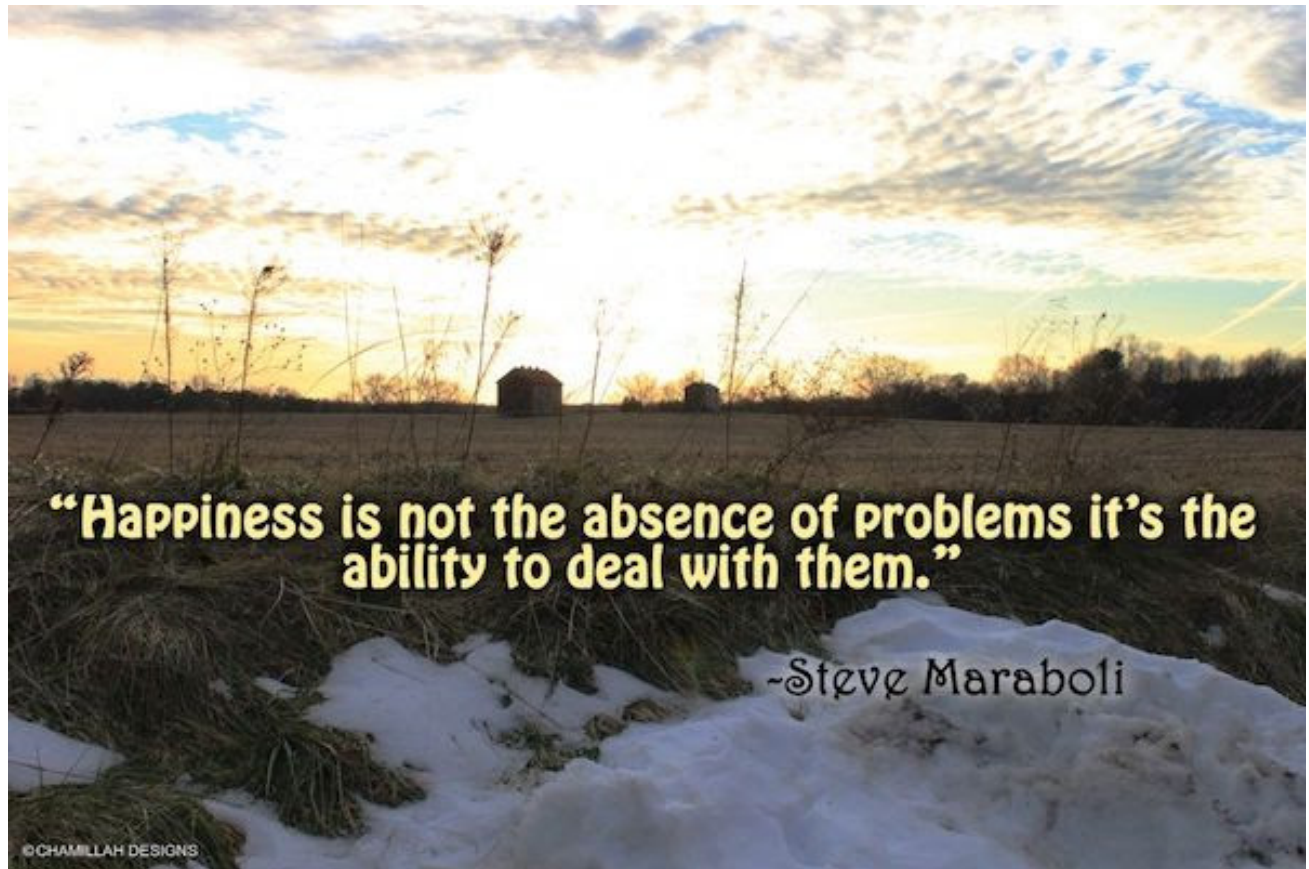
What Aristotle learned through his observation was that we all desire money, pleasure, goods and honor only because we believe these things will make us happy. He contended that all goods and most all desires were simply a means towards obtaining happiness, while happiness is always an end in itself.

Interestingly there is no magical place that's protected from all kinds of struggle. In fact, having "more" will not make the problems go away... it simply gives you a new set of problems. The key is how we learn to adjust and deal with problems.

Problems never go away. You'll always need focus, discipline, commitment and character no matter how much or how little you have. Regardless of where you are in life - we have to develop and use our best abilities right now. It won't be easier to do hard work tomorrow. Tomorrow doesn't exist. Yesterday no longer exists. It is always this moment of now, that we are currently experiencing and have to deal with. It's how we go about dealing and solving our problems "right now", and how we allow that performance to guide us toward "happiness" that matters most.

Click [HERE](#) to see the short clip from City Slickers (Source: [Sunnyskyz](#) & [The Pursuit of Happiness](#))

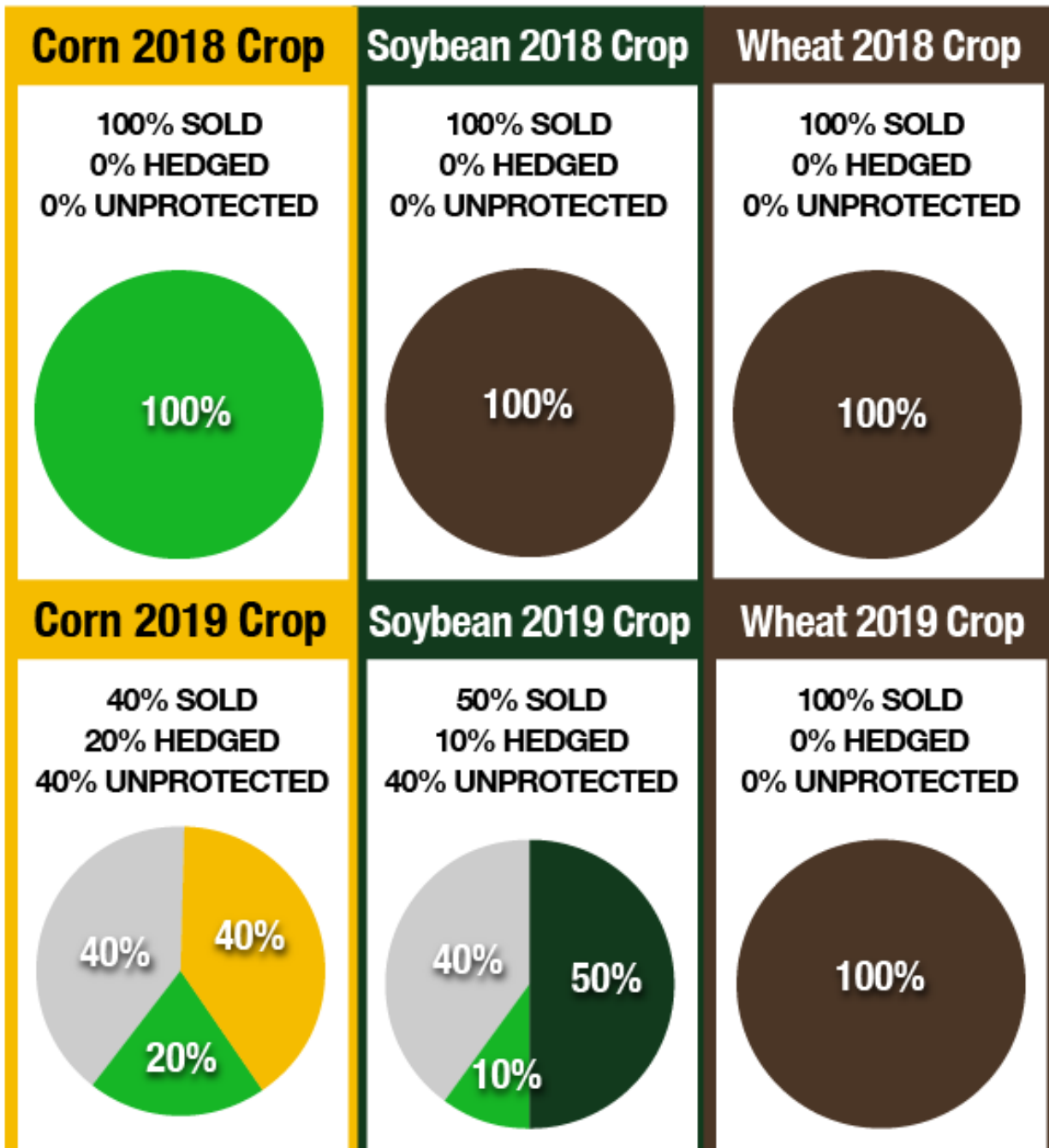


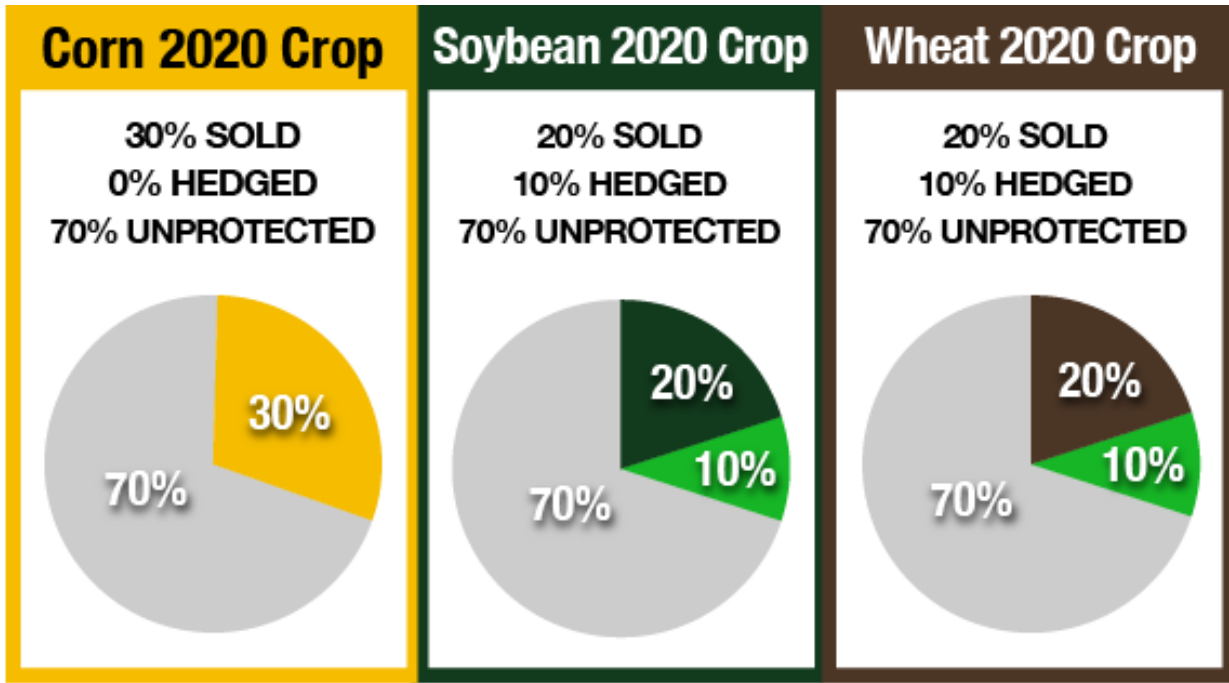


ANSWER to riddle: Short (short+er)

CASH SALES & HEDGING TOTALS

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