



February 2022 Newsletter



USDA Invests \$1 Billion in Climate-Smart Commodities

USDA is investing \$1 billion in partnerships to support America’s climate-smart farmers, ranchers and foresters. According to Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, the *Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities* initiative will provide targeted funding to “expand market opportunities for climate-smart

commodities to increase the competitive advantage of American producers”.

[Read the full story.](#)



USDA Aims to Double Cover Crop Usage to Tackle Climate Change

Soil health practices, especially cover crops, are the focus of several new climate-smart initiatives from The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. A *Farmers for Soil Health* partnership aims to double corn and soybean cover crop usage by 2030, while a \$38 million *Cover Crop Initiative* will help farmers in 11 states mitigate the effects of climate change. [Read more.](#)



Origins of Whole Orchard Recycling Explored in Almond Board Mini-Doc

The productivity, soil health and carbon sequestration benefits of Whole Orchard Recycling are well-reported. But much less is known about how this innovative and sustainable practice began and the extensive research behind it. Until now that is, thanks to a new mini documentary from the Almond Board of California. [Read more.](#)



U.S. Pork Producers Set New Sustainability Goals and Metrics

As part of its commitment to produce a sustainable protein choice, the National Pork Board has published new sustainability goals and metrics for the industry along with its first-ever sustainability report. The goals build on the industry's established *We Care* ethical principles and include, by 2030, reducing GHG emissions by 40% from a 2015 baseline and ensuring that 100% of fresh pork products will be traceable through the supply chain. [Read more.](#)



Insight & Opinion: Animal Welfare and Profitability Go Hand in Hand on America's Farms

Just because the U.S. does things differently doesn't mean that its animal welfare practices aren't as robust as more regulated countries. In fact, according to USSA Executive Director David Green, actual practices on American farms not only address consumer concerns, but they often go further. [Read David's article for more on how American farmers prioritize animal care.](#)



Cotton Farmer Barry Evans on his Pioneering Approach to Dryland Farming

Barry Evans is a third-generation cotton grower, recognized by *Field to Market: The Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture* for his outstanding conservation efforts and leadership in advancing sustainable agriculture. Farming in the Texas Panhandle, the heart of America's historic Dust Bowl, Barry has experienced the dangers of blowing topsoil first hand. We spoke to him about how he manages soil and water conservation in the semi-arid, resource-limited High Plains. [Read Barry's story.](#)



1,000 Farms Study Will Gather Evidence of Regenerative Agriculture Benefits

To date, anecdotal studies and farmer experiences have driven the uptake of regenerative agriculture practices, but now a major research project will validate the benefits. Ecdysis Foundation, a not-for-profit, will gather data across more than 1,000 U.S. farms by 2023 to provide information that has been lacking up until now. [Read more about the research.](#)



American Peanut Council to Document Sustainability Story of U.S. Peanuts

Dr. Eric Coronel has joined the American Peanut Council as its inaugural sustainability director. One of the first projects for the former *Field to Market* research analyst will be to launch a nationwide framework to gather grower data and document the U.S. peanut industry's sustainability story. [Read more.](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2021, the U.S. ag industry posted record annual global export levels – 14.6% higher than the previous 2014 record.
(Source: [USDA](#))



The U.S. Sustainability Alliance (USSA) is a group of American farmers, fishermen and foresters who have come together to explore and share our values regarding sustainable practices and conservation programs.

USSA Member Organizations:

Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute; Almond Board of California; American Hardwood Export Council; American Peanut Council; Cotton Council International; Food Export Association of the Midwest; Food Export USA Northeast; Leather and Hide Council of America; North American Export Grain Association; North American Renderers Association; Organic Trade Association; Softwood Export Council; USA Poultry & Egg Export Council; USA Rice Federation; U.S. Dairy Export Council; U.S. Dry Bean Council; U.S. Grains Council; U.S. Livestock Genetics Export, Inc.; U.S. Meat Export Federation; U.S. Soybean Export Council; and U.S. Wheat Associates

[Learn More About Our Members](#)

WHAT WE'RE WATCHING THIS MONTH:

+ We're excited to let you know about a new video series from USDA that will illustrate the reality of U.S. agriculture – with the first video available now. Watch how U.S. agricultural producers take great care in bringing high-quality ingredients to some of the southern region's most iconic dishes, like New Orleans



gumbo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rexbzPEx5G4&t=9s>.

+ This snapshot of Alaska's deep commitment to sustainability is worth a watch: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/KDmAmcEmIK8?rel=0&wmode=transparent>.

+ There's a perception that cutting down trees and using wood is somehow bad for the environment. But that's not the reality, as American Hardwood Export Council's Mike Snow explains in this [video](#).
