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Economic Research Service

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ERS is the main source of research and analysis from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, providing timely information on economic and policy issues related to agriculture, food, the environment, and rural America.



California's Citrus Crop

A new web page pulls together a wealth of information and data on California's citrus production, production share, farm value, prices, and exports. California accounts for 80 percent of fresh-market oranges.

For more information, see:

www.ers.usda.gov/News/CAcitrus.htm



Chinese Consumers Demand Greater Quality, Convenience, and Safety of Food

www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err32

China's rapid growth of 9-10 percent per year suggests that its demand for food may be growing faster than its production capacity according to *Demand for Food Quantity and Quality in China*. However, household income growth has not been spread equally over the Chinese population so average income figures do not necessarily reflect broad-based growth in income and purchasing power. The top tier of urban households has experienced a disproportionate share of income growth. High-income urban households are purchasing primarily greater quality and value added with their additional food spending. China's top tier income-earners appear to have reached a saturation point for consumption of most food items at a surprisingly modest level of income. In contrast, low-income households have a propensity to buy greater quantities of meats, poultry, dairy, and many other food products, but their incomes have grown at rates that lag behind China's 10-percent GDP growth.

How Retail Food Market Dynamics Affect Food Prices

www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err33

The Impact of Big-Box Stores on Retail Food Prices and the Consumer Price Index focuses on retail food market dynamics and how they affect food price variation across store formats. The differences in prices across store formats are especially noteworthy when compared with standard measures of food price inflation over time. Over the past 20 years, annual food price changes, as measured by the CPI, have averaged just 3 percent per year, while food prices for similar products can vary by more than 10 percent across store formats at any one point in time. Since the current CPI for food does not fully take into account the lower price option of nontraditional retailers, a gap exists between price changes as measured using scanner data versus the CPI estimate, even for the relatively low food inflation period of 1998-2003. This study estimates that the CPI for dairy products overstates food price change by 0.5 to 2.5 percentage points per year for dairy, eggs, and butter/margarine.



Did Consumers Purchase Beef After BSE Announcements?

www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err34

Did BSE Announcements Reduce Beef Purchases? examines consumers' retail purchases of beef and beef products for evidence of a response to the 2003 U.S. government announcements of finding cows infected with Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE). ERS constructed weekly estimates of quantities of beef products consumers purchased from 1998 through 2004 using ACNielsen Homescan data. While the variance in purchases was large, most could be explained by trend and seasonality. Deviations from established purchase patterns following the BSE announcements varied across beef products, but were limited to no more than 2 weeks in all cases.

Commodity Markets and Trade

ERS Outlook reports provide timely analysis of major commodity markets and trade, including special reports on hot topics. All reports, along with a calendar of future releases, are available at: www.ers.usda.gov/publications/outlook



Rural Employment at a Glance

www.ers.usda.gov/publications/eib21

Many Americans envision rural America as being heavily agricultural. Indeed much of the land area of rural America is devoted to agricultural uses. However, only a small portion of the jobs in rural and small-town America are in the agricultural sector, and this portion has continued to decline in recent decades. Farm jobs fell from 12.4 percent of nonmetro jobs in 1976 to 6.2 percent by 2004. *Rural Employment At A Glance* is a six-page brochure that highlights the most recent indicators of employment and unemployment in rural areas. It documents changes and differences in metro and nonmetro employment growth, unemployment, earnings per job, and occupational mix, as well as differences across nonmetro areas by location and county type.



Organic Poultry and Eggs Capture High Price Premiums and Growing Share of Specialty Markets

www.ers.usda.gov/publications/LDP/2006/12Dec/LDPM15001/

Organic poultry and egg markets in the United States are expanding rapidly. Statistics for the sector, especially the number of organic broilers, also signal expanding domestic supply. This report examines trends in markets, animal numbers, and prices for organic poultry and eggs. Price comparisons between organic and conventional show significant organic price premiums for both broilers and eggs.

Agriculture at the Crossroads

Energy, Farm & Rural Policy

Topics will include:

- Energy
- Rural Development
- Policy & Trade
- Science & Technology
- Food Trends
- Commodities

March 1-2, 2007
Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel
Arlington, Virginia

For registration and other details:
www.usda.gov/ocelforum



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