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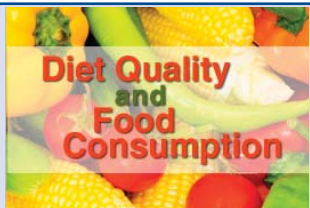
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Economic Research Service

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

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.



Food and dietary choices are influenced not only by prices and income, but also by family structure, time constraints, psychological factors, nutritional information, and Federal food and nutrition assistance programs.

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School Lunch Program: Trends and Issues

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR61/

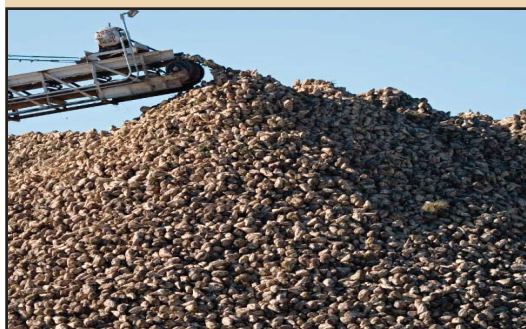
The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is the Nation's second largest food and nutrition assistance program. In 2006, it operated in over 101,000 public and nonprofit private schools and provided over 28 million low-cost or free lunches to children on a typical school day at a Federal cost of \$8 billion for the year. **The National School Lunch Program Background, Trends, and Issues** report provides background information on the NSLP, including historical trends and participant characteristics. It also addresses steps being taken to meet challenges facing administrators of the program, including tradeoffs between nutritional quality of foods served, costs, and participation, as well as between program access and program integrity.



The EU Sugar Policy Reform

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR59/

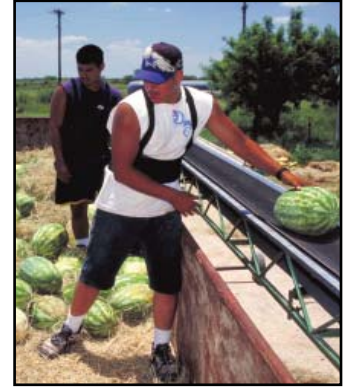
The European Union's sugar policy, in place since 1968, underwent its first major reform in 2005 in response to mounting and unsustainable imbalances in supply and demand. The reform, however, targeted only a few policy instruments (intervention price cut, voluntary production quota buyout, and restrictions on nonquota sugar exports), while leaving other key policies unchanged (interstate quota trading, sugar-substitute competition, and import barriers). Consequently, the extent of the reform's impact is limited, compared with more far-reaching alternatives, particularly when the oligopolistic nature of the industry and its noncompetitive pricing behavior are taken into account. As reported in **The EU Sugar Policy Regime and Implications of Reform**, a model-based analysis suggests that the reforms by themselves are unlikely to induce price adjustments sufficient to reduce overproduction unless quotas and/or high tariffs are reduced.



Profile of Hired Farmworkers

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR60/

Hired farmworkers make up a third of the total agricultural labor force and are critical to U.S. agricultural production, particularly in labor-intensive sectors such as fruits and vegetables. *Profile of Hired Farmworkers, A 2008 Update* reports that the hired farmworker labor market is unique because it includes a large population of relatively disadvantaged and often unauthorized workers, a portion of whom migrate to, and within, the United States. Recent economic and demographic trends, such as changing agricultural production methods that permit year-round employment, expanding immigrant populations in nonmetropolitan counties, and growing concerns over U.S. immigration policies, have elicited increased interest in hired farmworkers. This 2008 profile serves as an update to the 2000 Economic Research Service analysis of the 1998 Current Population Survey using current data with expanded sections on legal status, poverty, housing, and use of social services.



Agriculture Related Investment in India

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB37/



Despite strong overall economic growth and strengthening food demand, investment in Indian agriculture and agribusiness has remained sluggish, and growth in farm output has slowed, since the early 1990s. An array of policies and regulations affecting agricultural production, marketing, and food processing—along with weak infrastructure and a lack of market services—have discouraged private investment by farmers and large, vertically integrated agribusinesses. The policy environment has grown more investor friendly since the late 1990s and private investment appears to be responding, but significant barriers remain and the pace of future reforms remains uncertain according to *The Environment for Agricultural and Agribusiness Investment in India*.

Economic Organization of Broiler Production

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB38/

Broiler production in the United States is coordinated almost entirely through systems of production contracts, in which a grower's compensation is based, in part, on how the grower's performance compares with that of other growers. The industry is undergoing a gradual structural change as production shifts to larger broiler enterprises that provide larger shares of an operator's household income. Larger enterprises require substantially larger investments in broiler housing, and new or retrofitted houses are also an important source of productivity growth in the industry. *The Economic Organization of U.S. Broiler Production*, based on a large and representative survey of broiler operations, describes the industry's organization, housing features, contract design, fees and enterprise cost structures, and farm and household finances.



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