



Dateline ERS

New ERS research and analysis at: www.ers.usda.gov

Economic Research Service

September 2004

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.

New on the Web **Updated Ag Biotech Intellectual Property Database**

The ERS website now features an updated *Agricultural Biotechnology Intellectual Property Database* that identifies and describes U.S. utility patents on inventions in biotechnology and other biological processes used in food and agriculture, with issue dates between 1970 and 2000. The database also provides information about the ownership of these patents, whether patents are held in the public or private sector, and changes in patent ownership due to firm mergers, acquisitions, and spinoffs.

www.ers.usda.gov/data/AgBiotechIP

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

EU Introduces Single Farm Payment

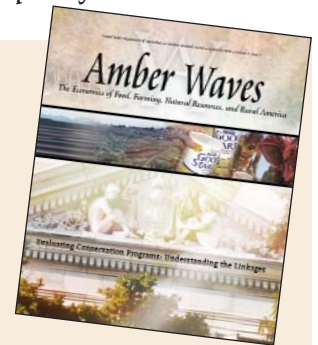
www.ers.usda.gov/publications/WRS0407

The European Union continued to reform its common agricultural policy in 2003-04. The centerpiece of the latest reforms is the introduction of a single farm payment (SFP), which is paid to EU farmers based on historical payments unrelated to current production decisions. These reforms allow the EU to assume an aggressive position in WTO negotiations on agriculture, while allowing farmers to make production decisions based more on market signals than on EU policy interventions.

Amber Waves September 2004

Amber Waves magazine covers the full range of ERS research and analysis, including articles on food, farming, natural resources, and rural America.

www.ers.usda.gov/amberwaves



Measuring the Success of Conservation Programs

Most conservation programs are designed to improve the environment by changing farmers' practices (through incentives). But, the path from programs to practices to environmental quality is complex. Measuring the success of conservation programs requires careful navigation of the complex series of interactions that link programs and environmental quality.

European Union Adopts Significant Farm Reform

Over the last two decades, the European Union has emerged as a leader in agricultural trade, competing with the United States for the rank of top agricultural exporter. The EU's success in expanding agricultural exports is due in part to support provided under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) which has recently been reformed. How will these policy reforms affect EU production and trade?

Sharing the Economic Burden: Who Pays for WIC's Infant Formula?

Almost 2 million nutritionally at-risk infants in low-income households receive free infant formula through WIC, USDA's nutrition assistance program for women, infants, and children. Concerns have been raised, however, that the program has economic consequences for non-WIC purchasers of infant formula.

Fifty Years of U.S. Food Aid and Its Role in Reducing World Hunger

Eight years after the World Food Summit all but declared war on global hunger, food security levels in some of the poorest countries have barely budged. What steps can the U.S. and other donor countries take to improve the effectiveness of food aid programs?

New Data on the Web:

Bilateral Fiber and Textile Trade

www.ers.usda.gov/data/fibertextiletrade

The WTO's Uruguay Round Agreement on Textiles and Clothing mandated the phase-out by 2005 of previously sanctioned import quotas. A new ERS database provides access to bilateral trade data (country and regional) in the fiber-textile sector. The data can illuminate trade patterns and underpin analysis of potential changes as the policy environment evolves.



Major Update of County Typology Codes

www.ers.usda.gov/data/TypologyCodes

An area's economic and social characteristics can significantly affect its development and need for various types of public programs. To provide policy-relevant information about diverse county conditions to policymakers, public officials, and researchers, ERS has developed a new set of county-level typology codes that captures differences in economic and social characteristics. This 2004 County Typology is a major update and revision of ERS's 1989 county typology. Also see the typology code chapter in the measuring rurality briefing room, www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/Rurality/Typology, for more information, links to maps, and methodology.

Farm Income Estimates for 2003 (released 8/25/04)

www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FarmIncome

For only the third time in the last decade, the value of both crop and livestock production increased in the same year. In 2003, the value of production for farm commodities rose by \$21.2 billion (9.6 percent), while farmers' expenses for inputs to produce crops and livestock rose by only 3 percent. Net farm income was a record \$59.2 billion in 2003, about 24 percent above the average of the preceding 10 years.

[NOTE: The *forecast* for farm sector income in the current year, 2004, will be updated on November 9].

WORKSHOP:

Understanding Demand Shifts for Grain-Based Foods

September 28, 2004

**The Food Industry Center
University of Minnesota
McNamara Alumni Center**

Because the U.S. food market is a mature market, increased demand for any one grain-based food tends to come at the expense of demand for another. In addition, demographic influences, such as increasing ethnic diversity, and the aging of the U.S. population, are affecting grain-based food demand.

This workshop, sponsored by USDA's Economic Research Service and the Farm Foundation, will bring together individuals from government, the food industry, and universities who have experience analyzing demand for grain-based food products and have knowledge of data sources for assessing and monitoring consumption trends.

Registration is \$450 (\$150 for University or government employees) and includes the pre-workshop dinner, continental breakfast, lunch, and other refreshment breaks.

**For more information, go to
www.ers.usda.gov/Features/GrainWorkshop**

Research Briefs Cut to the Chase — FAST

Get to the heart of ERS reports quickly with Research Briefs. Designed with the media in mind, Research Briefs are two-page fact sheets that encapsulate the purpose, methods, and results of ERS research.

Research Briefs are available in the ERS newsroom in PDF format at:

www.ers.usda.gov/news/ResearchBriefs.htm.

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