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Releases

New Releases

Easier Access to More Data

The Data page of the ERS website (www.ers.usda.gov/data/) has recently been enhanced to better serve our users—the intensive users who need large files of data, as well as the occasional user who needs just a few numbers. The scope and breadth of data available from ERS are now in an easy-to-navigate format. An indicators section gives key facts and figures; a calendar of releases displays what will become available when. A resource area provides easy access to plug-ins and readers for working with data, as well as mapping programs, the archive collection, Information Quality Guidelines, and a sign-up for notifications of new releases.



Emergency Food Assistance

Food pantries and emergency kitchens offer community-based food assistance to needy, low-income households and individuals. *The Emergency Food Assistance System—Findings From the Client Survey: Executive Summary* (FANRR-32) reports that about 4.3 million different households, including 8.0 million adults and 4.5 million children, received food from pantries during a typical month in 2001. About 1.1 million people (856,000 adults and 275,000 children) received meals from emergency kitchens during the same time frame. Almost half of the households that use food pantries contain children, while about 20 percent of visitors to emergency kitchens live in households with children. While emergency food providers serve a diverse clientele, the majority of their clients live in food-insecure households. **Laura Tiehen**, ltiehen@ers.usda.gov

Food Stamps Reduce the Depth and Severity of Child Poverty

Food Stamp Benefits and Childhood Poverty in the 1990s (FANRR-33) examines the effect on poverty of adding the value of food stamps to household income and finds that the incidence of poverty and childhood poverty are not reduced much by food stamps. However, the depth and severity of child poverty and poverty overall are significantly reduced by food stamps. These results demonstrate that examining only the incidence of child poverty leads to the incorrect conclusion that food stamps do not mitigate child poverty. **Dean Jolliffe**, jolliffe@ers.usda.gov

Policy Change Affects Cranberry Plantings

Favorable weather played a role in the 2003 expansion in cranberry plantings, but the absence of a restrictive marketing order is the main force driving growth. Under the marketing order—a government-sanctioned mechanism designed to mitigate the oversupplies existing since 1998—cranberry growers were allowed to sell only 65 percent of their historic average sales to processors. Although still large relative to levels prior to 1998, cranberry inventories have declined significantly and grower prices have been improving since 2001. More on changes in this commodity market are outlined in the September 2003 *Fruit and Tree Nuts Outlook* (FTS-306). **Agnes Perez**, acperez@ers.usda.gov

China's Trade as a First-Year WTO Member

China is a key player in agricultural commodity markets, and its trade with the world is an ongoing source of uncertainty. *China's Exports Outpaced Imports During WTO Year One* (FAU-79-02) discusses how policy measures and world market conditions boosted China's exports (particularly of vegetables, fruit, and corn) and dampened imports during 2002, its first year as a World Trade Organization member, and also addresses the emergence of China as an importer of consumer-oriented agricultural commodities. **Fred Gale**, fgale@ers.usda.gov

2003 Rural-Urban Continuum Codes Released

In August 2003, ERS released the 2003 Rural-Urban Continuum Codes based on the Office of Management and Budget's new definitions of metro and nonmetro areas (see www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/rurality). The codes are used by Federal agencies, policy analysts, and researchers to capture diversity in rural areas in ways that are meaningful for developing public policies and programs. The classification distinguishes metro counties by size and nonmetro counties by degree of urbanization and proximity to metro areas, resulting in a 9-part county codification. **Calvin L. Beale**, cbeale@ers.usda.gov

U.S. Farmers' Adoption of Genetically Engineered Crops

U.S. farmers have adopted genetically engineered (GE) crops widely since their introduction in 1996, notwithstanding uncertainty about consumer acceptance and economic and environmental impacts. Soybeans and cotton genetically engineered with herbicide-tolerant traits have been the most widely and rapidly adopted GE crops in the U.S., followed by insect-resistant cotton and corn. This online database (www.ers.usda.gov/data/biotechcrops) summarizes the extent of adoption of GE corn, cotton, and soybean varieties since 1996. **Jorge Fernandez-Cornejo**, jorgef@ers.usda.gov

Benchmark Data on Plant Breeding

This online database (www.ers.usda.gov/data/plantbreeding) provides information on the level of plant breeding effort (in terms of staff years and estimated expenditures) in the U.S. by the public and private sectors. The database is a comprehensive accounting of national plant breeding efforts based on a 1994 national plant breeding study conducted by Iowa State University with support from USDA. It provides the only national benchmark to which current efforts and future developments in this critically important area of research can be compared. **Paul Heisey**, pheisey@ers.usda.gov