

**CHINA AGRI-SCIENCE
NEWS DIGEST**
中国农业科技新闻摘要
June 2016 (Pilot Issue No 0)

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ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

China announces soil pollution controls

[Xinhua, 31.05.2016] -- An action plan on tackling soil pollution in China was released Tuesday.

The Action Plan for Soil Pollution Prevention and Control aims to improve soil quality, ensure safe agricultural products and a healthy living environment for people, according to the State Council, China's cabinet.

The document said China will curb worsening soil pollution by 2020, put soil pollution risks under control by 2030, and form a virtuous cycle in the ecosystem by 2050.

[Full article](#)

Third national action plan to tackle soil pollution

[China Daily, 03.06.2016] -- China released its third national action plan to curb pollution, this time targeting soil deterioration.

The government said it will stop the worsening problem by 2020, and then make improvements to polluted soil by 2030. The first two action plans focused on air pollution (2013) and water pollution (2015).

[Full article](#)

Rules aim to stamp out soil pollution amid scandals

[China Daily, 06.08.2016] -- China is putting stricter rules in place around soil pollution to make sure polluting companies are prevented from creating toxic environments for residential communities, schools and hospitals, ensuring only good quality land is used for building projects.

The move was necessary to combat soil pollution, and especially to control the deterioration of land inside and nearby polluting plants, according to a statement from the Ministry of Environmental Protection.

[Full article](#)

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Government's environmental efforts cause for cautious optimism

[China Daily, 03.06.2016] -- On Tuesday, the State Council, China's cabinet, released a timetable to deal with the country's severe soil pollution, which is another important step in the fight against pollution.

Until recently, China's development model followed that of Western countries, being focused on development first and taking care of pollution later, and it did not give enough attention to protecting its environment.

[Full article](#)

Tainted soil rich in opportunity

[China Daily, 01.06.2016] -- Soil pollution would be under control in no more than 15 years under a bold new plan tipped to inject trillions of yuan into the Chinese economy.

The State Council released its Action Plan on the Prevention and Control of Soil Pollution yesterday, aiming to improve soil quality, ensure safe agricultural products and create a healthy living environment. It is estimated to add 2.7 trillion yuan (\$411 billion) to the nation's GDP and create a market worth as much as 1 trillion yuan, the China Business News reports.

[Full article](#)

Xinhua Insight: China's fight to save its soil

[Xinhua, 01.06.2016] -- War on soil pollution was officially declared in China on Tuesday with the release of an action plan to rehabilitate the country's vast tracts of poisoned land.

Cleaning up the mess from decades of industrialization and questionable farming practices will be a long hard journey and the plan sets three significant milestones.

By 2020, the decline in soil quality and the expansion of polluted areas will have been arrested. By 2030, all risks will be under control. By 2050, a virtuous cycle will have been established to ensure that rejuvenated soil remains that way.

[Full article](#)

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China's environment ministry strives for better water, air, soil protection

[Xinhua, 03.06.2016] -- Three new departments under the Ministry of Environmental Protection, dedicated to water, air and soil protection, are all set for operation after personnel reported for duty, the ministry announced Monday.

The three departments have been reorganized from two departments on pollution prevention and control, and pollution emission control, both of which have been dissolved.

[Full article](#)

China to start nationwide inspection of water law enforcement

[CCTV, 04.05.2016] -- China's top legislature announced Wednesday 4th May the beginning of a nationwide inspection on water conservation law enforcement to aid agricultural water conservation and strengthen protection of water resources.

The inspection team should focus on investment in farmland water conservation facilities and promote the use of water-saving irrigation technology, said Ji Bingxuan, vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) at a plenary meeting in Beijing.

[Full article](#) (From China Agri-food News Digest No 41, May 2016)

China environment ministry given powers to inspect provinces

[Reuters, 12.05.2016] -- China's environment ministry has been given powers to send inspection teams to provinces and regions across the country as part of its efforts to root out local polluters, the official China Daily newspaper reported.

The paper said the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) would become only the second national authority, after the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, China's corruption watchdog, to have the power to send inspection teams and hold discussions with provincial leaders.

[Full article](#) (From China Agri-food News Digest No 41, May 2016)

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China will be 25% forest if green goals reached: report

[China Daily, 27.05.2016] -- Almost one quarter of China will be covered with forest by 2020 if the country succeeds in its mission to build an "eco-civilization", according to a report by the United Nations Environment Programme.

The report Green is Gold, released on Thursday at UNEP's headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, looks at the environmental dimension of China's 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020).

[Full article](#)

6.6 trillion yuan earmarked for low-carbon cities: report

[Xinhua, 07.06.2016] -- China is set to invest 6.6 trillion yuan (about one trillion U.S. dollars) on developing low-carbon cities in the next five years, according to a report released on Tuesday.

The money will be mainly spent on developing low-carbon buildings, green transportation system and clean energy to meet China's low-carbon ambitions outlined in the 13th Five-Year Plan, according to a report jointly released by the Paulson Institute, Energy Foundation China and a branch of the China Association of Circular Economy.

[Full article](#)

WB loans finance Chinese province to curb air pollution

[Xinhua, 07.06.2016] -- The World Bank (WB) has approved loans totaling 500 million U.S. dollars to north China's Hebei Province to help reduce air pollution, according to a WB press release Tuesday.

Garo J. Batmanian, WB lead environmental specialist and project team leader, said the loans would help Hebei achieve its goal of reducing PM2.5 by 25 percent by 2017 compared to 2012 levels.

[Full article](#)

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POLICIES

China on "right track" to make economic growth more sustainable: German economist

[Xinhua, 12.05.2016] -- China's economic and social development blueprint for 2016-2020 unveiled earlier this year shows China is on "the right track" to make its economic growth "more sustainable," a German economics professor has said.

In a recent interview with Xinhua, Professor Horst Loechel at Frankfurt School of Finance and Management hailed the 13th five-year plan, which was approved by Chinese lawmakers in March, as a good decision, saying it is "the right track to go" for the Chinese economy after decades of rapid growth.

[Full article](#) (From China Agri-food News Digest No 41, May 2016)

Top legislator stresses implementation of food safety law

[Xinhua, 10.05.2016] -- Top Chinese legislator Zhang Dejiang has urged companies to obey the food safety law and told government organs to fulfill their supervisory duties, vowing to deal harshly with crimes in the field.

Zhang, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, made the remarks during a visit to north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region between May 7 and 9, to investigate how the law has been implemented.

[Full article](#) (From China Agri-food News Digest No 41, May 2016)

China's food safety work to target baby formula

[Xinhua, 12.05.2016] -- Baby formula, including imported products, will be a priority for government action to improve food safety, said a document issued by the State Council on Wednesday, 11 May.

According to a plan on this year's food safety operations, baby formula and supplementary food will stay on the list of commodities under close watch.

The regulator will also tighten inspection of the recipes of baby milk powders registered by manufacturers and expose malpractice.

[Full article](#) (From China Agri-food News Digest No 41, May 2016)

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Chinese President Xi Jinping stresses importance of modern agriculture in NE China

[News.sohu.com, 27.05.2016. Translated by DCZ] -- President Xi Jinping investigated farms, companies, forestry stations and some research institutes in Yichun City, Fuyuan City, Jiamusi City and Harbin City in Heilongjiang Province from the 23rd to 25th of May.

He mentioned that agriculture played a vital role in Heilongjiang. Heilongjiang was the granary of China, its main forestry region, and an old industrial base. It therefore holds the key to the issue of revitalization of the Northeast Region and is of vital importance for its economic development.

For Heilongjiang, a large agricultural province and main grain producing region, Xi Jinping proposed that more attention should be paid to the construction of modern agriculture industrial systems, of production systems and of operation systems. A variety of measures including modern agriculture bases, companies as well as industries should be taken. Some engineering, agricultural technological and biological methods could be utilized to stimulate the initiative of farmers in their efforts to both protect and make good use of the black soil (region).

[Full article \(in Chinese\)](#)

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Province builds for ecologically sound future

[China Daily, 01.06.2016] -- Jilin's local government has identified three "function zones" in the province where it plans to introduce a number of ecological restoration and protection programs in a bid to step up the protection of resources, and improve the local natural environment.

The function zones contain forests, farmland and wetlands, three natural resources that underpin both economic growth and local communities.

"Jilin is part of the colorful picture of China, with grasslands in the west, mountains in the east and plains in the middle," said Bayin Chaolu, Party chief of the province. "Here we have abundant farmland with fertile black soil, clear blue sky and green forests."

[Full article](#)

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

China makes plan to accelerate commercialization of research findings

[Xinhua, 09.05.2016] -- China's State Council General Office has issued an action plan to accelerate commercialization of research findings.

The action plan says commercialization of scientific and technological findings is a key task in achieving innovation-driven development, which can also strengthen connections between sci-tech and the economy, with significance of promoting supply-side structural reform.

[Full article](#) (From China Agri-food News Digest No 41, May 2016)

Ministry tweaks eating guidelines

[China Daily, 14.05.2016] -- China's top health authority released a new dietary guideline on Friday, 13 May, stressing the need for a balanced diet amid rising health threats such as obesity in recent years.

The guideline, a revision of a version drafted in 2007, takes into account the main nutritional problems and eating habits of the Chinese in recent years, according to the National Health and Family Planning Commission.

[Full article](#) (From China Agri-food News Digest No 41, May 2016)

China's plan to cut meat consumption by 50% cheered by climate campaigners

[Guardian, 22.06.2016] -- New dietary guidelines could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 1 billion tonnes by 2030, and could lessen country's problems with obesity and diabetes

The Chinese government has outlined a plan to reduce its citizens' meat consumption by 50%, in a move that climate campaigners hope will provide major heft in the effort to avoid runaway global warming.

[Full article](#)

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AGRI-BUSINESS AND TRADE

China's soybean industry on the rise

[China Daily, 05.05.2016] -- China's soybean acreage will increase by 400,000 hectares this year as a result of a government-led initiative to increase the supply of domestic soybeans.

Yu Xinrong, vice-minister of agriculture, told a news conference Thursday 5th May that a survey of farmers' planting intentions indicated that the corn acreage in China will decrease by close to 1.33 million hectares. This is noted as the first decreasing year of corn acreage in 13 years. He said the increase in soybeans acreage will mainly take place in the northeastern provinces where farmers are encouraged to switch from the cultivation of corn to soybeans.

[Full article](#) (From China Agri-food News Digest No 41, May 2016)

China corn reserves eyed as crop area to fall for first time in 13 years

[Reuters, 05.05.2016] -- China has estimated the country's corn planting area will fall by more than a million hectares this year, the first drop in 13 years, as global grain markets brace for the fallout from Beijing's biggest agricultural reforms in nearly a decade.

China said in March that it would end its corn stockpiling program, which had driven up domestic prices and spurred imports of cheaper substitutes like sorghum and distillers' grains.

The scheme, under which large volumes were bought at fixed prices, was designed to support rural incomes, but it has left the state with a bulging stockpile to sell.

[Full article](#) (From China Agri-food News Digest No 41, May 2016)

EU farms look to feed growing market in China

[China Daily, 10.06.2016] -- Demand among increasing middle class can be rich harvest for agriculture sector

The European Union is looking to further boost agricultural exports to China as the country's rapidly expanding middle class increases demand for high-quality, safe products, according to top EU officials. Phil Hogan, the European commissioner for agriculture and rural development, says exports of agriproducts to China from the EU rose 33 percent last year.

[Full article](#)

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China's farmland drops slightly in 2015

[Xinhua, 22.04.2016] -- The total area of China's farmland dropped slightly last year, but remains well above a government red line, official data said on Thursday.

China's total area of arable land stood at 2 billion mu (around 135 million hectares) at the end of 2015, down by 990,000 mu from a year ago, but still well above the official lower limit of 1.8 billion mu, said the Ministry of Land and Resources (MLR).

[Full article](#)

Agriculture ministers agree to share data globally

[China Daily, 09.06.2016] -- Agricultural ministers from the world's 20 leading economies plan to use information technology and the internet to improve integrity and efficiency in the global agricultural sector and benefit farmers.

The 2016 G20 Agricultural Ministers Meeting, which concluded in Xi'an, capital of Shaanxi province, on Friday, also prioritized the importance of innovation, including the innovation of agricultural technologies, commercial models and policies, in the development of the global agricultural sector.

Chinese agriculture minister Han Changfu said one major achievement of the conference is that the G20 countries are planning to establish platforms on agricultural technology innovation and agricultural information technology to enable sharing of innovation programs and technologies.

[Full article](#)

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POLICY NOTE

Notice on comprehensive utilization of crop straw and promoting the quality of farmland

[Chinese Ministry of Finance, 30.05.2016, Translation by DCZ]

A Notice was published by the Office of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Office of the Ministry of Finance about launching experimental units for comprehensive utilization of crop straw and promoting the quality of farmland.

Some key zones have been chosen to serve as experimental units to embark on the task of comprehensive utilization of crop straw. This practice could encourage local areas to perfect the comprehensive utilization of crop straw and to improve farmland quality.

1. Goals and Principles

A long-term mechanism of farmland protection and quality improvement should be established in accordance with zones, via the comprehensive utilization of crop straw and soil fertility with “green ecological orientation”.

The utilization rate of crop straw is to reach 90% or is to rise by 5% in comparison with the figure of the previous year, by setting up the experimental units for comprehensive utilization of crop straw. The level of straw returning to field is to increase considerably. The average soil organic matter content in farmland is to climb to 1%, with the quality of farmland soil increasing markedly. The energetic utilization of straw is to be strengthened and the environment in rural areas to be improved.

2. Areas for implementation

The implemented areas were identified in accordance with comprehensive utilization of crop straw and soil fertility and management of degraded arable land.

Ten provinces (incl. autonomous regions) have been chosen to be the experimental units in comprehensive utilization of crop straw: Hebei, Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang, Jiangsu, Anhui, Shandong, Henan. For Beijing and Tianjin Municipalities, the task of comprehensive utilization of crop straw could be launched through their own budget sources, according to some related requirements.

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3. Tasks

- a) The experimental units of comprehensive utilization of crop straw should take stringent measures to ban the burning crop straw in the open air, should uphold agricultural use as the main principle of facilitating the whole process (including the subsidizing of some agricultural machines involved), should improve the utilization of crop straw for industry purposes (such as bio-oil, alcohol, straw starch, etc.), and lay more emphasis on the role which socialized service organizations can play in promoting the comprehensive utilization of crop straw.
- b) Regarding the management of soil fertility and degraded farmland, soil fertility is to be increased by spreading organic fertilizers, cultivating green manures, and by properly utilizing some of the livestock manure, while the management task of degraded farmland should deal with the soil acidification in South, soil salinization in the North and the protection and comprehensive management of the black soil in the Northeast. Some measures like returning straw to the field and increased application of organic fertilizers could be taken along with some soil amendments like lime, gypsum, etc.

4. Means of support

In the experimental units of comprehensive utilization of crop straw awards, replacing subsidies, have been identified as main method of support. There could also be a combination of physical subsidy and purchasing service.

5. Related requirements

As related requirements, the organizational leadership should be emphasized, a revision system be established, the administrative service be strengthened, and the financial supervision should be consolidated.

[Full text \(in Chinese\)](#)

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vacancies for internships at DCZ

- For Chinese native speakers, with very good knowledge of English. Tasks include working on documents, translations, as well as support in office management.
- Für internationale Studierende der Agrarwissenschaften, mit sehr guten Englischkenntnissen, und bevorzugt mit chinesischen Sprachkenntnissen. Die Aufgabenfelder orientieren sich an den Schwerpunktthemen des DCZ und werden von Fall zu Fall vereinbart.

Interested candidates please contact the DCZ under yingjuan.li@giz.de

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