

### Contents

<b>Policies .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Internet Plus Agriculture model to promote integrated rural development .....	1
China to be self-sufficient in grain by 2035 .....	1
China's ChemChina, Sinochem set to merge .....	1
Chinese farmers inspired by new harvest festival.....	1
China's top legislature to check farm produce safety law enforcement .....	2
China toughens supervision in key regions to reduce air pollution .....	2
With generous funding and top-tier jobs, China seeks to lure science talent from abroad ....	2
China introduces sweeping reforms to crack down on academic misconduct .....	2
China's issues guidelines on foreign investment measures .....	3
European experts view China's B&R initiative positively .....	3
<b>Science, Technology and Environment .....</b>	<b>3</b>
China launches new Earth observation satellite .....	3
Chinese scientists monitor global wheat pests and diseases .....	3
Self-driving harvesters point to future of China's agriculture .....	4
New AI system aims to boost China's pig farming .....	4
China to protect quarter of land from development by 2020 .....	4
China reports highly pathogenic H5N1 bird flu at chicken farm.....	5
China fuels clean energy growth.....	5
Chinese institutions continue to rise in Nature Index .....	5
<b>Trade and Business .....</b>	<b>5</b>
China lifts ban on exports of British beef .....	5
China, Britain seek deeper insurance cooperation under Belt and Road Initiative .....	6
China's high-quality wheat acreage rises to 30 pct this year .....	6
Chinese brand Yili ranks among world's best-performing food brands .....	6
China soy region to increase acreage under govt order .....	7
China's poultry giant goes to lab in quest for meatier chickens .....	7
China becoming a major buyer of U.S. cotton after years of stockpiling.....	7
China slaps anti-dumping deposit on Brazilian chicken .....	7
US-China trade war offers Brazil opportunity to boost soybean exports .....	8
Croatian food manufacturers eye Chinese market .....	8
China's Hunan Province, Uganda sign cooperation agreement .....	8

## Policies

### **Internet Plus Agriculture model to promote integrated rural development**

[Xinhua, 27-06-2018] China will improve internet services and information technology (IT) infrastructure under the "Internet Plus Agriculture" model, as decided during a State Council executive meeting chaired by Premier Li Keqiang on Wednesday 27 June.

The move will promote integrated development of the primary, secondary and tertiary industries in rural areas and bring farmers more business opportunities that help increase their income.

The market will play a greater role in the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy. Internet technologies will be extensively applied to make agricultural production better targeted and effective and enable farmers to adapt to shifting market dynamics.

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### **China to be self-sufficient in grain by 2035**

[GBTimes, 29-06-2018] China is on the way to guaranteeing food security with grain self-sufficiency to be generally achieved by 2035, according to a report released on June 26.

According to the report, the overall food production, acreage and yields of China continues to grow as the country vigorously promotes supply-side structural reform in agriculture. It also proposes changes in agriculture such as establishing a market-oriented pricing system targeted at eliminating oversupply of some grains.

The report, entitled 'China Agriculture Industry Development Report', was conducted by the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences in cooperation with International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

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### **China's ChemChina, Sinochem set to merge**

[Reuters, 30-06-2-18] Chinese state-owned Sinochem Group and ChemChina will merge to create a new company, financial publication Caixin reported.

Reuters has reported that the two companies were in merger talks to create the world's biggest industrial chemicals firm worth around \$120 billion, to be led by the head of Sinochem.

Beijing sees a Sinochem and ChemChina deal as a blueprint for streamlining and consolidating its sprawling, debt-heavy state-owned enterprises, leaving fewer, but more powerful, national champions.

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### **Chinese farmers inspired by new harvest festival**

[Xinhua, 26-06-2018] China designated a special day for farmers to celebrate their annual harvest, which will fall on the Autumnal Equinox, usually between Sept. 22 and 24, each year.

"The Chinese farmers' harvest festival is a day for farmers to celebrate and enjoy their harvest," said Han Changfu, minister of agriculture and rural affairs. It is also an occasion to display the country's agricultural traditions, he added.

"The festival will give greater importance to rural work, speed up the implementation of China's rural vitalization strategy, and push for faster development of agriculture and rural areas," Han said.

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### **China's top legislature to check farm produce safety law enforcement**

[Xinhua, 25-06-2018] China's top legislature on Monday 25 June began an enforcement inspection of a law protecting the safety of farm produce.

It is the first inspection since the Law of the People's Republic of China on Quality and Safety of Agricultural Products went into effect in 2006.

Key aspects to be checked include the input, production, packaging, labeling, transport, storing, as well as the management of production bases and quality control mechanisms, among others.

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### **China toughens supervision in key regions to reduce air pollution**

[Xinhua, 09-06-2018] China will start a massive environmental overhaul on June 11 to ensure the effective curb of air pollution in key regions, said sources with the Ministry of Ecology and Environment Saturday.

The inspection is expected to last until April 28, 2019, during which approximately 18,000 environmental supervisors will aim to discover environmental protection problems in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and the surrounding areas, the Yangtze River Delta, and the Fenhe and Weihe river plains.

The supervisors will be professionals selected from local environment protection departments and the ministry to uncover structural problems in industrial development, energy use, transportation and land use that are detrimental to air pollution control.

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### **With generous funding and top-tier jobs, China seeks to lure science talent from abroad**

[Sciences, 05-06-2018] In the past decade, China has aimed to build up its scientific capacity by luring back some of the tens of thousands of Chinese scientists working abroad. The latest measures emphasize that non-Chinese talent is also welcome.

On 22 May, the Ministry of Science and Technology issued guidelines that encourage science ministries and commissions to consult foreign experts and attract non-Chinese to full-time positions within China. In a striking change, foreign scientists are now allowed to lead public research projects.

Foreign academics can also join the faculty of one of nine overseas universities that now have Chinese mainland campuses, typically set up with local institutions. Most teach in English, making it easy for non-Chinese academics to feel at home.

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### **China introduces sweeping reforms to crack down on academic misconduct**

[Nature, 08-06-2018] China is getting tough on scientific misconduct. The country's most powerful bodies, the Chinese Communist Party and the State Council, introduced a raft of reforms on 30 May aimed at improving integrity across the research spectrum, from funding and job applications to peer-review and publications.

Under the new policy, the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) will be responsible for managing investigations and ruling on cases of scientific misconduct, a role previously

performed by individual institutions. And for the first time, misconduct cases will be logged in a national database that is currently being designed by MOST.

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### **China's issues guidelines on foreign investment measures**

[Reuters, 15-06-2018] China's State Council issued guidelines on Friday 15 June for previously announced measures easing restrictions on foreign investment in sectors including agriculture, coal mining, vehicles and aircraft.

The rules detail steps announced by the State Council during a briefing last week as part of China's effort to further open its economy and markets and attract capital in industries including transportation, logistics, professional services.

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### **European experts view China's B&R initiative positively**

[Xinhua, 04-06-2018] During the 12th Lennart Meri Conference on foreign and security policy, China's Belt and Road Initiative, including its Arctic policy, was viewed by European experts as being helpful to global development.

As to China's vision for a "Polar Silk Road," Caroline Kennedy-Pipe, Professor of International Security at Britain's Loughborough University said it is helpful for the development in the Arctic region.

In an interview with Xinhua here on Sunday, the British expert on international relations and global security said: "China is hugely important because of its commercial and economic strength, and ambitions to be able to trade more freely with different parts of the globe."

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## **Science, Technology and Environment**

### **China launches new Earth observation satellite**

[Xinhua, 02-06-2018] China on Saturday, 2 June launched a new Earth observation satellite, Gaofen-6, which will be mainly used in agricultural resources research and disaster monitoring.

Weighing 1,064 kg and with a designed life of eight years, Gaofen-6 has a similar function to that of Gaofen-1 satellite, but with better cameras and its high-resolution images can cover a large area of the Earth, according to the State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence.

Gaofen-6 can observe chlorophyll and other nutritional content of crops, and help to estimate yields of crops such as corn, rice, soybeans, cotton and peanuts. Its data will also be applied in monitoring agricultural disasters such as droughts and floods, evaluation of agricultural projects and surveying of forest and wetland resources, said Tong.

The project has helped reduce China's dependence on foreign remote sensing satellite data.

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### **Chinese scientists monitor global wheat pests and diseases**

[Xinhua, 19-06-2018] Chinese scientists said they have released the first remote sensing monitoring report on wheat pests and diseases globally, providing references for early warning and solutions.

The report was conducted by scientists from the Vegetation Remote Sensing Research Team of the Aerospace Information Research Institute with the Chinese Academy of Sciences. It

shows the occurrence and development of typical wheat pests and diseases in ten wheat production countries in the Northern Hemisphere, namely China, Russia, France, Turkey, Pakistan, the United States, Germany, Iran, Uzbekistan, and the United Kingdom, during April and May.

Quantitative monitoring of major wheat pests and diseases, such as wheat rust, fusarium head blight, and aphids, was conducted, including spatial distribution, damage levels and areas.

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### **Self-driving harvesters point to future of China's agriculture**

[Xinhua, 16-06-2018] Self-driving harvesting is only one of the processes of agricultural production. China has set a target of gradually building automated farms, utilizing smart technologies to improve quality and efficiency and also reduce costs.

Earlier this month, China's first trial run of automated farming was conducted in Xinghua in the eastern province of Jiangsu, with the support of 12 firms and agencies.

More than 10 autonomous agricultural machines were involved in the whole production process from plowing the land and transplanting rice seedlings, to spreading fertilizer and pesticide and finally harvesting.

By the end of 2017, China had 240 million citizens aged over 60, accounting for 17.3 percent of the total population. By 2050, one in three Chinese will be over 60, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

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### **New AI system aims to boost China's pig farming**

[GT, 10-06-2018] Agriculture in China is getting an AI upgrade with a new system aiming to boost output for pig farmers and other agribusinesses, experts revealed at The Computing Conference 2018 in Shanghai.

Jointly developed by AlibabaCloud and Sichuan Tequ Group, the ET Brain Agricultural (ETBA) system gathers data on livestock in order to maximize breeding.

The system is aiding farmers in gathering and analyzing important data on their pigs, such as age, weight, frequency of exercise, and immunity status.

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### **China to protect quarter of land from development by 2020**

[Reuter, 25-06-2018] China aims to keep a quarter of its land off-limits for development by 2020 and increase forest coverage to more than 23 percent of its total landmass, the country's cabinet said.

China has published a slew of policy documents in recent months aimed at improving surveillance, strengthening law enforcement and raising industrial standards as it plans to extend its war on pollution until 2020.

It is also putting the finishing touches to a 2018-2020 air quality action plan aimed at cutting smog in key industrial regions, and will extend the fight to the major coal-producing provinces of Shanxi and Shaanxi.

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## **China reports highly pathogenic H5N1 bird flu at chicken farm**

[Reuters, 27-06-2018] China reported an outbreak of highly pathogenic H5N1 bird flu at a farm in its northwest Qinghai province, the Paris-based World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) said on Tuesday, 26 June, citing a report from the Chinese agriculture ministry.

It is the first case of the H5N1 strain of flu to be reported on a Chinese poultry farm since 2014, according to a Reuters search of OIE's database of notices from the Chinese agriculture ministry.

But the virus has been reported in Nepal and Bhutan this year, both countries that share borders with China's northwest.

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## **China fuels clean energy growth**

[Xinhua, 04-06-2018] While China has been promoting green development, clean energy including wind, solar and nuclear power has been thriving in the country, reducing its dependence on coal.

The National Energy Administration said the total installed renewable energy capacity reached 650 million kilowatts by 2017, up 14 percent from 2016. Clean energy generated 1.7 trillion kWh of electricity last year, accounting for 26.4 percent of the country's total.

Due to the thriving clean energy of various kinds, coal consumption, a major contributor to the country's air pollution, has reduced by 8.1 percent over the past five years, according to the government work report in March.

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## **Chinese institutions continue to rise in Nature Index**

[Xinhua, 07-06-2018] The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) is at the top place among the world's leading institutions for high-quality scientific research, according to the Nature Index 2018 annual tables.

As for the specific sector of academic institutions, China's Peking University and Tsinghua University makes it into the global academic top 10. Meanwhile, Nanjing University has climbed from 21 to 13, and the University of Science and Technology of China has made its way to 18, from 27.

Among the leading 100 academic institutions in the 2018 annual tables are 44 from the United States and 16 from China. Britain and Japan contribute seven each, with six from Germany, four from Switzerland and three from Canada, according to Nature Index.

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## **Trade and Business**

### **China lifts ban on exports of British beef**

[Defra, 27-06-2018] China has today lifted its longstanding ban on exports of beef from the UK, in a landmark move for British producers estimated to be worth £250 million in the first 5 years alone.

More than 20 years after the Chinese government first imposed a ban on British beef in the wake of the BSE outbreak, today's milestone is the culmination of several years of site inspections and negotiations between UK and Chinese government officials.

China is currently the UK's eighth largest export market for agri-food, with over £560 million worth of food and drink bought by Chinese consumers last year.

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## **China, Britain seek deeper insurance cooperation under Belt and Road Initiative**

[Xinhua, 19-06-2018] Chinese and British companies anticipate more cooperation in insurance to forestall risks as both sides are set to deepen coordination in projects under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), speakers told a high-profile Sino-UK BRI insurance cooperation forum held Monday 18 June in London.

London, as a natural partner for the Belt and Road Initiative, has a lot to offer for cooperation with China in assessing project risks and insurance, said Cetherine McGuinness, chair of Policy and Resources Committee, City of London.

In a bid to support British businesses' involvement in the initiative, the British government recently pledged up to 25 billion British pounds (33.3 billion dollars) worth of financial support for companies participating in the Belt and Road projects in Asia.

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## **China's high-quality wheat acreage rises to 30 pct this year**

[Reuters, 26-06-2018] China's summer grains acreage was expected to be at 408 million mu (27.2 million hectares), slightly down from last year, the country's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs said in a statement.

Wheat yield was down after rains during planting and low temperature in early April hit the crops, the ministry said. China's quality wheat acreage in its overall wheat acreage rose 2.5 percent to 30 percent this year.

Corn was in bad growing condition in some parts of the country's northeast due to drought earlier, according to the statement

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## **Chinese brand Yili ranks among world's best-performing food brands**

[Xinhua, 27-06-2018] Chinese brand Yili ranks among the world's top 10 best-performing food brands, jumping from 8th to 3rd spot, according to Brand Finance Food & Drink 2018 report.

The report published Tuesday 26 June said that dairy is one of the strongest performing sectors in the food industry, registering an average 13 percent brand value growth year on year versus 4 percent for the table as a whole.

Within the sector, the report added, the Chinese market is the most dynamic in the world, set to overtake the United States as the largest market for dairy products by 2022. This phenomenon is due to rising affluence and improved accessibility of products in China's lower-tier cities. As Chinese consumers increasingly prefer dairy products which are more premium, with health benefits and innovative flavours, leading brands such as Yili focus on the changing demand and product innovation.

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## **China soy region to increase acreage under govt order**

[Reuters, 06-06-2018] China's Henan province will increase soybean acreage by 500,000 mu (33,333 hectares) this year under a government order, the local Henan Daily newspaper reported on 6 June.

China is taking extra efforts to increase its soybean output this year as a trade dispute with the United States threatens to curb imports from its second biggest supplier.

The soybean acreage in Henan in 2017 was estimated at 370,000 hectares, about 5 percent of the nation's total at 7.78 million hectares.

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## **China's poultry giant goes to lab in quest for meatier chickens**

[Reuters, 13-06-2018] China's top poultry producer, Guangdong Wen's Foodstuff Co Ltd, is turning to genetic science to target the country's fast-growing supermarket and fast-food sectors.

Wen's is drawing on an in-house gene bank and breeding unit to create new varieties of meatier chickens for processing at slaughterhouses to better serve restaurant chains and supermarkets.

That represents a sharp departure from Wen's roots serving local markets, where the animals are sold alive to customers.

If successful, Wen's could start eating into the sales of companies like Fujian Sunner Development Co that sell broiler chickens bred for their meat efficiency.

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## **China becoming a major buyer of U.S. cotton after years of stockpiling**

[WSJ, 10-06-2018] China is re-emerging as a major consumer of U.S. cotton after years of stockpiling the fiber, a shift that together with poor growing conditions in Texas has sent prices surging to a six-year high.

China announced this month that it intends to raise cotton import volumes, a move that could increase Chinese purchases of American fiber at a time when the Trump administration is calling for more imports from the U.S.

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## **China slaps anti-dumping deposit on Brazilian chicken**

[Reuters, 08-06-2018] Chinese importers of Brazilian chicken will be required to pay deposits ranging from 18.8 percent to 38.4 percent of the value of their shipments from June 9, the commerce ministry said in a statement.

A preliminary ruling from the ministry found that Chinese producers had been "substantially damaged" by shipments from Brazil between 2013 and 2016, when the country supplied more than half of China's imports of chicken meat.

The anti-dumping measures are another blow to Brazilian meatpackers, who are still recovering from a food safety scandal last year.

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## **US-China trade war offers Brazil opportunity to boost soybean exports**

[Platts, 25-06-2018] One country that could indirectly benefit from the intensifying US-China trade war is Brazil, which finds itself in a strategic position to increase its market share of soybean exports to China.

China is expected to import 100 million mt of soybeans this year, up from 95 million mt in 2017. The US accounted for 33 million mt, or just over a third, of the 2017 total.

With US soybeans now in line for a 25% tariff, Chinese buyers are likely to shift their interest to the South American region, which accounts for nearly half of global soybean production.

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## **Croatian food manufacturers eye Chinese market**

[Xinhua, 17-06-2018] Croatia's agriculture ministry expects the Chinese inspectors to visit the largest Croatian producers of milk and dairy products in order to be convinced of the quality of the products, an official with the ministry said.

China has simplified the procedure for obtaining a license for the import of food products since March, which makes it easier for Croatian exporters to place their goods on the Chinese market.

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## **China's Hunan Province, Uganda sign cooperation agreement**

[Xinhua, 22-06-2018] Visiting officials from central China's Hunan Province and the Ugandan government on Friday 22 June signed a cooperation agreement aimed at boosting trade and investment.

The agreement calls for cooperation in five key priority sectors of agriculture, mining, energy (hydro power, solar and wind energy), tourism and industrialization designed to benefit both sides.

Zheng Zhuqiang, Chinese ambassador to Uganda, said the east African country should showcase good policies and tax incentives to attract more Chinese investors into the country.

Crispus Kiyonga, Uganda's ambassador to China, said Uganda is working to attract investments from other Chinese provinces.

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