

# NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL BIOSECURITY CENTER



# NABC

National Agricultural  
Biosecurity Center

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- Corn Stunt Disease.....1
- Canadian Rail Strikes.....2
- ESA Herbicide Strategy..2
- Protectionist Trade.....3
- Mexican Cattle Trade.....3

## BRINGING NATIONAL SECURITY TO AGRICULTURE PRODUCERS IN THE MIDWEST

Located on the Manhattan campus of Kansas State University, the National Agricultural Biosecurity Center, or NABC, is an integral part of the midwest’s expanding animal health corridor. The NABC contributes to and accesses a vast network of interdisciplinary research and resources in the areas of animal and plant diseases, foodborne pathogens, environmental changes, food security, emergency management and One Health.

The mission of the NABC is to facilitate prevention and response strategies that address emerging threats to agricultural economies and the food supply in the U.S. and the world.

## CORN STUNT DISEASE CONFIRMED IN KANSAS, OKLAHOMA, AND MISSOURI

**Why This Matters:** Corn stunt disease, carried by corn leafhoppers, can cause stunted growth in both the stalks and the ears, deformed ears, multiple ears on a single plant, loose kernels, yellow or reddened leaves, and other symptoms. As of right now, damage from the disease has been limited but it can lead to a significant production decline of between 5% - 100%.

Corn stunt disease has been confirmed in at least one county in Oklahoma and four counties in Missouri. In the last two weeks, the disease has been confirmed in Sedgwick, Pratt, Stafford, and Edwards counties with sweet corn also being affected in Riley County. Damage to affected stalks has been fairly minimal to date, with most of them reaching full maturity.

The disease is carried by corn leafhoppers that transmit a pathogen called *Spiroplasma kunkelii*, a bacteria-like organism. Corn leafhoppers have typically not been seen this far north in the United States as they typically stay in the southwest United States and South American region. K-State Entomology has released a video to help farmers identify and collect leafhopper samples.



## SHORT TERM SOLUTION FOR CANADIAN RAIL STRIKES

**Why This Matters:** The Canadian railroad companies are crucial for not only the American supply chain, but the North American supply chain as a whole. Continued strikes would cause mayhem for the agricultural system. The Canadian railroads are a hugely important avenue of transportation for fertilizer and other agricultural commodities from American agriculture. In 2023, \$28.2 billion of U.S. agricultural products were exported to Canada. Further strikes could cause increased price volatility, shipping delays, and other disturbances in the supply chain. This is increasingly worrisome due to continued delays

in other shipping routes throughout the world due to geopolitical conflict.

On August 22nd, the Canadian government intervened in a dispute between the Canadian National (CN) and the Canadian Pacific - Kansas City Southern (CPKC) railroad companies and their workers. The two companies locked out almost 10,000 workers over threats of a sudden strike. The two companies and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), which represents the Canadian rail workers, have been negotiating pay, scheduling, and working conditions since the current contract expired in December of 2023.

The Canadian government forced the groups into binding arbitration and ordered the rail workers to return to work. However, union leaders criticize the government's forced intervention as they feel that it has taken some of their negotiating leverage in the situation. It seems as though neither side is fully satisfied and the situation continues to be very fluid, with changes to happen at any time.



## CONCERN FOR FARMERS OVER ESA HERBICIDE STRATEGY



**Why This Matters:** The feasibility and cost to farmers nationwide of the Endangered Species Act Herbicide Strategy will be a concern to farmers nationwide. The implementation of the new strategy is set to cost American producers billions of dollars. However, for applicators that work with a mitigation specialist or participate in mitigation programs, the level of additional mitigation explained in the ESA Herbicide Strategy decreases.

The Environmental Protection Agency released the final Endangered Species Act Herbicide Strategy on August 20th and it is causing concern for crop producers nationwide. Many are concerned with the feasibility and complexity of implementing this final ruling.

American Soybean Association president Josh Gackle remarked, "While there are clear improvements to the final Herbicide Strategy over what was first proposed, we are disappointed EPA chose to leave so many opportunities on the table to make this strategy workable for U.S. agriculture." The ASA shared ongoing concerns about whether current and future mitigation requirements are supported by modern science, and whether they are legal. Additionally, there are discussions over whether the EPA has correctly identified the danger herbicides pose to endangered species. Some have noted that the EPA has been overly conservative in estimates of the risks posed to endangered species coming from the use of herbicides.

The Final ESA Herbicide Strategy involves a three step plan: assessing potential impact (categorized as low, medium, or high); determining mitigation measures (based on potential impact assessment); and applying mitigation in specific areas (areas and amount of mitigation measures necessary will vary by area).

To view the final ruling: <https://www.regulations.gov/document/EPA-HQ-OPP-2023-0365-1137>

## PROTECTIONIST TRADE POLICIES THREATEN AGRICULTURE

**Why This Matters:** Growing protectionism world wide has the ability to affect agricultural producers in the United States. Protectionist trade policies and resulting retaliation can cause depletion of stocks, price volatility, and exacerbate effects from past supply chain shocks. The American soybean market, for example, is still feeling the effects of the U.S./ China trade war from 2018–2020 and protectionist trade policies will increase those consequences and may cause new ones for the agriculture industry as a whole.

Ongoing geopolitical and climate change issues have pushed countries worldwide into enacting protectionist trade policies. Many countries are dropping out of their multilateral trade agreements to enter into bilateral and protectionist policies, which is impacting the free trade market. Countries want to protect themselves from supply chain shocks resulting from global issues (such as COVID) and have begun a natural tendency to stockpile goods, especially agricultural commodities. Agriculture is one of the easiest markets to retaliate against, so it has historically been hit the hardest when these conflicts arise.

Many eyes are on America since Trump has promised that if elected to a second term, he will enact a 60% tariff on Chinese imports and a 10% import tariff on all other goods. This is reminiscent of Trump's first term, where the United States and China entered into a trade war, which is a very likely response from China if high tariffs are enacted again.

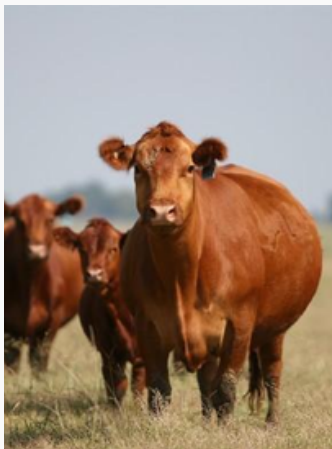
In July of 2023, India put into place a ban on non-basmati rice products along with a 10% wheat import tariff. This caused global wheat prices to rise 20% and left African countries scrambling to find rice imports. India is currently deciding whether to lift the import ban and lift the wheat tariff, but it is unlikely due to high food inflation and climate issues within the country.

Due to huge Russian wheat crops in the past two years, Turkey placed a ban on wheat imports from June 21 to mid-October. This was to protect Turkish farmers from price decreases, but it has impacted the world price in the grain market and supply chain. Many supply chains were disrupted and/or rerouted stemming as a consequence from the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the EU's restrictions on Ukrainian wheat.

Ongoing political issues surrounding Russia have economists worried that the country will enact protectionist trade policies to protect itself and its agricultural markets.

Economists explain that countries need to be working multilaterally, instead of enacting bilateral or protectionist trade policies to protect the global economy.

## KDA RECRUITED BEEF GENETICS TO SEND TO MEXICO



The Kansas Department of Agriculture has recruited beef cattle to go on an outbound genetics trade mission to Hermosillo, Mexico. This trade mission is a joint effort between the KDA, the International Brangus Breeders Association, and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture. The focus of this trade mission is to allow American producers to market their purebred beef genetics to Mexico and open up U.S. markets to Mexico. Mexico has been Kansas' top trade partner with 44% of the states agricultural exports going to Mexico.

This will take place November 4 – 8, 2024 and the team will have the opportunity to tour the beef and agribusiness sectors in Mexico. This will be the second trade that the KDA has facilitated in recent years and has proven to be an avenue to expand the relationships between Mexico and Kansas beef producers.