



## Top Stories

**8/23/16** – The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [announced](#) it is extending its deadlines and issuing clarifications for several Food Safety Modernization Act provisions. The changes include provisions on food safety controls downstream and in the distribution chain. Extensions are being made to provisions affecting companies that pack and hold produce, import food contact substances, or gin cotton, among other things. The changes will "address concerns about the practicality of compliance with certain provisions, consider changes to the regulatory text, and better align compliance dates across the rules."



**8/17/16** – The U.S. Energy Information Administration's (EIA) Short-Term Energy Outlook recently [projected](#) energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from natural gas to be 10 percent higher than those from coal in 2016 for the first time in nearly 45 years.

**8/9/16** – The U.S. Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals [upheld](#) the Department of Energy's (DOE) use of the social cost of carbon in its analysis of standards for commercial refrigeration equipment, a metric that represents the long-term economic damage to society, in U.S. dollars, from each incremental ton of CO<sub>2</sub> released into the atmosphere.

**7/13/16** – EIA Administrator, Adam Sieminski, [announced](#) that for the first time in nearly 60 years, the U.S. is on track to become a net exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG) during the second half of 2017. Additionally, EIA anticipates imports of natural gas declining from 2.6 Bcf/d in 2015 to 0.2 Bcf/d in

2017. An increase in exports to Mexico as well as an increase in LNG production for export in Louisiana are primary drivers of the estimate.

## From Congress

**7/21/16** – Forty senators [called](#) on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to boost biodiesel volumes as the agency revises its recently proposed Renewable Volume Obligations for biodiesel for 2018.



**8/23/16** – The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) took a number of actions to assist dairy producers in light of declining milk prices. On Aug. 23, USDA announced that it would purchase approximately 11 million pounds of cheese to help reduce a cheese surplus. The cheese would be distributed to food banks across the country. Additionally, on Aug. 4, USDA [announced](#) more than \$11 million in financial assistance to dairy producers enrolled in the 2016 Margin Protection Program for Dairy—the narrowing margin between milk prices and the cost of feed triggered the payments. These actions follow a letter [sent](#) to the USDA by 61 members of Congress calling for assistance on behalf of dairy producers struggling with declining milk prices.

## From the Administration

**8/22/16** – DOE [issued](#) a proposed rule for new standards for residential cooking products, including ovens and electric and gas cooking surfaces.

**8/17/16** – USDA's Secretary Vilsack [announced](#) a new investment of \$17.8 million for 37 projects aimed to help educate, mentor, and enhance the sustainability of the next generation of farmers through USDA's [Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program](#).

**8/12/16** – The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management [announced](#) a proposed lease sale of 122,405 acres offshore North Carolina for commercial wind energy leasing.

**8/12/16** – USDA's Natural Agricultural Statistics Service's [Crop Production](#) report, [indicates](#) that U.S. corn and soybean production is forecast to reach record high levels, 11 percent and 3 percent above 2015 levels respectively.

**8/11/16** – USDA in consultation with the Drug Enforcement Administration and the FDA, [released](#) a statement of principles relating to the cultivation of industrial hemp, intended to inform the public, institutions of higher education and state agriculture departments on how federal law applies to activities associated with industrial hemp that is grown and cultivated in accordance with the Agricultural Act of 2014.

**8/2/16** – USDA Secretary Vilsack [announced](#) \$36.5 million across 19 grants for research and extension to support American farmers growing specialty crops.

**7/26/16** – DOE [unveiled](#) its roadmap for boosting U.S. hydropower from 101 gigawatts (GW) to nearly 150 GW by 2050, and [released](#) nearly \$10 million to finance close to a dozen projects aimed at reducing costs and timelines for pumped storage and electrification of existing dams.

**7/21/16** – The administration [announced](#) federal and private sector actions to accelerate electric vehicle adoption in the U.S. through a set of *Guiding Principles to Promote Electric Vehicles and Charging Infrastructure*.

**7/19/16** – The administration [announced](#) the Clean Energy Savings for All Initiative, a collaborative program between various federal agencies to increase accessibility of solar

energy and to promote energy efficiency across the nation, with an emphasis on serving low-and moderate-income families.

**7/19/16** - FDA [proposed](#) revised guidance describing the type of information the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine recommends sponsors provide to address the human food safety of the use of new animal drugs in food-producing animals.

**7/18/16** – DOE Secretary Ernest Moniz [awarded](#) \$40 million for research to accelerate waste cleanup at DOE nuclear sites.

**7/18/16** – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) [issued](#) new rules removing the lesser prairie-chicken from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife, [complying](#) with a court ruling that vacated its Endangered Species Act listing decision.

**7/12/16** – DOE [announced](#) new funding to strengthen and protect the nation's electric grid from cyber and physical attacks with \$15 million to support efforts by the American Public Power Association and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association to enhance the culture of security within their organizations.

## Additional News

**8/5/16** – The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission [ruled](#) that Apple Inc. has the authority to sell the power it generates from a 130-megawatt solar array. The decision comes after subsidiary Apple Energy LLC [applied](#) in June to sell power at wholesale and provide grid services in California, the Midwest, New England and the Southwest.

## NCSL Resources

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