

China Agri-food News Digest

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Policies

New gov't tests first major reform in agriculture

BEIJING, April 3 (Xinhua) -- The State Council, or China's cabinet, on Wednesday rolled out its first major reform in agriculture since inauguration, experimenting schemes to accelerate modern agriculture.

The new government considered the development of modern agriculture "an important strategic mission" that will sustain economic growth, increase income for farmers and improve people's well-being, according to a statement issued by the State Council after an executive meeting presided over by Premier Li Keqiang.

Regions where conditions permit will be picked to carry out the pilot program involving nine major tasks to boost modern agriculture through comprehensive and coordinated agricultural reforms.

The experiments in agriculture are restricted only in Heilongjiang Province, one of the country's top grain production regions in northeast China, according to the statement.

Large-scale farming in different forms will be supported by the government, as farmers are encouraged to grow their joint partnership; family farms or cooperatives at a time when most rural young and middle-aged labor force are leaving the countryside and seek job opportunities in cities.

The government has pledged deeper reforms in rural land management system to speed up the transfer of rural land to improve efficiency and promote large-scale commercial farming.

The seizure of collectively owned rural land will be subject to strict management, according to the statement. Most rural land in China is owned collectively by a village, and farmers get contractual rights over some plots.

As part of the pilot comprehensive agricultural reforms, the government also vowed to improve financial services in rural areas, increase compensation for major grain-producing regions, boost agriculture-related technological innovation, enhance the supervision over food safety and push forward the integration of rural and urban areas.

"The pilot program marks the beginning of major economic reforms to be taken by the new government," said Cheng Guoqiang, a researcher with the Development Research Center of the State Council. "The new government has the determination to press ahead with major reforms."

The State Council's experiments in agriculture come as some economists say the Chinese economy has reached a stage where reforms must be accelerated urgently as the demographic dividend, defined as a large proportion of the workforce in the entire population, is starting to dwindle sharply in the country.

Click [here](#) for details

Agriculture cooperatives bear fruit in Guangdong

[2013-04-17 China Daily] Wu Zhide remembered his first visit to the municipal bureau of agriculture four years ago when his rural cooperative was just established in Zhanjiang, Guangdong province. When the director of the cooperative knocked on the door of one of the offices, he had no idea what kind of plants he and other farmers should pick for their fields.

With nine farmers then registering to join at the very start and now 163 households taking part, Wu's small cooperative is prospering, with various different kinds of plants allocated in its more than 333 hectares.

"All that is thanks to the new support platform set up by the bureau of agriculture," he said. The support offered includes information on planting seeds and training in farming skills.

The bureau's involvement accomplished a great deal. By the end of 2012, the number of rural cooperatives in Zhanjiang had reached 1,855, with 50,400 registered farmers.

Rural cooperatives are a new development there. Guangdong didn't have its first rural cooperative until 2003, when a cooperative that grew lychee was founded in Zhanjiang.

Wu and his fellow farmers enjoy many more conveniences than they did before when they set up a rural cooperative. They now pay a lower price for pesticides and employ helpers more easily at busy times, as they have more bargaining power.

The concept was not easy to sell at first. The neighborhood villagers misunderstood Wu's way of using their land. They complained of and even accused him of "selling out" the collective land.

In a rural cooperative, "We rent the idle land from farmers who don't have the farming capacity," said Wang Zhiwei, vice-president of Guangdong Hengfu Group Sugar Industry Co Ltd.

After renting the land, a cooperative rents the land out for free at the beginning of a harvest year either to specialized households or to individual farmers who can work it. At the end of the harvest year, the land rental is deducted from the sales of agricultural products, like sugar cane.

Click [here](#) for more details

Forum discusses China's urbanization

LOS ANGELES, April 26 (Xinhua)-- Scholars and experts on ecological civilization gathered here on Friday to discuss rural development, noting that China's development of rural culture and agriculture is of great importance to the future of itself and the world.

The 7th international forum on ecological civilization, held at Pitzer College in the suburbs of Los Angeles, focused on problems China has met in the process of urbanization, discussing ways to better develop ecological agriculture, build rural communities and expand small farms.

John B. Cobb, Jr., theologian, ecological economist, and president of the Institute for Postmodern Development of China, said in a speech that America has learned a lesson on its own road of industrialization and he hoped China "will not be attracted to the extreme form of capitalism that now controls this country."

"We deeply mourn our destruction of a once healthy rural and small town America. Independent farmers and the small towns that served them were once the backbone of our cultural and political life. Their disappearance has deeply wounded American public life," said Cobb.

Meanwhile, he said climate change will make food production require more flexibility and frequent adjustments, noting that farmers should seek help from scientists to adapt to uncertain weather conditions.

Zhihe Wang, executive director of the Institute for Postmodern Development of China, told Xinhua that China has made great achievements in its economic development in the past 30 years, but the smog in Beijing and other cities as well as water pollution have served as a warning to China that it is time to protect the environment.

Wang said when his institute sponsored the first forum, there were fewer experts and scholars attending, but this year, about 110 experts came from China, and about 60 experts from the United States, Germany and other countries.

"More and more people, from officials to experts, have realized that our environment should be protected, and economic development should not be achieved at the cost of environment," said Wang.

Click [here](#) for full details

Drought-hit areas provided with agriculture production funds

BEIJING, April 11 (Xinhua) -- The Chinese government has allocated a total of 1.5 billion yuan (239.6 million U.S. dollars) to drought-hit areas to aid their agriculture production, the Ministry of Finance said on Thursday.

The funds will go to the provinces of Shanxi, Henan, Yunnan, Gansu and Sichuan, where droughts had affected large areas of farmland, a ministry statement said.

China's drought relief authority said last week that drought in the country's central and western regions has affected 7.3 million hectares of farmland.

The ministry said the latest policy support is in response to the central government's call for increasing efforts to ensure grain output as the country has entered the season of spring farming.

Click [here](#) for details

Minister urges supporting poultry farms as bird flu saps demand

BEIJING, April 19 (Xinhua) -- A top agricultural official said Friday that the government should support poultry farms that are up to quarantine standards to prevent them from being financially devastated by the H7N9 avian flu epidemic.

Large-sized distributors should be encouraged to buy poultry products from qualified farms at protective prices, Minister of Agriculture Han Changfu said while visiting a poultry company in Beijing.

The government should coordinate credit support for major poultry farms and processors, as well as find ways to provide insurance for the farms, Han said.

He also called for subsidies for businesses that provide breeding hens in order to guarantee supplies when the poultry market picks up after the epidemic.

The poultry business is a significant source of income for Chinese farmers, but recent fears over human infections of the H7N9 virus have had a huge impact on the industry and sent prices tumbling, Han said.

H7N9-infected fowl have been found in live poultry markets but not in poultry farms and slaughterhouses, as nationwide tests have shown.

The test results demonstrated that the virus can be controlled and that it's safe to consume poultry products from markets and stores that pass quarantine inspections, Han said.

Local authorities need to further expand epidemic surveillance and step up quarantine measures, the minister noted.

Eighty-seven human infections of H7N9 avian flu have been reported in China, including 17 that ended in death, according to the National Health and Family Planning Commission.

Click [here](#) for more details

Launch of the Chinese edition of the 3rd GLOBE climate legislation study in Beijing

[8 April] Minister Xie Zhenhua, Vice Chairman of China's National Development & Reform Commission today launched the Chinese edition of the 3rd GLOBE Climate Legislation Study.

The Minister also announced that China's legislation on climate change would be comprehensive and will be forthcoming within the next two years.

The Minister was joined by GLOBE President and Chairman of the UK Statutory Climate Change Committee, Rt Hon, John Gummer, Lord Deben, the former UK Deputy Prime Minister, Rt Hon. Lord John Prescott, Steen Gade MP, the Chairman of the Danish Climate Change Committee and President of GLOBE Denmark, Arnaud Leroy MP, the Vice President of GLOBE France, and Deputy Antonio Ramos Preto, Chairman of the Portuguese Parliament's Committee on Environment and GLOBE Secretary General Adam Matthews.

The launch was also joined by China's lead climate negotiator Su Wei and the lead author of the study, Terry Townshend.

Following the launch the delegation held a detailed discussion with the Minister and his team about GLOBE's ongoing work with China to contribute the experience of legislators in the development of national climate laws and in developing carbon market legislation. Importantly a key focus of the discussion concerned GLOBE's China-EU Dialogue, exploring how China and Europe can develop common low carbon standards within key industrial sectors. It was agreed that this work will be developed jointly with the NDRC Ministry over the coming months.

Click [here](#) for more details

China plan to complete climate change law draft within two years

[19 April, 2013] China plans to draw on the experience of seven regional carbon markets as it drafts new national legislation in one or two years, according to the country's lead climate negotiator.

The nation, the biggest emitter of greenhouse gases linked to global warming, will "actively promote" the legislation, Xie Zhenhua, vice chairman at the National Development and Reform Commission, said yesterday in Beijing.

Shanghai and Shenzhen are trying to set rules for carbon trading, providing expertise for the nation, he said.

China, which surpassed Japan in 2010 to become the world's second-biggest economy, plans to cut carbon emissions per unit of economic output by 40 per cent to 45 per cent before 2020 and learn from carbon-pricing efforts in South Korea, Australia and the European Union, Xie said.

Click [here](#) for more details

Zhejiang to protect marine resources

April 22, 2013 [People's Daily]. A ban, introduced on April 16, on the fishing of hairtails in their conservation zone covers about 7,200 sq km, according to a notice issued by the Zhejiang Ocean and Fisheries Bureau, to protect resources in the East China Sea.

It is the first time the province introduced such a regulation to ensure the survival of the fish, according to Qianjiang Evening News.

The moratorium will last until July 1.

Fishery administration ships will be used to enforce the ban.

Chen Guoguang, an official with the Regional Bureau of the East China Sea Fishery Management under the Ministry of Agriculture, said that the number of wild hairtails in the East China Sea has been decreasing in recent years due to over-fishing.

Last year alone their numbers decreased by 40 percent over the year, he said.

Other major fish groups, yellow croaker, small yellow croaker and inkfish, in the sea are near extinction.

The conservative zone is the most important breeding area for fish like hairtails and yellow croaker. Their numbers indicate the stability of the fishing industry in East China Sea, Chen said.

The regulation also forbids fishing for shrimp, a vital food for hairtails.

Click [here](#) for details

Science, Technology and Environment

China to speed up food-tracking system construction

BEIJING, April 16 (Xinhua) -- China will speed up the construction of a national electronic food-tracking system as part of efforts to boost food safety supervision, a Cabinet circular said Tuesday.

Featuring an agenda on food safety work for 2013, the State Council circular urged efforts in making infant formula, ingredient milk, meat, vegetables, liquor and wine, as well as dietary supplement products traceable.

Standards concerning volumes of pathogenic microorganisms (such as bacteria), use of food additives, and levels of residue from pesticides and veterinary drugs in food products will be improved before the end of the year, the document said.

National product standards for honey and edible vegetables as well as relevant standards of testing methods will also be improved by the end of 2013.

Calling for efforts in forming a food safety credibility system, the Cabinet urged a "blacklist" system to be set up to publicize names of firms who fail to be honest in its business, a move intended to promote self-discipline initiatives in the food industry.

Click [here](#) for details

Overcrowding on farms behind mystery of China's floating pigs

[Apr 24, 2013, Reuters] - Overcrowding on farms around Shanghai was the underlying factor that led to 16,000 dead pigs floating down the Huangpu River into China's affluent financial centre, according to an analysis of official documents and interviews with farmers in the region.

The appearance last month of carcasses of rotting hogs in a river that supplies tap water to the eastern Chinese city was a morbid reminder of the pressures facing China's mostly small-scale farmers as the country grapples with food safety scares, environmental pressures and, most recently, a bird flu outbreak.

Until now the main reason for Shanghai's startling outbreak of dead hogs appeared to have been a local government crackdown on criminal gangs that had been selling abandoned carcasses as meat on the black market, meaning fewer ended up in the river.

But a deeper look suggests that an unsustainable level of overcrowding -- a key factor in the spread of disease and death rates -- was the critical issue. Experts warn that if conditions are not improved the incident may not have been a one-off.

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China's booming demand for meat has the potential to create ever more crowded farms, ripe for the spread of disease. Pork demand is expected to grow around 20 percent from 2012 levels to 60 million tons by 2020, according to a recent Rabobank report.

Data from a Nanhu district government document in September shows in 2011 the key hog farming town of Xinfeng had a level of 15.3 pigs per mu (667 sq meters), three times higher than the level of five hogs per mu local officials recommended in August 2012. The nearby village of Fengqiao had levels of 10 hog per mu.

The high density of pig farms, and the poor farm management that is often associated with small-scale farming operations, are key risk factors for porcine circovirus -- a common disease among pigs that is the most likely killer of the floating hogs -- according to many academic and scientific papers.

Many Chinese pig farmers use medicated feed containing antibiotics to help stave off disease, but cost pressures have led some to cut back on expensive vaccines in favor of giving medication later when illness strikes. Others skirt incineration costs by dumping livestock.

Click [here](#) for full details

China-developed hybrid rice to help the Philippines achieve rice self-sufficiency
MANILA, April 15 (Xinhua) -- By using the hybrid rice technology successfully developed by China, the Philippines, one of the world's largest rice importers, could become self-sufficient in the staple food and could even start exporting rice to other countries.

This was the consensus that emerged at the first National Hybrid Rice Congress held April 3-5 at the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) in the Science City of Munoz, Nueva Ecija in Central Luzon, north of Manila.

The congress, whose main speaker was Chinese agriculture scientist Yuan Longping, the acknowledged father of hybrid rice, was held to strengthen the hybrid rice industry in the Philippines.

Agriculture Secretary Proceso Alcala said that the government's goal right now is to make Filipino farmers earn more by cutting production cost and planting hybrid rice.

The country's rice self-sufficiency is almost within reach, with only 187,000 metric tons (MT) of imports this year, Alcala said.

Alcala said that through the Super Hybrid Rice and 10-5 Program (SHR-10-5), the government's goal of making the Filipino farmers rich is achievable.

China's average rice yield is more than quadruple that of the Philippines because the land area planted to hybrid rice in China is 58 percent of its 29.5 million hectares of rice land, or 17 million hectares.

Yuan, a recipient of several international awards, including the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 2011, predicts that the super hybrid rice will become a commercial success in the Philippines in three years.

Click [here](#) for more details

Super rice project could be finished in 3 years

[2013-04-27, Chinadaily] New super rice strains with an expected yield of 15 tons per hectare could be developed in three years, Chinese agricultural scientist Yuan Longping said on Friday.

A scientific research project, undertaken by Yuan, to develop the new super rice strains was launched in South China's Hainan province earlier this month.

The project had been expected to realize its target within five to eight years, but now the target could be achieved in three years, said Yuan, known as the "father of hybrid rice" for developing the first hybrid rice varieties in the 1970s.

China now grows 17 million hectares of hybrid rice, with a yield of 7.5 tons per hectare. China is now able to produce 13.5 tons of hybrid rice per hectare, but the technology has yet to be further applied.

The project will help China maintain its largely self-sufficient supply of rice, a staple food for more than 60 percent of its population, over the next few decades, experts said.

Click [here](#) for more details

China plans research centres to aid developing world

[18 April 2013, Beijing] The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) is planning a major new drive to extend science cooperation with developing countries, including setting up research centres outside China, as well as new offices of the World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) within China.

The move follows last year's election of the first Chinese president of TWAS, Bai Chunli, who is also the president of the China's science academy.

"International cooperation is very important for CAS, and as a new president of TWAS, we have more opportunity to cooperate with other developing countries," Bai Chunli tells *SciDev.Net*.

The planned new TWAS centres within China, which are still under discussion, will aim to promote the cooperation and exchange of science, and the training of scientists.

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CAS's first overseas research centre is planned to be in Kenya and will be jointly established with the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, but the details and budget for the initiative are still in discussion.

Click [here](#) for more details

Scientists confirm new H7N9 bird flu has come from chickens

[Apr 25, 2013, Reuters] Chinese scientists have confirmed for the first time that a new strain of bird flu that has killed 23 people in China has been transmitted to humans from chickens.

In a study published online in the *Lancet* medical journal, the scientists echoed previous statements from the World Health Organization (WHO) and Chinese officials that there is as yet no evidence of human-to-human transmission of this virus.

The H7N9 strain has infected 109 people in China since it was first detected in March. The WHO warned on Wednesday that this strain is "one of the most lethal" flu viruses and is transmitted more easily than the H5N1 strain of bird flu, which has killed hundreds around the world since 2003.

Kwok-Yung Yuen of the University of Hong Kong, who led the study, said its findings that chickens in poultry markets were a source of human infections meant that controlling the disease in these places and in these birds should be a priority.

Yuen's findings do not mean all cases of human H7N9 infection come from chickens, or from poultry, but they do confirm chickens as one source.

Click [here](#) for more details

No H7N9 virus found in poultry farm samples: ministry

BEIJING, April 26 (Xinhua) -- No samples collected from poultry farms so far have tested positive for the H7N9 strain of avian influenza, China's agricultural authorities said on Friday.

As of Friday, of the 68,060 samples collected from poultry markets, habitats, farms and slaughterhouses across the country, 46 have tested positive for the virus, according to a statement by the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA).

Of the 46 positive samples, 44 were from 14 live poultry markets in east China's Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Anhui provinces, central China's Henan province and the city of Shanghai, said the statement.

Two other samples from Jiangsu, including a wild pigeon and a sample collected at a household farm of carrier pigeons, also tested positive for the virus, the statement said.

The virus has not been detected in pigs, the ministry added.

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China's second national communication on climate change

The Second National Communication on Climate Change of the People's Republic of China is divided into 8 parts with relevant chapters underneath: national circumstances, national GHG inventory, climate change impacts and adaptation, policies and actions for climate change mitigation, other relevant information on achieving the objective of the Convention, needs for funds, technologies and capacity building, basic information of the Hong Kong SAR on addressing climate change, and basic information of the Macao SAR on addressing climate change, presenting a full picture of China's national circumstances related to climate change. According to the relevant decisions of UNFCCC, taking into consideration China's national circumstances, the National GHG Inventory is based on the data of 2005; however, the relevant data and information in other chapters is generally updated to 2010.

Click [here](#) for more details

International Relations

The third governing board meeting of SAIN held in Beijing

[2013-04-17, MOA] The third governing board meeting of the China-UK Sustainable Agriculture Innovation Network (SAIN) was held in Beijing on 15-16 April, 2013. The Meeting was co-chaired by Niu Dun, MOA Vice Minister and Professor Ian Boyd, the Chief Scientific Adviser of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

At the Meeting, Niu said that the meeting is an important event to strengthen China-UK cooperation in sustainable agriculture in the context of the current global food and agriculture situation, thus it is of great significance to boost all-round agricultural cooperation between China and UK, and sustainable and sound development of SAIN.

Ian agreed with Niu and pledged to work together with China to make the best use of SAIN to advance new progress in agricultural exchange and cooperation.

At the meeting, the two sides briefed each other about the latest agricultural development and respective challenges faced by China and UK, and shared thoughts on future agricultural development.

The meeting discussed a number of topics including SAIN's new working model, the plan for introducing multiple financing channels, the strategy of involving the private sector in the mechanism, and stepping up policy influence of SAIN. Extensive consensus was reached among the participants. The Meeting also reviewed and adopted the workplan for SAIN in 2013.

Click [here](#) for details

Nestle to spend \$16 million on China coffee center

[Apr 2, 2013, Bloomberg News] Nestle SA (NESN), the world's largest food company, said it will spend at least 100 million Yuan (\$16 million) on a coffee center in China as it seeks to boost consumption of the beverage in the world's most populous nation.

The coffee industry has room to grow on the mainland because consumption is lower than other parts of the region, Heiko Schipper, managing director of Nestle's Greater China food and beverage division, said in an interview in Shanghai yesterday.

The Vevey, Switzerland-based foodmaker, which sells products from Nescafe coffee to Maggi food seasonings in China, is expanding its food and beverage business as rising incomes drive consumption in the world's second-largest economy. The new center in the southwestern Yunnan province will train 5,000 farmers, agronomists and coffee business professionals a year, and will include a coffee testing laboratory as well as a consumer education facility.

China is now Nestle's second-largest market, with annual sales of about 6 billion Swiss francs (\$6.32 billion), according to the Swiss company's annual report.

Click [here](#) for details

British shops ration baby milk as Chinese demand surges

[Apr 11, 2013, Reuters] British shops are rationing sales of baby milk after Chinese visitors and bulk buyers cleared their shelves to send it to China, where many parents fear the local versions are dangerous.

The British Retail Consortium (BRC), whose members account for 80 percent of the sector, said many stores had imposed a two-box limit on each customer to deter the "unofficial exports" to China.

Demand for foreign milk powder has been high in China since at least six infants died and 300,000 fell ill in 2008 after they drank milk laced with the industrial chemical melamine.

The scandal sapped consumer confidence in Chinese-made food and led to shortages of powdered milk in Hong Kong and Australia as people bought boxes to export to China.

The rise of the middle-class Chinese working mother has greatly increased sales of baby milk in the world's most populous country. Fast-growing markets like China support a global baby food market worth an estimated \$30 billion a year.

"The major retailers of baby milk - supermarkets, chemists - are restricting sales," said BRC spokesman Richard Dodd. "They have done this in response to some customers buying

unusually large amounts. The irregular buying patterns are thought to be a result of unofficial exporting to China."

The buyers include Chinese tourists and students who take a few cartons home with them or post them to relatives. There are also organized groups who buy large amounts of powder to export to China, one businessman involved in the trade told Sky News.

Supermarkets in Britain put up signs telling customers they could only buy two boxes of milk powder per visit. Shoppers in London said they had noticed sporadic shortages and had had to visit different chains to find a preferred brand.

Beijing has tried to reassure people that milk powder and dairy products in China are now safe and rigorously tested. However, lax regulatory enforcement is still a problem.

Click [here](#) for more details

Researchers find bountiful harvest in the Congo

[2013-04-18, China Daily] Tasked with helping people in the Republic of Congo to deal with what is still one of their potential crises - inadequate food production capacity, Chinese experts at the Brazzaville-based China-Congo Agricultural Demonstration Center have made rapid progress in their efforts to meet demand.

Having started from an empty office at the end of 2011, the expert team's chief Wang Yongzhuang says the center has already developed into a research complex - home to 10 Chinese agriculture experts and 50 local workers. He says the center has been active in improving local people's farming technologies and increasing the yield and diversity of their agricultural products.

One of their latest achievements is the increased yield of cassava. The center has now selected three virus-resistant types of cassava after experimenting with 17 types. These types of cassava are expected to be introduced to the market after one or two harvests.

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All the technology and discoveries produced from these successful experiments are to be passed on to local people. Since September last year, according to the center's office chief Zhou Quanfa, the center has held three training sessions, each lasting 15 days, that have trained 58 local farmers mainly on corn and cassava growing and chicken feeding methods, while providing them with free board and food.

Click [here](#) for full details

Zambia can clinch agro exports to China — Sata

[Apr 10, 2013, Times of Zambia] PRESIDENT Michael Sata yesterday said Zambia can capture an export market in China for its agricultural produce.

President Sata made the remarks before closed-door talks with Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang and other senior Chinese government officials.

The President said Zambia had a variety of agricultural produce whose production could be scaled up in order to have a share in China's 1.3 billion strong population's market.

"Zambia is a landlocked country which China assisted with a route to the sea by helping it build the Tazara railway line.

"As a country, we have many things in common and we look to you to help us boost our employment levels," he said.

He said Zambia was an open society which would welcome Chinese people that were willing to show their prowess in Zambia's different economic sectors.

Click [here](#) for details

Smoother road for Chinese companies heading abroad

[April 18, 2013, People's Daily] Government officials vowed to enhance their services, simplify procedures and step up negotiations with foreign governments to help Chinese companies tap overseas markets.

Liu Hongkuan, deputy director of the National Development and Reform Commission's department of foreign capital and overseas investment, on Wednesday encouraged Chinese companies investing abroad to prioritize the energy, natural resources, high-tech, high-end manufacturing, and infrastructure building sectors.

At the opening session of the Chinese Enterprises Outbound Investment Conference in Beijing, Liu pledged that the government will play a major role as a facilitator in the continuous rise of China's outbound direct investment.

The government will also help with more negotiations on investment protection agreements with foreign countries, simplify and reduce administrative approval procedures related to outbound investment and speed up the establishment of a framework concerning relevant laws and regulations, he said.

Click [here](#) for more details

AmCham-China's survey on foreign firms 'debatable'

BEIJING, April 17 (Xinhua) -- An official with the Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MOC) said Wednesday that a recent survey conducted by the American Chamber of Commerce in China (AmCham-China) has under-represented foreign businesses in China, making the survey results debatable.

According to the group's annual business climate survey, which was released on March 29, 28 percent of respondents said they saw China's investment environment improving, down from 43 percent the previous year.

The report also said more than a quarter of respondents said they had experienced data breaches or theft in their China operations.

The MOC official, who works with the ministry's Department of American and Oceanian Affairs, said AmCham-China's report was based on answers from 325 respondents among its 1,100 members, but the number of foreign-funded enterprises in China has exceeded 285,000, with over 20,000 funded by American firms.

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Whether the survey results are scientific, rigorous and serious is a matter for argument, the MOC official said.

Click [here](#) for more details

China overtakes Australia as NZ's biggest export market

[Friday April 26, 2013] China has overtaken Australia as New Zealand's biggest export market for the first time, buying more meat, dairy products and pine logs, while shipments across the Tasman have fallen.

In the first quarter, exports to China jumped 32 percent to \$2.3 billion and imports rose 2.8 percent to \$1.8 billion, outpacing trade with nearest neighbour Australia, which took \$2.2

billion of New Zealand's exports, down 7.3 percent, and sent \$1.5 billion of its produce across the Tasman (down 5.3 percent).

The rise of China to New Zealand's biggest trading partner underlines the importance of high-level delegations to Beijing, such as business and cultural mission led by Prime Minister John Key this month.

Click [here](#) for more details

Chinese vice premier underlines agricultural cooperation with France

BEIJING, April 26 (Xinhua) -- Chinese Vice Premier Wang Yang met here Friday with French Agriculture Minister Stephane Le Foll, calling on the two sides to deepen agricultural cooperation.

Wang said the two countries complement each other when it comes to the agricultural sector and have great potential for cooperation.

He said the two sides should enhance coordination in international and bilateral agricultural cooperation, take measures to implement cooperative programs and deepen mutually beneficial cooperation in agriculture.

Le Foll said France is willing to work with China to support exchanges and investment cooperation between agricultural enterprises of the two countries.

Also on Friday, Wang met with Sir David Brewer, chairman of the China-Britain Business Council (CBBC), in Beijing.

Wang praised the CBBC's contribution in promoting bilateral economic and trade cooperation as well as exchanges between small and medium-sized enterprises between the two countries.

He said China will adhere to the policy of opening up, oppose trade protectionism and create more conditions for cooperation between business communities of the two countries.

Click [here](#) for more details

China, Italy steps up food safety cooperation

MILAN, Italy, April 29 (Xinhua) -- China and Italy on Monday pinpointed major cooperation to improve food safety.

In a keynote speech at the "China-Italy food safety forum," Jiang Fan, Deputy Director General of China's Ministry of Commerce said that the trade between Italy and China in agricultural food products had been growing steadily over the past few years.

The forum, held in Italy's business capital Milan, attracted around 100 officials and companies from the two countries.

Jiang said China is attaching increasing importance to food supervision and related standards.

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Italy, meanwhile, is the largest exporter of chocolate to China with a market share of 40.3 percent, and the second largest exporter of pasta, with a share of 18.8 percent, according to local estimates. Olive oil, wine, coffee and cheese are also increasingly appreciated in China.

Click [here](#) for details

For more information about UK China Sustainable Agriculture Innovation Network (SAIN), please visit: <http://www.sainonline.org/English.html>

If you have any further enquiries, please contact Yuelai Lu at: y.lu@uea.ac.uk