

Relocation Planning – Impacts to Upcoming Products

Due to decreased staffing levels, ERS will for considerable time be unable to provide the same level of breadth and depth in its economic research and outlook analysis as it did in the past.

The following bullets represent a preliminary list of impacts to products scheduled for release in October through December. This list is for internal use and subject to change. It will be updated as needed.

Calendar Items

The research divisions do not currently plan to discontinue current products listed on the calendar. However, due to potential shortages in staff, including web posting staff, there may be delays in some posting products, particularly on heavy posting days.

- Many Commodity and Trade related Outlook products (comprising over 90% of ERS calendar items) are expected to be released on schedule.
- Most Outlook Reports will be shortened if key staff depart before new hires are trained and if secure IT connections preclude remote participation in WASDE and other interagency meetings. For example, they will have fewer or no ‘special articles,’ limited data visualizations, no tables in some PDF reports when they are also available as excel files.
- Monthly season average commodity price forecasts may be delayed in October and after if key staff depart before new hires are onboarded and trained. These 2-year price forecasts are used by Risk Management Agency and World Agricultural Outlook Board.
- The Fruit & Tree Nut yearbook (annual data product on the calendar for Oct 31) and monthly Aquaculture data product updates will likely be delayed for similar reasons.
- Congressionally mandated, biannual Cost of Production estimates released in October are not expected to be delayed. The December Cost of Production forecasts may be delayed if new hires cannot be onboarded and trained in time (the majority of team members are leaving ERS).
- Monthly Food Price Outlook may be delayed in Oct., Nov., and Dec.
- Rural America at a Glance and America’s Diverse Family Farms are currently on schedule but will need people to shepherd them through clearance and will need editorial support from PSB.
- The November Farm Income release is not expected to be delayed but may encounter issues if editorial and posting resources are not available.

Reports

All divisions anticipate delays in the production and release of ERS reports. The divisions will work with PSB on prioritization of reports given limited editorial staff. See list of reports that may be affected below.

Food Economics Division

- How Americans Spend Time on Food-Related Activities: A Time-Use Analysis using the 2004-16 American Time Use Survey
- Household Food Insecurity and Federal Housing Assistance
- Cost Containment and Participant Access in the WIC Program
- Resource Requirements of Future Food Demand in the United States
- Food Loss at the Farm and Pre-Retail Sectors: A Look at the Produce Supply Chain in the United States
- Food, Temperature, Season, Region and Campylobacteriosis in the U.S., EIB,
- Cost Implications of Participant Product Selection in the Women, Infants and Children Program
- The Potential Impact of New Bread and Breakfast Cereal Products on U.S. Nutrient Consumption
- An Examination of Veterans' Diet Quality
- Household Characteristics and the State Economic and Policy Environment are Both Linked to Food Insecurity Among Households with Children
- Estimating Prices for Foods Reported Consumed in Dietary Recall Data: The Purchase to Plate Price Tool
- Food Purchasing Patterns and Obesity in the United States
- The Cost of Foodborne Illness: What's Science Got to Do with It?
- Water for Food: Tracking Freshwater Use in the U.S. Food Supply Chain
- Marketing Practices and Financial Performance of Local Food Producers: A Comparison of Beginning and Experienced Farmers
- The Impact of Super Center Stores on the Availability of SNAP-Approved Stores
- Food Security Among Working-Age Veterans

Market and Trade Economics Division

In addition to the reports listed on the ERS calendar (summarized above) significant delays in producing most research reports are expected due to staff attrition. These include the following reports that have been submitted into the ERS peer review process or are in the post-peer review clearance stage; significant delays also occurring with reports not yet to these stages:

- Changes in Trade from Removing Global Market Distorting Policies
- Agricultural Market Access Under Tariff Rate Quotas
- U.S. Agricultural Exports to Regions in China
- The Changing Composition of US Ag Trade with Canada and Mexico
- Evaluating USDA Long-Run Forecasts for US Harvested Area
- India's Oilseed and Feed Market
- U.S. Competition for Southeast Asia Dairy Imports
- Food Loss at the Farm and Pre-Retail Sectors: A Look at the Produce Supply Chain in the United States

- Brazil's Agricultural Competitiveness: Impact on Global Trade
- Issues and Trends in Production Practices and Costs of the U.S. Corn Sector
- Factors Contributing to Changes in Agricultural Commodity Prices and Trade for the United States and the World
- A Deeper Look into the USDA Crop Baseline Projections

Resource and Rural Economics Division

- The changing drivers of the opioid epidemic: From physical disability in the 2000s to economic hardship in the 2010s
- The Distribution of Farm Household Income and Wealth
- Consolidation in U.S. Dairy Farming
- SNAP Impacts on the Rural and Urban Economies in the Aftermath of the Great Recession
- Honeybees on the Move: Pollination Services and Honey Production
- Cover Crop Trends and Practices in the U.S.
- Farm Use of Futures, Options and Marketing Contracts
- Scenarios of Global Diets and the Impact on Land Resources
- Trends in Organic Production and Marketing in the U.S.

Other Products not listed on the calendar

- Charting the Essentials may not receive its typical annual update for all charts.
- There will be Charts of Note in the queue through early November (3 new and 2 ICYMI per week).
- Marketing of ERS webinars – While the communications team plans to conduct routine, regularly scheduled webinars (such as farm income in Nov), there may be limited web support for marketing the webinars on the ERS website and some consolidation may need to occur in terms of where information about the webinars is posted.
- The September webinar on the Rice Market Outlook (delivered by MTED staff but hosted by University of Arkansas) will be delayed.
- With fewer staff, we expect to be able to support a reduced number of staff analysis requests and briefings.

Delayed/Discontinued Products (non-calendar items)

Due to the relocation, the following non-calendar products will be delayed (past their target publication date) or discontinued until further notice. Products are listed by division:

Food Economics Division

- Food Environment Atlas—updated data is expected in early Fall—this will be delayed
- Price Spreads from Farm to Consumer—this is updated periodically and any updates in the Fall will probably be delayed.

- FoodAPS—all updates, especially to the publications page, will be completed by the end of September; any updates in the Fall may be delayed.
- SNAP Policy Database, which was to be updated in 2020, will be delayed.
- Quarterly Food at home prices database will not be updated or significantly delayed.
- Food Consumption and Nutrient Intakes Data Product will not be updated.
- 2020 ERS Cost of Foodborne Illness Data Product will be delayed.
- The Food Processing Topic Page will no longer be updated.
- The Food Retailing Topic Page may be delayed or no longer updated.

Market and Trade Economics Division

- Updates to nearly all topic pages will be delayed until sufficient staffing levels are obtained; this includes a number of high-demand commodity topic pages including Corn & Feedgrains, Cotton & Wool, Fruit & Tree Nuts, Rice, Soybeans & Oil Crops, Sugar & Sweeteners, Vegetables & Pulses, Wheat, and Bioenergy.
- Data products that are not calendar items, including high demand commodity related data products, will likely be delayed.

Resource and Rural Economics Division

- County-level Oil and Gas Production in the U.S. will be discontinued.
- Creative Calls County Codes will be discontinued.

Note: Next steps will include developing consistent external messaging for delayed and/or discontinued products.