

# Corn Belt Drought, Hainan Crop Losses, and Turkey's Urea Duty Cut

Global Agricultural Developments

2026-03-08

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*By Global Agricultural Developments • March 8, 2026*

U.S. drought risk, Hainan weather and margin pressure, and Turkey's zeroing of a 6.5% urea import duty were the clearest market signals in this source set. The brief also highlights early-stage crop-protection innovation and practical soil and livestock management guidance.

### 1) Market Movers

This source set was light on benchmark grain and livestock price quotes, but it did surface several clear drivers of farm economics.

- **United States - Corn Belt supply risk:** U.S. Drought Monitor data showed worsening conditions across the Corn Belt, with Illinois and Nebraska seeing expanding moderate and severe drought [1].
- **United States - Corn demand policy:** At Commodity Classic, an Indiana farmer pushed E15 and other new corn markets, reinforcing continued interest in demand-side support for corn [2].
- **China - Hainan horticulture margins:** Recently introduced strawberries and tomatoes were described as facing a roughly **RMB 2 per jin** price drop from around **RMB 7-8 per jin**. Combined with a **2,000 jin per mu** yield loss, that translated to about **RMB 4,000 per mu** in losses [3].
- **China - Storm losses:** 2025 typhoons were described as causing individual mango-farm losses ranging from more than **RMB 30,000** to more than **RMB 80,000** [3].

## 2) Innovation Spotlight

- **Denmark / global potatoes:** Mycoverse, a spin-out from the Technical University of Denmark, raised **€2.4 million (\$2.78 million)** in pre-seed funding to advance fungi-based biological crop protection built on an **AI-driven discovery platform** and proprietary fungal production technology [4]. Its first target is **potato late blight**, a market described at about **\$2.2 billion** globally [4]. The company said it identified early candidates in **five months**, with promising greenhouse results, and will use the new capital for expanded field trials [4].
- **United States - herbicide pipeline:** FMC is developing **Rimisoxafen**, a new herbicide active ingredient aimed at resistant pigweeds including **waterhemp** and **Palmer amaranth** in **corn** and **soybeans** [5].
- **China - protected pest management:** In Hainan bean production, expert-supported pest control combined **pesticide rotation**, **semi-enclosed insect nets**, **flower removal**, and **tip pruning**. The report said this improved pest control, yield, and quality [3].
- **China - market-timed mango production:** Wuxing Village mango growers use **off-season flower induction**, pruning in **February** to concentrate flowering in **July-September** so fruit can reach market before **Spring Festival**, when better prices are targeted [3].

## 3) Regional Developments

- **United States:** Expanding drought in Illinois and Nebraska is the main production-side signal from this note set for the U.S. Corn Belt [1].
- **China - Hainan:** A production system built around off-season mangoes and diversified horticulture is dealing with multiple pressures at once: typhoon damage, pest pressure, and weaker prices in newer crops such as strawberries and tomatoes [3].



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- **Turkey:** A Turkish market commentator reported that the **6.5%** customs duty on imported **urea-form fertilizer** was cut to zero, and argued that the move should lower agricultural input costs and offset fertilizer price increases tied to crude oil moves and raw-material delays [6].

#### 4) Best Practices

The most actionable guidance in this source set centered on soil-risk management and livestock handling.

- **Soil and compost testing:** In a community discussion, growers emphasized testing suspect soil or compost before use. One commenter cited local-university testing at **\$30-60** for lead and other contaminants, while others stressed avoiding untested or high-risk inputs, biosolids, and contaminated water sources [7, 8, 9].
- **If heavy metals are already present:** Suggested responses ranged from **phytoremediation** with sunflowers or fungi, described as a long process that could take **years to decades**, to **dilution** with clean material or full **removal and disposal** of contaminated compost or topsoil [10, 11].
- **Reducing crop uptake:** Commenters suggested managing **soil pH** and favoring crops whose edible portion is less likely to accumulate metals; in that discussion, **fruits, berries, and corn** were presented as safer choices than **leafy greens or potatoes** [10].

- **Placement of humanure compost:** One commenter advised using humanure compost under **trees** or other non-vegetable plantings rather than on vegetables [12, 13].
- **Mixed goat-sheep housing:** Keep **copper** access separate because goats need it while sheep tolerate little. One commenter suggested **copper boluses every 6-12+ months** for goats and separate feeding or mineral stations; another warned that **rams can injure pregnant does** [14, 15].

## 5) Input Markets

- **Turkey - nitrogen:** The clearest fertilizer policy move in the source set was the reported reduction of the **urea import duty from 6.5% to zero**. The same commentary said that alone could offset potential fertilizer price increases by **6.5 points** [6].
- **China - grower cost pressure:** In Hainan, rising **fertilizer** and **pesticide** prices were described as reducing growers' willingness to plant, alongside calls for subsidy and sales-support policies [3].
- **Crop protection pipeline:** On the chemical side, FMC's Rimisoxafen remains in development for resistant pigweeds in U.S. corn and soybean systems [5]. On the biological side, Mycoverse's new funding will move fungi-based crop protection from greenhouse work into broader field testing [4].

## 6) Forward Outlook

- **United States:** Watch whether drought in **Illinois** and **Nebraska** broadens across the Corn Belt as the season advances [1].
- **United States:** E15 and new corn-market advocacy remains a demand-side theme to monitor after Commodity Classic [2].
- **Turkey:** The zero-duty urea move bears watching as a possible short-term buffer against nitrogen cost increases linked in the source to energy and raw-material disruptions [6].
- **China - Hainan:** Seasonal planning still hinges on market timing and weather resilience. Growers are targeting the pre-Spring Festival window through off-season mango flowering, but last year's typhoon losses show the downside of that weather exposure [3].
- **Crop protection:** Watch whether Mycoverse's field trials confirm its early greenhouse results in late blight control, and whether FMC advances Rimisoxafen toward commercial use in resistant pigweed management [4, 5].

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## Sources

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