



Tim Francisco <info@farmdirection.com>

GOOD MORNING: 05/16/17 Farm Direction - VanTrump Report

2 messages

Kevin Van Trump <kvt@farmdirection.com>
 To: Kevin Van Trump <kvt@farmdirection.com>
 Bcc: info@farmdirection.com

Tue, May 16, 2017 at 6:06 AM



"Success is a lousy teacher. It seduces a lot of people into thinking they are smart and can't lose." — Unknown

TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2017
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Morning Summary: Stock markets are steady to mixed this morning but only after both the S&P 500 and Nasdaq set fresh new all-time record highs yesterday. A big winner coming into the week were 'tech companies' but there's a bit of uncertainty about what the "WannaCry" cyberattack could do if it spreads deeper into the space? Though the spread has slowed, there are concerns that another cybercriminal may be inspired to perfect the code used and launch an even more damaging attack. That would obviously give antivirus and other cyber-security related companies a good boost, but could create a drag for some of the other leading online companies. Bottom-line, we must continue to closely monitor the cyber attacking headlines! Oil markets have gotten off to a strong start this week, following public announcements from Saudi Arabia and Russia that they both favor extending oil production cuts into the first quarter of 2018. Citigroup said yesterday they anticipate OPEC, Russia and other producers could even deepen production cuts later this month, saying there is a 60% to 70% chance they could cut production by another -300,000 to -500,000 barrels per month. Keep in mind OPEC's next meeting is right around the corner on May 25th. As for economic data here at home, investors are anxious to see the latest in U.S. Housing Starts. The report is expected to show that April Starts and Permits both saw modest gains. One big positive in the March report was a big jump in single-family home completions, which insiders are hoping to see continue as the low supply of new homes is holding the industry back from its full potential. Industrial Production is also due out today. In Washington, the controversy surrounding President Trump's dismissal of FBI Director James Comey continues. Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein on Thursday will brief the full Senate on the matter. Rosenstein was in the spotlight last week when a letter he sent was held up as the reason Trump fired Comey, however Trump later countered that idea saying he was going to fire him no matter what. Rosenstein also was rumored to have threatened to quit amid Comey's firing, though Rosenstein later denied the claim.

North Korea Conducts Another Missile Test: North Korea said on Monday it had successfully conducted a mid-to-long-range missile test and would continue such launches "any time, any place", defying UN Security Council resolutions and warnings from the United States. The North's KCNA news agency said Sunday's test launch verified the homing feature of the warhead that allowed it to survive "under the worst re-entry situation" and accurately detonate. They also claimed the missile is capable of carrying a "large-size heavy nuclear warhead." U.S. military experts say the test represents an improved level of performance never before seen from a North Korean missile. The range of the missile appears capable of reaching the U.S. base at Guam. The UN Security Council is scheduled to discuss North Korea and its most recent ballistic missile tests today. The United States called the missile launch a message to South Korea, days after Moon took office pledging to engage Pyongyang in dialogue and keep up international pressure to impede the North's arms pursuit. (Source: Reuters)

U.S. Shale Drillers Will Keep On Pumping: The U.S. Energy Information Administration is forecasting American shale oil drillers will raise output again in June, forecasting production will rise by 122,000 barrels a day next month. In June, total output from these resources is expected to reach 5.4 million barrels a

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day, according to EIA. Production growth in U.S. shale fields has driven a 10 percent recovery in the country's overall crude output since September. Drilling in the Permian basin in Texas and New Mexico is once again expected to lead that gains, with output poised to rise by 71,000 barrels a day in June. The agency also reported that OPEC members lost \$76 billion in 2016 due to low oil prices caused by rising U.S. oil production. EIA's report estimates that in 2016, OPEC earned about \$433 billion in net oil export revenues. That's 15 percent lower and \$76 billion less than the \$509 billion the cartel earned in 2015, and the lowest earnings posted by OPEC since 2004. OPEC net oil export earnings are expected to increase in 2017. The expected increase in OPEC's net export earnings is attributed to a slightly higher forecast in annual crude oil prices in 2017 compared with 2016 as well as slightly higher OPEC output during the year. (Source: EIA, CNBC)

Value Of \$1,000 Invested In Amazon Twenty Years Ago: Twenty years ago yesterday, Amazon's stock made it's market debut. Few investors could have foreseen that it would gain about 50,000% in the two decades after its initial public offering. One thousand dollars invested at the closing price on Amazon's IPO day would be worth over \$491,000 on Monday, based on the stock's price in early trading. That kind of return escaped even investors as seasoned as Warren Buffett, the Berkshire Hathaway CEO who recently said he was "too dumb to realize what was going to happen." Amazon's cloud-computing business has driven its growth and profitability, while its core retail business is threatening brands that were around long before. It would have taken a rare kind of discipline to stick with the stock through its downturns. Shares have dropped by more than 10% and an average of 36% from their intrayear peak in each of the past 20 years, according to Michael Batnick, the director of research at Ritholtz Wealth Management. (Source: Business Insider)

MARKETS ▴ CHART OF THE DAY

VALUE OF \$1,000 INVESTED IN AMAZON

Value of \$1,000 invested at the closing price on May 15, 1997



SOURCE: Yahoo Finance. Prices adjusted for splits and dividends.

BUSINESS INSIDER

Weather is focused on severe storms impacting the Plains states and rain in the western Midwest for this week. Forecasts are calling for a mixed rain pattern in the Midwest, while Western areas will see moderate to heavy rain, causing planting delays but also providing beneficial crop moisture. Eastern Midwest areas will have drier conditions, offering improvement in fieldwork and planting following heavy rain earlier in the month. In the southern Plains, the winter wheat crop is continuing to recover from the effects of cold and snow in April. Warm humid weather prevails in advance of an approaching cold front. However, showers and thunderstorms are developing across the northern Plains -- especially the Dakotas -- trailed by a push of cooler air into Montana. A slow moving storm system will become better organized over the western U.S. before emerging across the central Plains. The low-pressure system will cross the upper Great Lakes region by Thursday. Along the storm's trailing cold front, showers and severe thunderstorms will affect portions of the Plains and upper Midwest. Late in the week, a second system in the wake of the initial storm will result in additional rainfall in the nation's mid-section, particularly across the central and southern Plains and the mid-South. Five-day rainfall totals could reach 1 to 4 inches from the southern Plains into the upper Great Lakes. In contrast, little to no precipitation will fall across the Desert Southwest and the lower Southeast. Looking to South America, Brazil is



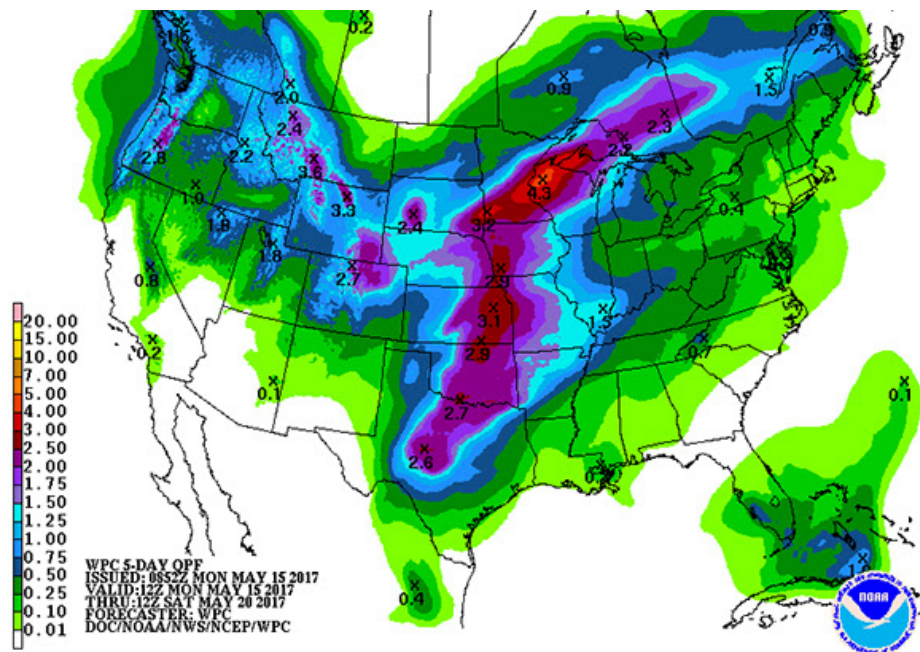
Today In History



1881, Dick Fellows - An inept horseman but persistent outlaw, Dick Fellows becomes a free man after spending five years in the San Quentin prison. Like many western bandits, Fellows drifted into life of crime when his efforts to make an honest living failed or provided only a poor income. Born George Lyttle in Kentucky in 1846, he came from an upstanding family and planned to become a lawyer. The outbreak of the Civil War put his ambitions on hold, though. While still in his teens, he fought with the Confederate Army until he was captured in 1863 and spent the rest of the war in a northern prison camp. After his release, he returned home and attempted to obtain a license to practice law, but his fondness for hard drinking apparently interfered. With few opportunities available to him in Kentucky, Fellows headed West where he began robbing stagecoaches near Los Angeles and adopted the alias Dick Fellows. Fellows concocted a plan to hold up a coach carrying Wells Fargo's chief detective, James B. Hume. A man of such importance, Fellows reasoned, must be escorting a major shipment of gold or money. In fact, Fellows was right--the coach was carrying \$240,000. However, he missed his chance to rob the stage when the horse he had stolen threw him, knocking him cold for several hours. Refusing to walk away with nothing, Fellows stole a second horse and held up a different stage. He succeeded in taking the heavy treasure box, but only then realized he had forgotten to bring the tools he needed to break it open. When he tried to lift the box up on his horse's saddle, he startled his mount and it, too, raced off. Fellows had little choice but to lug the heavy box by hand. In the darkness, he fell over a high bluff, knocking himself unconscious for the second time that day. When he came to, he discovered that his left leg was broken and the treasure box had crushed his left foot. He managed to limp to a nearby construction camp, where he fashioned a crude pair of crutches and used a stolen axe to break open the box where he

the desert southwest and the lower southeast. Looking to South America, Brazil is expected to see periods of showers this week which will favor developing and filling corn. In Argentina, mixed rain is in the forecast as heavy amounts are in store for east-central crop areas and will cause some harvest disruptions.

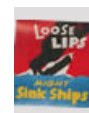
Heavy Rains To Delays Planting in Midwest: At least two rounds of severe storms are anticipated this week through the central Midwest. Some of the storms may produce heavy rain, leading to localized areas of flash flooding. Early in the week, severe thunderstorms are forecast from western Kansas to the Oklahoma panhandle and west Texas. The second threat will nudge into the Plains on Thursday. Severe thunderstorms will fire up from Kansas southward through Oklahoma and Texas. Again, these storms will bring heavy rain throughout the Midwest and could exacerbate the already water-logged portions of southern Missouri and northern Arkansas.



Corn bears are excited to see the USDA's most recent planting estimates indicating that 71% of the U.S. crop is now in the ground, which is actually a fraction ahead of our traditional 5-year average pace. Remember, many traders including myself thought we would still be lagging a bit behind. There's really not a lot new or fresh in the headlines, so I included below the specific state-by-state breakdown of planting and specifically how much each state was able to get planted last week. It was interesting to see several big production states get over +30% of their corn acres planted in a one week time window. Also keep in mind that four large production states...Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota and South Dakota are all now running ahead of schedule. Illinois is 75% planted and very close to being considered at or ahead of their traditional pace. It's simply amazing how quickly the American farmer can now get the crop in the ground. There's talk we will start to see U.S. corn crop condition ratings in a couple of weeks. With the U.S. looking as if it will easily have 80% of its corn planted by the third week in May, a large portion of the trade will start to take a more relaxed attitude. As a producer I continue to keep all hedges in place and suspect we may soon test the lower end of the recent trading range.

- Minnesota planted 49% of their crop last week, now at 84% planted
- South Dakota planted 45% of their crop last week, now at 77% planted
- North Dakota planted 35% of their crop last week, now at 58% planted
- Iowa planted 33% of their crop last week, now at 85% planted
- Wisconsin planted 33% of their crop last week, now at 48% planted
- Nebraska planted 30% of their crop last week, now at 78% planted
- Colorado planted 24% of their crop last week, now at 53% planted
- Kentucky planted 18% of their crop last week, now at 68% planted
- Kansas planted 15% of their crop last week, now at 60% planted
- Tennessee planted 12% of their crop last week, now at 89% planted
- Missouri planted 10% of their crop last week, now at 87% planted
- Illinois planted 10% of their crop last week, now at 75% planted
- Michigan planted 10% of their crop last week, now at 30% planted
- Pennsylvania planted 9% of their crop last week, now at 35% planted
- North Carolina planted 5% of their crop last week, now at 93% planted
- Indiana planted 5% of their crop last week, now at 56% planted
- Texas planted 3% of their crop last week, now at 80% planted

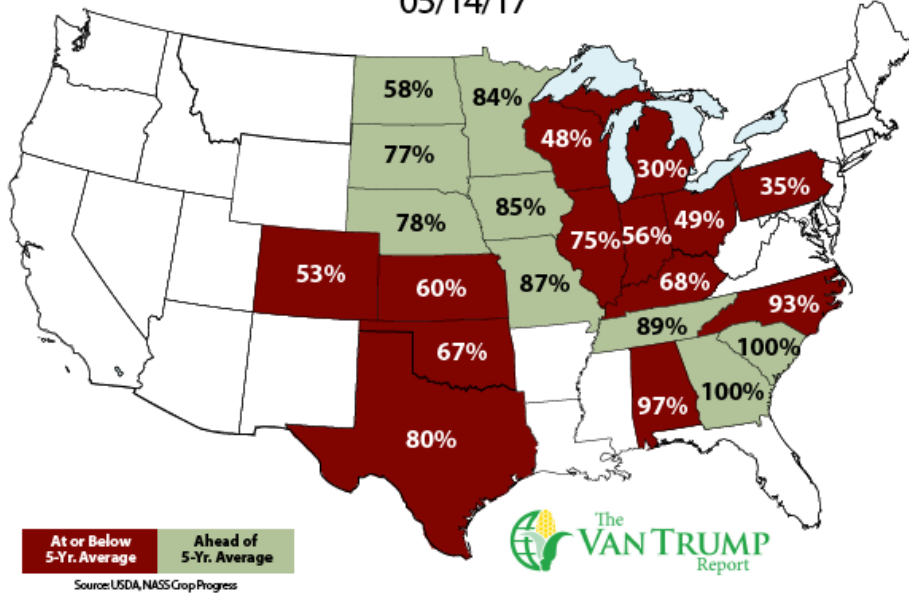
found \$1800. Unfortunately, the luckless Fellows never had a chance to spend his ill-gotten gains. The Wells Fargo detectives soon tracked him down, and he was sentenced to eight years in the San Quentin prison. Pardoned and released on this day in 1881, Fellows made a stab at earning an honest living, working briefly for a newspaper and even teaching Spanish for a time. Again, the money was inadequate to Fellow's tastes, and he returned to robbing stages. By the time he was recaptured in February 1882, Fellows had become a celebrity. While in jail in San Jose, he received more than 700 visitors. Sentenced to life in Folsom Prison, Fellows devoted part of his time there to teaching a course in moral philosophy to his fellow inmates. Pardoned in 1908 at the age of 62, he returned to his home in Kentucky and faded from the historical record.



1918, Sedition Act - The United States Congress passes the Sedition Act, a piece of legislation designed to protect America's participation in World War I. Aimed at socialists, pacifists and other anti-war activists, the Sedition Act imposed harsh penalties on anyone found guilty of making false statements that interfered with the prosecution of the war; insulting or abusing the U.S. government, the flag, the Constitution or the military; agitating against the production of necessary war materials; or advocating, teaching or defending any of these acts. Those who were found guilty of such actions, the act stated, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment for not more than twenty years, or both, the same penalty imposed for acts of espionage. One of the most famous prosecutions under the Sedition Act during World War I was that of Eugene V. Debs, a pacifist labor organizer and founder of the International Workers of the World (IWW) who had run for president on several occasions. After delivering an anti-war speech in June 1918 in Canton, Ohio, Debs was arrested, tried and sentenced to 10 years in prison under the Sedition Act. Debs appealed the decision, and the case eventually reached the U.S. Supreme Court, where the court ruled Debs had acted with the intention of obstructing the war effort and upheld his conviction. In the decision, Chief Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes referred to the earlier landmark case of Schenck v. United States (1919), when Charles Schenck, also a Socialist, had been found guilty under the Espionage Act after distributing a flyer urging recently drafted men to oppose the U.S. conscription policy. In this decision, Holmes maintained that freedom of speech and press could be constrained in certain instances. Debs' sentence was commuted in 1921 when the Sedition Act was repealed by Congress.

- Ohio planted 3% of their crop last week, now at 49% planted

Corn Planted 05/14/17



Soybean traders are digesting a slightly less than expected April NOPA crush estimate. Several of the bears are saying this should eventually push the USDA to reducing their current domestic crush estimate by -5 to -10 million bushels. The USDA showed 32% of the U.S. soybean crop is now planted up from 14% last week and right on pace with our historical 5-year average. It was interesting to see big-production states like Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska and the Dakotas all had huge weeks in the fields. Below are some additional state-by-state soybean planting specifics:

- Minnesota planted 43% of their crop last week, now at 47% planted
- Iowa planted 31% of their crop last week, now at 40% planted
- North Dakota planted 25% of their crop last week, now at 29% planted
- Nebraska planted 24% of their crop last week, now at 37% planted
- South Dakota planted 24% of their crop last week, now at 29% planted
- Missouri planted 15% of their crop last week, now at 24% planted
- Wisconsin planted 13% of their crop last week, now at 15% planted
- Arkansas planted 12% of their crop last week, now at 62% planted
- Kansas planted 12% of their crop last week, now at 16% planted
- North Carolina planted 11% of their crop last week, now at 19% planted
- Tennessee planted 11% of their crop last week, now at 19% planted
- Louisiana planted 10% of their crop last week, now at 86% planted
- Michigan planted 10% of their crop last week, now at 11% planted
- Illinois planted 9% of their crop last week, now at 23% planted
- Kansas planted 8% of their crop last week, now at 18% planted
- Mississippi planted 7% of their crop last week, now at 81% planted
- Indiana planted 4% of their crop last week, now at 23% planted
- Ohio planted 3% of their crop last week, now at 19% planted

1929, Academy Awards - This night in



1929 marks the first-ever Academy Awards ceremony, Hollywood's annual celebration of the best its creative artists have to offer over the previous year. The official Academy Awards banquet took place in the Blossom Room of the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel. Some 270 people attended, and tickets cost \$5 each. After a long dinner, complete with numerous speeches, Douglas Fairbanks, the president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which had been formed in 1927, handed out 15 awards in a five-minute ceremony. The awards presentation was somewhat anticlimactic compared to today's Academy Award ceremonies, as the winners had already been announced in February. In 1929, movies were just making the transition from silent films to so-called "talkies," but all the nominated films were without sound. For the only time in Academy history, Best Picture honors were split into two categories: Best Picture - Unique and Artistic Production, and Best Picture - Production. The winner in the first category was F.W. Murnau's romantic drama *Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans*, starring George O'Brien and Janet Gaynor. William Wellman's film *Wings*, set in the World War I-era and starring Clara Bow, Charles "Buddy" Rogers and Richard Arlen, won in the second category. Other winners of the night included the German actor Emil Jannings as Best Actor for two films, *The Last Command* and *The Way of All Flesh*; and Gaynor as Best Actress. She had received three of the five nominations in the category, and was honored for all three roles, in *Sunrise*, *Seventh Heaven* and *Street Angel*. The Academy also presented an honorary award to Charles Chaplin; it would be the only honor the great actor and filmmaker would receive from the organization until 1972, when he returned to the United States for the first time in two decades to accept another honorary award. Starting with the following year's awards, the Academy began releasing the names of the winners to the press on the night of the awards ceremony to preserve some suspense. That practice ended in 1940, after the Los Angeles Times published the results in its evening edition, which meant they were revealed before the ceremony. The Academy then instituted a system of sealed envelopes, which remains in use today.

Upcoming Events

Mon. 5/22 - Cold Storage

Wed. 5/24 - Minutes From 5/3 FOMC Meeting Released

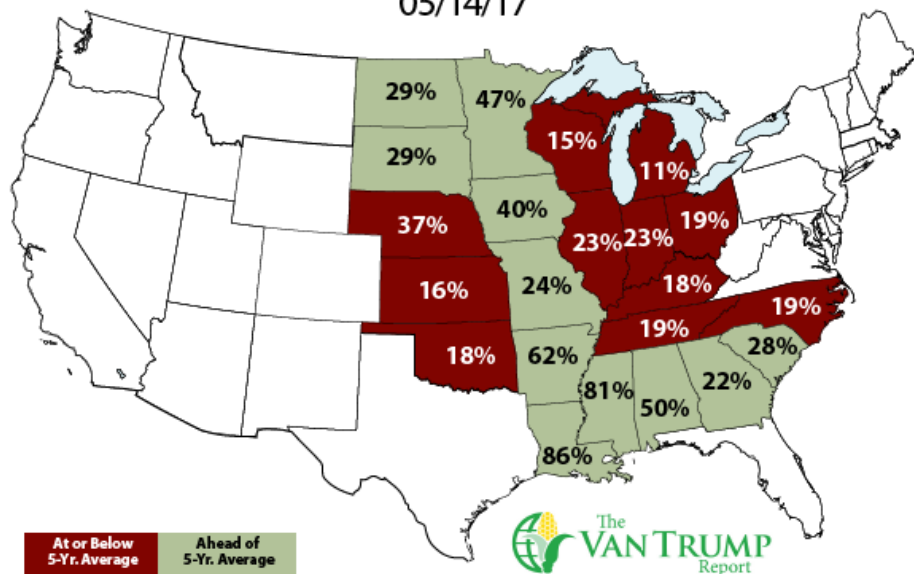
Fri. 5/26 - Cattle on Feed

Mon. 5/29 - Memorial Day - Markets

From 5/15 Memorial Day - Markets Closed

Soybean Planted

05/14/17



Wheat bulls were happy to see the USDA lower their weekly winter crop condition estimate from 53% down to 51% of the crop now rated "Good-to-Excellent". Some of the larger declines in conditions came in states like Illinois, Montana and South Dakota. the largest improvements came in states like Idaho, Michigan and Nebraska. Interestingly to me overall winter wheat conditions in the state of Kansas also improved, as many of us were thinking we see another round of setbacks. The USDA also showed spring wheat planting last week jumped by +24% to 78% complete and now actually ahead of our traditional 5-year average. Technically the wheat market continues to struggle as the funds continue to hold a near record short position. In fact many insiders suspect the wheat market may eventually attempt to retest its current contract lows. Continuing to stay extremely patient as a bull despite the obvious nearby bearish fundamentals.

Fri. 6/9 - USDA Supply and Demand

Tues.-Wed. 6/13-14 - FOMC Meeting

Thurs. 6/22 - Cold Storage

Fri. 6/23 - Cattle on Feed

Fri. 6/29 - Quarterly Hogs and Pigs

Fri. 6/30 - Quarterly Stocks and Acreage

Tues. 7/4 - Independence Day - Markets Closed

Wed. 7/5 - Minutes From 6/14 FOMC Meeting Released

Wed. 7/12 - USDA Supply and Demand

Fri. 7/21 - Cattle on Feed

Mon. 7/24 - Cold Storage

Tues.-Wed. 7/25-26 - FOMC Meeting

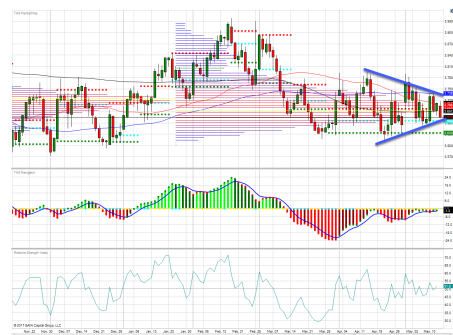
Fri. 8/10 - USDA Supply and Demand

Wed. 8/16 - Minutes From 7/26 FOMC Meeting

Tues. 8/22 - Cold Storage

Fri. 8/25 - Cattle on Feed

Chart Of The Week



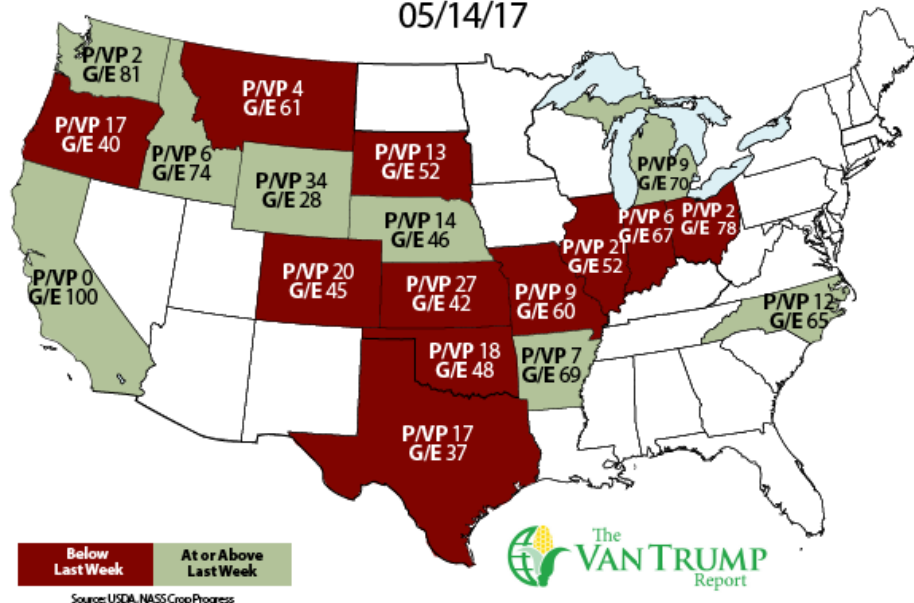
July Corn

The pennant is tightening. A breakout and close above 374'0 or below 366'0 could help to set near term trend direction. Momentum is ascending upward.

[Enlarge July Corn Chart »](#)

Winter Wheat Conditions

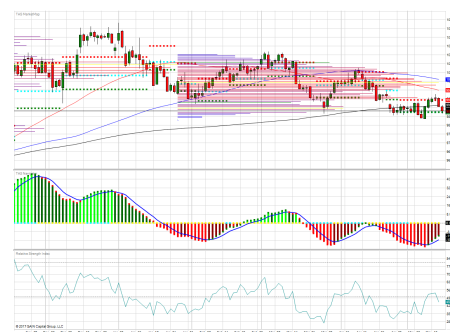
05/14/17





Need more help with the "Technical" side of the market? I personally like to use Tom Dossdall at Technical Ag Knowledge. [Click here](#) for a complimentary subscription courtesy of The Van Trump Report.

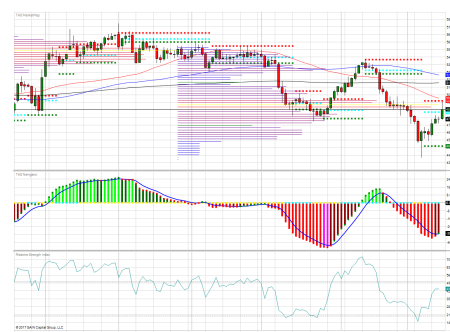
Outside Markets



US Dollar Index

A close above 99.450 will indicate a strong buying presence and could help to tilt the scales more bullish in the short term.

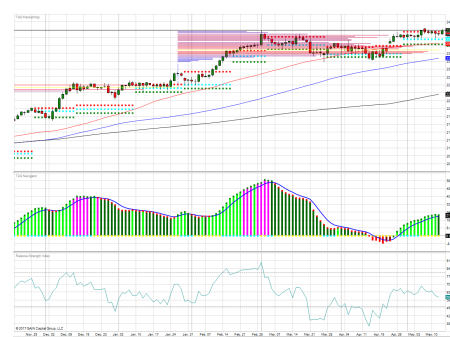
[Enlarge US Dollar Index Chart »](#)



Crude Oil

The short term bounce from oversold conditions could find resistance at the top end of the current TAS Box range (red dots) near the 50 day moving average at 49.76. Momentum is still down but weakening.

[Enlarge Crude Oil Chart »](#)



> China Vows To Review U.S. GMO Crops: China's promise to evaluate eight varieties of U.S. genetically modified crops by the end of this month under a trade deal marks a step forward in a years-long process that has held up seed sales in the United States. China's review covers crops grown from seeds developed by major agrichemical companies, including Monsanto Co, Dow Chemical and DuPont, the U.S. Commerce Department and the companies said on Friday. They have been stuck in the Chinese approval process for up to six years. Dow AgroSciences said Chinese approval would be key to the roll out of its new Enlist corn and soybeans seeds in the United States, where over 90 percent of corn is genetically modified. Monsanto makes four of the products pending approval, including herbicide-tolerant corn, soybean and alfalfa varieties that have been under review for almost five years, spokeswoman Christi Dixon said. DuPont Pioneer and Syngenta each make one of the other products pending approval, according to biotech industry group BIO. (Source: Reuters)

> Soybean Farmers In China Will Receive Higher Subsidies: China's top grain-producing provinces will pay greater subsidies to soybean farmers than corn growers as the country pushes to whittle a huge corn glut. The nation has been overhauling its grains policy in the wake of abandoning a state stockpiling system that amassed over 250 million tonnes of corn, more than one year's consumption. The governments of Heilongjiang and Liaoning provinces in the northeastern corn belt announced the move on subsidies in policy documents published late last week, although details on subsidy levels will be released later. China included cutting corn acreage and lifting soybean acreage in its five-year plan issued last year. It is the world's top consumer of both commodities. (Source: Reuters)

> USDA Says Traceability Hearings Not Aimed At Replacing ADT: The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is on the verge of completing seven public hearings to review Animal Disease Traceability, the name for its existing approach to tracking cattle, but tells MA that shouldn't be read as an indication that changes are coming. ADT, which involves non-electronic ear tags and lots of paperwork, was rolled out in 2013 as a compromise for ranchers who revolted against a USDA effort to introduce a mandatory electronic program called the National Animal Identification System. ADT is only mandatory for cattle moved across state lines. APHIS says that the hearings are merely "assessing the effectiveness" of its existing efforts and notes that it plans to "hold a national forum early in the fall to review potential next steps." (Source: Politico)

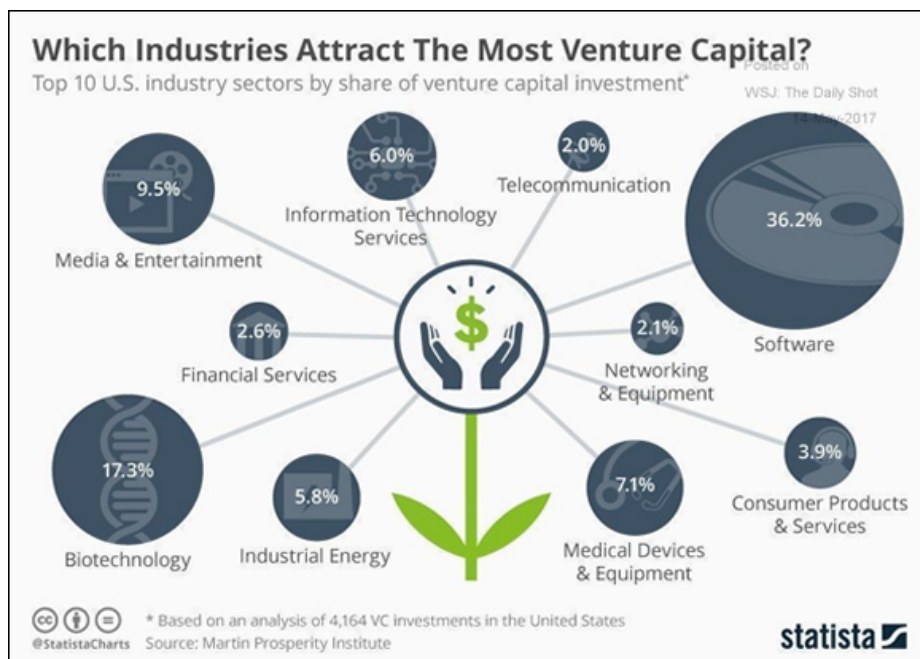
> White House Reviewing EPA's Proposed Biofuel Blending Volumes: The US Environmental Protection Agency has sent its proposal for 2018 ethanol blending volumes and 2019 biodiesel volumes under the Renewable Fuel Standard to the White House for review, signaling the policy could be on track for final release by November 30. The notice that the EPA has sent the proposal to the White House's Office of Management and Budget does not include any detail about the volumes under consideration. But it signals to the refining and biofuel industries that the next set of RFS targets may not be significantly delayed as in past years. Industry sources expect the EPA to propose volumes publicly in June, and the agency has until November 30 to issue a final rule. (Source: Platts)

> Ag Secretary Perdue Scheduled To Appear Before House Committee: The new Agriculture secretary, Sonny Perdue, makes an appearance at a House Agriculture Committee hearing at 10 a.m. on Wednesday to talk about the "State of the Rural Economy." It could be a good venue to hear Perdue's perspective on the 2018 farm bill and also how USDA's recent reorganization might position the agency to boost the farm economy, which - as House Agriculture Chairman Mike Conaway notes in his description - "is in the midst of a four-year, 50 percent decline." (Source: Politico)

> USDA Releases Ag Chemical Survey Results: The USDA's National Agricultural Statics Service says farmers increased their nitrogen applications slightly while decreasing phosphorus on corn acres last year. In USDA's Ag Chemical Use Survey, farmers applied nitrogen to 97 percent of planted acres, at an average rate of 145 pounds, one pound more than respondents in the 2014 survey. Farmers cut phosphorus applications by three pounds to the acre. Pesticide use remained steady with farmers using herbicides on 97 percent of planted acres and fungicides on 12 percent of corn fields. Insecticide use dropped by one percent. Scouting for weeds continued to be the top management practice, followed by crop rotation and no-till or minimum till, although farmers surveyed reduced the use of overall management practices slightly from 2014. (Source: BrownfieldAa)

> Ransomware Cyberattack Slowing Down: New victims of the "WannaCry" computer virus emerged as expected on Monday, but government and security officials around the world expressed relief that it was proliferating at a much slower pace than feared, and said it appeared to have been the work of relatively unsophisticated hackers. Even so, no one was ready to declare victory. Several security firms detected new variations of the virus, just as many had predicted would happen. Thus far, none of these new versions had made much of an impact, but security officials remained vigilant. The virus exploits a vulnerability in the Windows operating system that was discovered by the U.S. National Security Agency and later revealed by hackers who stole the information from the NSA. On Sunday, Europol had disclosed that 200,000 computers had been infected with the WannaCry virus, an attack the agency described as "unprecedented." (Source: LA Times)

> Which Industries Are Attracting The Most Investment: Venture capital - the money provided by investors to startup firms and small businesses showing potential for long-term growth - is generally thought of as "good capital". In terms of global venture capital investment, the United States is leading the way-with an estimated \$58.8 billion invested across the country in 2015. The chart below shows the top 10 industries that are attracting the most venture capital investment. Software investment accounts for 36.2% of US VC funding. In the second quarter of 2016, the value of VC investments in the US software industry amounted to approximately \$8.74 billion dollars. Phone-based apps are some of the most valuable start-ups in the world with many using VC funding to enable global expansion. Biotechnology comes second with 17.3%. Media and entertainment rounds off the top three with 9.5%. Other areas of growth and innovation include information technology services, medical devices and equipment and industrial energy. (Source: World Economic Forum)



E-Mini S&P Index

Bearish momentum has subsided and TAS Navigator has hooked back into positive territory, signalling buying interest is regaining strength. A close above 2395.00 could help to attract fresh buying while 2358.00 supports.

[Enlarge E-Mini S&P Index Chart »](#)

Kevin's Song of the Week



About the Report



Eastcentral Wisconsin - We are out of the field today as we received some rain last night. Unlike most others, we have waited for the cool and wet spring conditions to pass before we put our seed in the ground. In my opinion, those that have planted already will likely suffer some yield drag as the wet and cold weather should pose less than ideal development conditions. We are still sitting on 50% of old crop corn and will be looking for a chance to get it sold near breakevens. We are feeling ok with our first 50% as we sold above the breakeven. If all remains status quo we are hoping to get out in the fields in the next two days to start planting as the forecast looks cooperative.

Central Illinois - We finished all of our corn plantings on April 17th. We are hoping that we will not have any acres to replant but with 5.5" of rain in a short window, I think that the odds are good. We do have some seedling in a lot of fields now.

think that it's only a matter of time. we do have some ponding in a lot of fields now. The early planted corn was at the three leaf stage and I think it has all come out of it but could have a few issues. I was just glad to see that it was all still alive after the water came. We were very wet but the warm up and a little wind have helped. We will try to get going on bean planting later today or in the morning. We are planting all Liberty beans this year, which is a first. I think that we are seeing more and more weed pressure that is not easy to take care of with other products. We could have planted beans before the rains but wanted to keep the seed in the bag until the weather settled down and I think we made the right decision. I have rented a lot of our ground this year but didn't do cash rent and opted to do crop share. I had a few different neighbors that were interested so I just divided it up between the two and didn't have them bid against each other.

Southcentral Michigan - We have just started planting for this year's crop, rolling with two planters putting in corn and beans at the same time. We have had plenty of moisture over the past few weeks and need to miss the next rain in the forecast. We are back in the shop now getting the bugs worked out of the planters. Believe it or not, we had a white lawn this morning but it has now gotten up to 50 degrees. The temperatures are supposed to be cooler the next couple days before we warm up again. Nobody is to concerned with the date to plant as last year we started on May 18th. In 2012, it was a very weird year and we had all of our corn planted by April 12th. We had one of our best crops while much of the corn belt was in one of the worst droughts ever. We got lucky that year because you only had to go 20 to 30 miles in any direction to find very dry conditions, with terrible yielding crops. If we miss the rains forecasted for this weekend we may have a good window to get planting wrapped up. Some areas up here have localized flooding and there will be a few acres that will need to be replanted.



Three Large Soybean and Corn Shipments Were Fraudulently Labeled Organic:

Three big, recent shipments of soybeans and corn from Turkey to California were fumigated with pesticides but labeled as "organic" when they arrived in the U.S. One shipment of 36 million pounds of soybeans that arrived in California, in December, had their value boosted by about \$4 million due to the organic claim. USDA officials said they were investigating fraudulent organic grain shipments, but have declined to identify any of the firms or shipments under review, according to the Washington Post. About 21 million pounds of the soybeans have already been distributed to customers. The three shipments examined by the Washington Post involved millions of pounds of "organic" corn or soybeans. All three were presented as organic, despite evidence to the contrary. And all three hailed from Turkey, now one of the largest exporters of organic products to the United States, according to Foreign Agricultural Service statistics. Read more [HERE](#).

Seven Grain Companies Make Forbes' "Best Employers" List: Working with online statistics provider Statista, Forbes surveyed 30,000 American employees working for large (more than 5,000 employees in the U.S.) and midsize (between 1,000 and 5,000 employees in the U.S.) employers in 25 different industries, to create Forbes 2017 list of America's Best Employers. The willingness to recommend one's own employer was considered to be the most important dimension of the assessment. A secondary dimension to the assessment involved asking employees to share their thoughts on good or bad employers in industries besides their own. The list consists of 500 companies from multiple industries. Check out the details [HERE](#).

Why Our Musical Tastes Freeze Over With Age: Some of us are more susceptible than others, but eventually it happens to us all. You know what I'm talking about: the inability to appreciate new music – or at least, to appreciate new music the way we once did. There's a lot of disagreement about why exactly this happens, but virtually none about when. Call it a casualty of your 30s, the first sign of a great decline. It's a very real phenomenon, as real as anything that transpires in the mind. Famously, something similar happens to us with sports, particularly spectator sports, and at a much younger age. It's axiomatic in our culture that a sense of wonder is something to be encouraged in others and coveted for ourselves. But a sense of wonder is dependent on an ability to experience surprise, and if as an adult you're still surprised by certain things, then you haven't been keeping up the way you should. Most of us stop responding to new music because we know better, as in we know enough to understand that it's been done before, whatever this is we're listening to. Read more [HERE](#).

NEXT level THINKING



My goal at "The Van Trump Report" is to help readers better identify the moving parts and dynamics associated with the financial markets, geopolitical events, economics, media and culture that is currently influencing and shaping the direction of the agricultural markets. I like to believe I "Challenge the Traditional" and encourage our readers to think outside the box.

I use story telling techniques that are written in an easy to read format to help convey my current thoughts about business, markets, technology, weather, sports and life. I also like to include links, filter the noise, and pass along in-depth research and information that I believe could challenge your current thought process and help you make more informed decisions. In addition I include valuable lessons I have learned from other traders, executives and investors, along with an occasional inspirational piece about life, family and faith.

What I do not do in "The Van Trump Report" is give specific financial advice or tell individuals how to invest or how to specifically hedge. Remember, this information is being read by hedge fund managers, bankers, CEO's, and Ag leaders around the globe, therefore it's NOT tailored to fit your specific individual needs. For specific investment or hedging advice please seek the help of a licensed representative that can better understand your particular situation, individual needs and overall risk tolerance. This information should ONLY be used for educational and entertainment purposes.

My family and I would like to thank you again for your support!

Kevin Van Trump

What Others Are Saying

"I am a recent subscriber to Kevin's newsletter, but I'm a long-time reader of many other high-profile marketing services. I am particularly impressed with the thorough manner in which Kevin evaluates every economic aspect, both nationally and internationally, that influences commodity prices. His analysis and conclusions are highly thought out and conveyed in layman's terms so that the reader can comprehend the numerous and often complex interrelationships that impact the markets. Kevin is a real attribute to the agricultural sector."

A.M., FDIC

"As a national federal farm policy administrator and commodity producer, I find it critical to keep updated with what is going on in the real world of agriculture and with the domestic and global markets. Of all the services I've have been privy to or have subscribed to over the past 20 years I've found in the past several months of engaging in your "Farm

that it's been done before, whatever this is we're listening to. Read more [HERE](#).

You Should Learn to Say 'No' More Often: Humans are social animals who thrive on reciprocity. It's in our nature to be socially obliging, and the word no feels like a confrontation that threatens a potential bond. But when we dole out an easy yes instead of a difficult no we tend to overcommit our time, energy and finances. "The ability to communicate 'no' really reflects that you are in the driver's seat of your own life," said Vanessa M. Patrick, an associate professor of marketing at the C. T. Bauer College of Business at the University of Houston. "It gives you a sense of empowerment." That's why learning to say no comes in handy. Read more [HERE](#).

101-Year-Old Daredevil Sets New Skydiving Record: A 101-year-old man from southwest England has become the world's oldest tandem skydiver. Bryson William 'Verdun' Hayes, known as Verdun, completed the record-breaking jump Sunday. He skydived for the very first time a year ago to celebrate his 100th birthday. "Last year's skydive was an amazing experience," he said in a press statement. "I must have got a bit of a taste for it, because it just made me want to do it again." And he seemed to enjoy this year's dive just as much. Asked how he felt on landing, he said, "oh, absolutely over the moon." The previous record was held by Canadian Armand Gendreau, who skydived from 10,000 feet in June 2013 aged 101 and three days. See a video of the dive [HERE](#).



How Spinach Isn't Just For Popeye Anymore

Technology continues to amaze me. This time we have scientist using the plant like scaffolding from a spinach leaf to build a mini version of a working heart, transforming the leaves into beating human heart tissue which may one day aid in tissue regeneration. Bioengineers and co-authors Glenn Gaudette and Joshua Gershlak from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in Massachusetts, began to brainstorm new ways to tackle a deadly medical problem: the lack of donor organs. Of the more than 100,000 people on the donor list, nearly two dozen people die each day while waiting for an organ transplant. The team published its initial findings in the journal [Biomaterials](#). The main limiting factor for tissue engineering ... is the lack of a vascular network," says Gershlak, in a video describing the study. "Without that vascular network, you get a lot of tissue death. "Knowing it's difficult to reproduce veins, the group decided to use the system already in place on a spinach leaf by replacing spinach cells with human heart cells. First, they removed the cells from spinach leaves purchased at a local market. "We use detergent soap — which strips away the cellular material of tissues," said Gershlak. "This leaves behind the protein matrix and structure." The soap punctured plant cell membranes and washed the deflated cells away; the overall effect was not unlike turning over a garden before planting new crops. Left behind was cellulose, a plant material known to be compatible with mammal tissue, as well as the intact leaf veins. The scientists seeded the now-vacated cellulose matrix with cardiac muscle cells. After five days, the muscle cells began to beat. Once they had transformed the spinach leaf into a sort of mini heart, the team sent fluids and microbeads through its veins to show that blood cells can flow through this system. "Long term, we're definitely envisioning implanting a graft in damaged heart tissue," he said. But the researchers first need to make sure that plant scaffolds like these would not be rejected, once inside

Direction" services to be the best perception and analysis of what is really happening in today's world. Not only here in the United States, but across the globe as well. US farmers need this type of help and information to assist them in their daily efforts. I commend you for a job well done. Please let me know if I can ever be of any help or assistance to you in the future..."

**L.T., Assistant Deputy Administrator
for Farm Programs USDA**

[More Testimonials](#)

My Own Personal Truisms

"Not To Trade, is often considered a good trading decision..."

"First Rule of HOLES: When you are in one stop digging..."

"Every looser in Vegas, always walks away from the table thinking he could have done better, the winners on the other hand leave while on top..."

"Bulls make money, Bears make money, but pigs get slaughtered..."

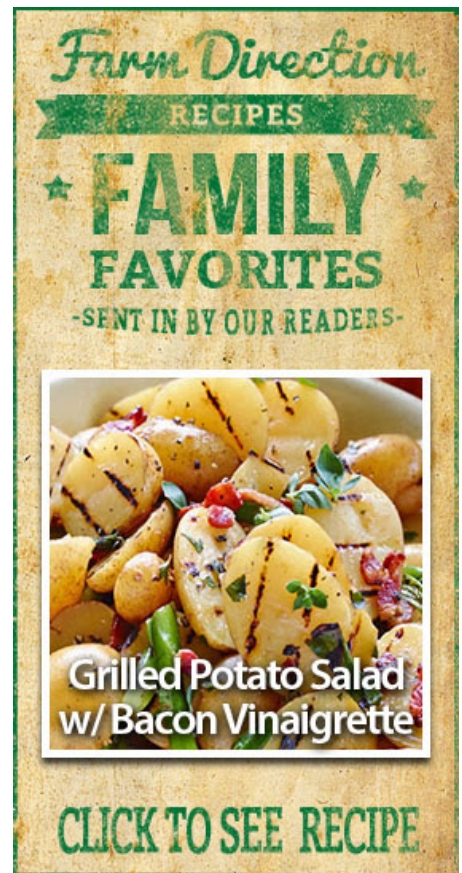
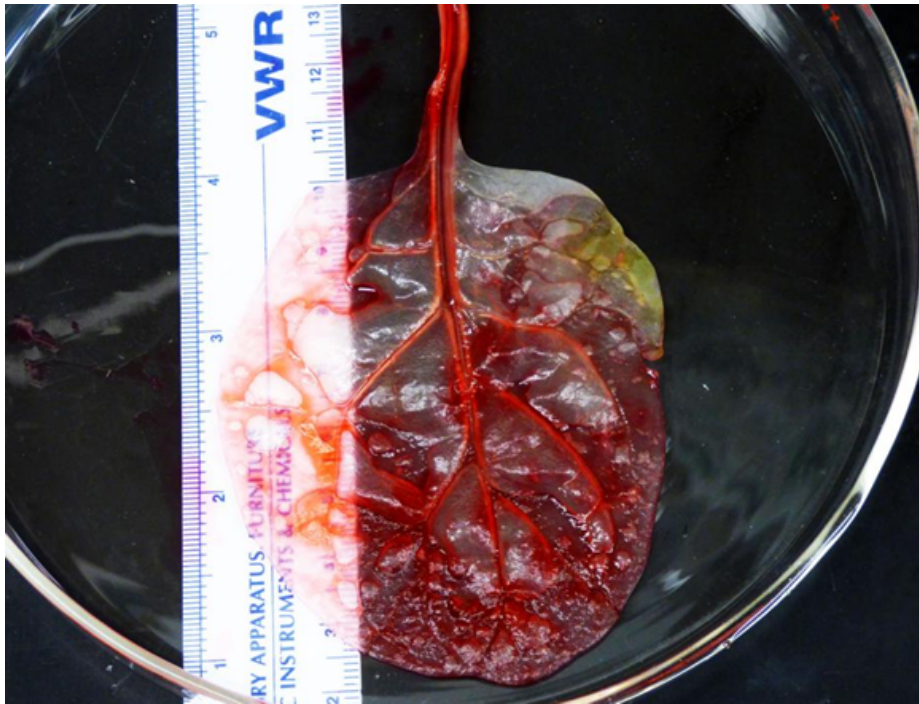
"The markets ability to remain irrational can often times last much longer than your ability to remain solvent..."

I'm more of a long-term player, therefore you will not see me give many short-term suggestions or trade ideas. One of my most important rules is that I always follow my long-term direction. Therefore, as long as I am "bullish" a market I will only play that particular market in one of three ways.

- Option #1 - Conservatively long.
- Option #2 - Aggressively long.
- Option #3 - Sitting on the sideline.

I never initiate a "short" position in a market that I am "bullish" longer-term, nor do I initiate a "long" position in a market I am "bearish" longer-term.

a host. They also plan to make their heart-spinach hybrids stronger. "If we stack decellularized leaves, can we create a large thickness," Gaudette wondered, "more along the thickness of a human heart wall?" One day the team of engineers imagine that a piece of broccoli or cauliflower, once stripped of its cells, could be a foundation for growing lung tissue. Check out the [VIDEO](#) showing the "beating" spinach leaf. (Source: Time, National Geographic, Washington Post)



Interesting History About "Joan of Arc"

French heroine Joan of Arc has always been somewhat of a mystical figure. She won the heart of the French people for her military leadership during the Lancastrian phase of the Hundred Years' War. She claimed she had been chosen by God to lead France to victory in its struggle to free itself from English-rule. As young as age 13, Joan said she was receiving visions from what she called her "counsel", including Archangel Michael (who was accompanied by other angels), St. Margaret and St. Catherine. Joan convinced the uncrowned King of France at the time, Charles VII, to let her lead the army to the besieged city of Orleans. Understand that Orleans was one of the few key French cities that remained loyal to Charles VII, and it was feared that if it were to fall, all of France would be lost. Joan's claims were also bolstered by popular legend - For generations, there had been prophecies in France which promised the French would be saved by a virgin from the "borders of Lorraine" who would work miracles. In the end, Joan and her army proved victorious and the siege of Orleans ended nine days later. It also effectively turned the long-running conflict into a full-blown religious war, with church authorities loyal to Charles VII declaring Joan to be of a "divine nature." Several other quick victories followed Orleans, and Charles was finally coronated in July of 1492. Nonetheless, the Hundred Years' War would drag on until 1453. In the interim, Joan was considered an enemy of England. A group of British loyalists known as the Burgundian faction captured her in early 1430. The English contended that the only reason the "peasant girl" was able to defeat their armies was because she was in fact possessed by the Devil. The Burgundians handed her over to the English and she was put on trial for heresy in January of 1431. The tribunal was composed entirely of pro-English and Burgundian clerics, and overseen by English commanders, just one of the many problematic aspects of the trial. Heresy at the time was only punishable by death if the convicted person was a repeat offender. In an effort to garner capital punishment, Joan was charged with a repeat offense of "cross-dressing." During her imprisonment before the trial, she was kept in an all male military prison and was given male attire, her dress confiscated by the guards. With the odds clearly stacked against her, Joan was sentenced to death. On May 30, 1431, she was tied to a pillar and burned to death. She was posthumously retried after the war, however, and it was eventually ruled that the court violated various ecclesiastical laws, including falsification of tribunal transcripts, and Joan was martyred. She remained an almost mythical figure in French and church history for four centuries. There have been an innumerable amount of things dedicated to her, including vessels, medals, memorials and churches. Calls to have her declared a "saint" began in earnest around 1869. It wasn't until 1909 that a Decree of Beatification was issued. "The Maid of Orleans" was canonized by Pope Benedict XV on this day in 1920. Over 60,000 people attended the ceremony, including 140 descendants of Joan's family. (Sources: Biography, Wikipedia, Franciscan Media)

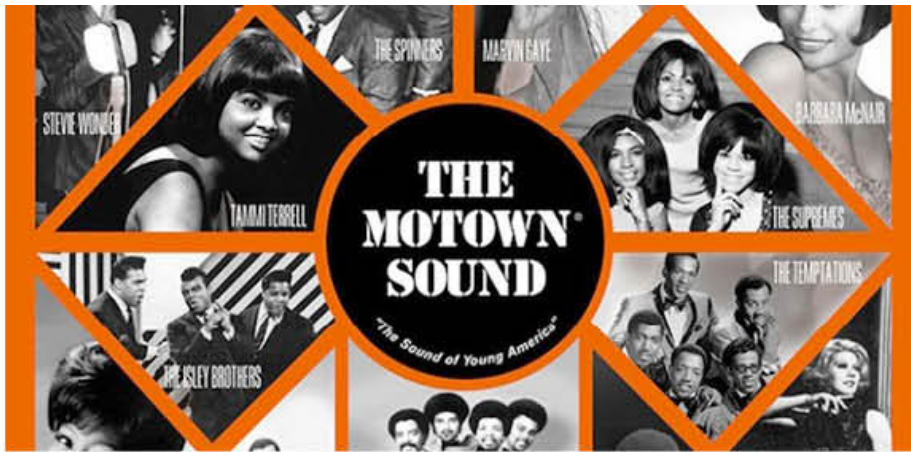


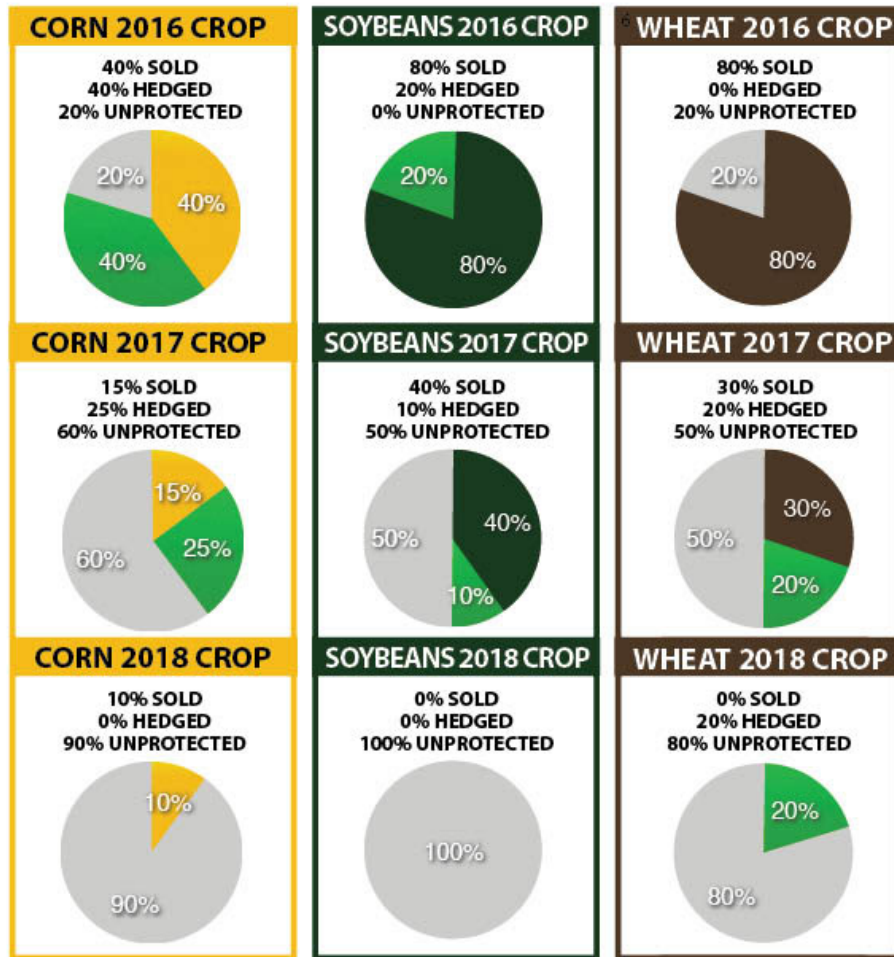
The Evolution Of A Music Empire

Music legend Barry Gordy, Jr. launched a record company called "Tamla Records" back in 1959 out of a house at 2648 West Grand Blvd. in Detroit, Michigan. Gordy had some early success with "Shop Around," by The Miracles in 1960 and "Please Mr. Postman" by The Marvelettes in 1961. But soon found himself eager to launch a new label. His first contract under the new label was offered to a young aspiring songwriter named Mary Wells in 1962. The catch was that Gordy would make a record for Wells but would issue it on a brand new label that had no identity or reputation in the marketplace: Motown Records. Not really in a position to argue, she signed on as the fledgling label's very first artist, and two years later, Mary Wells gave Motown its first #1 hit when "My Guy" reached the top of the Billboard pop chart on this day back in 1964. Interestingly Mrs. Wells released another single called "You Lost the Sweetest Boy" in 1963, which featured the Supremes and the Temptations singing backup. This is just a sample of the talent that would soon pass through Motown... In fact Motown Records would go on to release another 32 #1 hit singles during the next 10 years and corner the market on a style of music that became known as the "Motown Sound". Miracles lead singer William "Smokey" Robinson became the vice president of the company and later named his daughter "Tamla" and his son "Berry". The operations quickly expanded and within seven years Motown would occupy seven additional neighboring houses. Motown had hired over 450 employees and had a gross income of \$20 million by the end of 1966. From 1961 to 1971, Motown had 110 top 10 hits. Top artists associated with the Motown label during that period included the Supremes (initially including Diana Ross), the Four Tops, and the Jackson 5, while Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, the Marvelettes, the Miracles, the Temptations, the Contours, and Martha and the Vandellas, the Velvettes, the Spinners, the Monitors, and Gladys Knight & the Pips. Gordy relocated Motown to Los Angeles in 1972, and there it remained an independent company until June 28, 1988. During the 1970s and 1980s Motown had artists like Lionel Richie and the Commodores, Rick James, Teena Marie, the Dazz Band and DeBarge. By the mid-1980s Motown had started losing money, and Berry Gordy sold his ownership in Motown to MCA Records and Boston Ventures in June 1988 for north of \$60 million. From 2011 to 2014, Motown was a part of The Island Def Jam Music Group division of Universal Music. Then in the spring of 2014, Universal Music Group announced the dissolution of Island Def Jam, subsequently Motown relocated back to Los Angeles to operate under the Capitol Music Group. It now operates as just a fraction of what it once was out of the landmark Capitol Tower. (Source: Wiki; History)









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Kevin Van Trump <kvt@farmdirection.com>
 To: Kevin Van Trump <kvt@farmdirection.com>
 Bcc: info@farmdirection.com

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