

FRIDAY BY Noon

*This Week's Hot Topics in
Food, Bev, and Ag*

In contrast to the oversized share of attention plant-based proteins have received recently, influential voices have turned their attention to the real thing.

- Food system security, spurred by the cyberattack on JBS.
- Delivery's staying power, forged by the pandemic.
- Supply chain struggles, driven by ongoing meat production issues.

Jeopardized Beef Supply



JBS Foods — the world's largest meatpacker, whose consumer brands include Swift, Pilgrim's, Blue Ribbon and Certified Angus Beef — [announced](#) on May 31 that a cyberattack forced the Brazil-based company to shut down processing plants in Australia, Canada and the United States. On June 2, the FBI [attributed](#) the attack to Russian cybercriminals.

- Keith Good of the University of Illinois [distilled](#) the supply chain woes: "Two of 2021's worst trends, cyberattacks and shortages, meet in one story about #meat."
- The disruption came in the wake of Congressional leaders [requesting](#) that the Department of Justice open an antitrust investigation into the beef processing industry.
- Farm Journal's Tyne Morgan [reported](#) that 27,000 fewer cattle were processed on June 1 — which amounts to 22% less than the previous Tuesday.
- National Cattlemen's Beef Association [commented](#): "We have a high supply of cattle at one end of this equation and a high demand for U.S. beef at the other, but the middle is being absolutely choked by the lack of processing capacity."
- JBS [declared](#) that it had fully restored its systems on June 3, having lost "less than one days' worth of production." JBS USA CEO Andre Nogueira praised the IT team and shifted focus to "fulfilling our responsibility to produce safe, high-quality food."

Delivering the Goods



The pandemic accelerated the growth and accentuated the importance of food and beverage delivery. Several developments focused on which trends will stick and how delivery will continue to evolve and grow.

- The Wall Street Journal published a triple threat of articles about food delivery: alcohol-to-go, and the laws permitting the practice, is here to stay ([May 29](#)); Uber Eats and others attempting to one-up Amazon by moving to a "within the hour" model ([May 31](#)); and pizza purveyors like Domino's and Papa John's varying perspectives on using third-party apps ([May 30](#)).
- Restaurant Business [covered](#) James Beard award-winning chef Stephanie Izard's new role as chief restaurant officer at DoorDash. In a press release, Izard [explained](#): "I know that bringing the voice of the local restaurants to leadership is critical to enact meaningful change."
- Supermarket News [reported](#) that Instacart will offer same-day delivery from nearly 6,000 7-Eleven stores in the U.S.
- Meanwhile, Yum! Brands looked to beef up its in-house tech. The chain [bought](#) Australia-based Dragontail to "[scale] ... artificial intelligence (AI) kitchen order management and delivery technology globally."
- A partnership between Walmart and drone delivery company Flytrex [expanded](#) its drone delivery capabilities near Fayetteville, North Carolina, according to Grocery Dive. "*First in Flight*" is no joke.

A Meaty Fortnight



Outside of the JBS cybersecurity debacle, the topic of meat production rose to prominence from several perspectives since our last edition of Friday by Noon:

- The Washington Post's Laura Reilev [outlined](#) the reasons behind

rising prices of beef and pork, referencing a conversation with an economist from the American Farm Bureau Federation. Key factors cited included labor shortages, restocking restaurants as they reopen, high feed and transportation costs, and a strong export market competing with domestic demand.

- In an article titled "Where's the Honeycrisp of the meat case?," Prime Future blogger Janette Barnard [pondered](#) innovation in meat, compared with other categories like plant-based protein and produce. Barnard argued that innovation is plentiful, just unseen, as it's mostly on the farm side of the business, not on grocery shelves.
- The line speeds at which pork is processed are again at issue. The United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) [praised](#) the USDA's [response](#) to a March federal district court ruling that [rolled back](#) Trump administration policies. Food Safety News [outlined](#) the National Pork Producers Council appeal of the ruling.
- Food Business News editor Keith Nunes [compared](#) the "stark" differences between Tyson Foods' new CEO Donnie King with outbound leader Dean Banks. While Banks, who is leaving the nation's second-largest meatpacker for personal reasons, brought years of tech-industry experience, King is a meat industry veteran who's been with the company since 1982.

IS THIS CONTENT RELEVANT, OR WHAT?

That's right, it's your chance to provide editorial input. And thank you.



Yes



No

Worth Reading.

Some important points of view worth checking out this weekend.

Food Truckin'

A feature on food trucks in the New York Times [highlighted](#) the success stories for some small-business owners and described how they were able to adapt and prosper during a pandemic. For many food trucks, going digital, creating a strong presence on social media and even reconstructing menus was the key to success. "Food trucks — kitchens on wheels, essentially — are flexible by design and quickly became a substitute during the pandemic for customers who couldn't dine indoors and coveted something different than their mainstream carryout options."

Malthus at the Gate

The International Food Policy Research Institute [recommended](#) that governments implement policy reforms to combat hunger in the face of climate change and rising populations between now and 2050. Compounding these concerns in the short term, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization [found](#) that in May food prices rose by the fastest level in a decade.

Looking Hard for Progress

Eater's Jaya Saxena [examined](#) what's changed in the restaurant industry post-#MeToo, post-George Floyd and (nearly) post-pandemic world. Saxena called for a consensus in what makes for a better industry: "No more excuses for sexist or racist chefs who happen to have a brilliant mind for food, and no more throwing workers under the bus in the name of customer-is-always-right hospitality."

Debatably Natural

BBC Future [attempted](#) to settle the debate surrounding processed foods versus natural foods. A deep dive later, BBC concluded: "frozen vegetables, pasteurised milk or boiled potatoes, for example, can be better for us than their unprocessed counterparts. As long as we can recognise a processed food as being close to its natural form, having them in our diet may even be good for us." *So if we form SPAM into more natural pig shapes ...*



Questions? Comments?

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About This Email

The [Intel Distillery](#) is your essential source for food industry analysis and intelligence. Six days a week, our team systematically analyzes input from the top 1,500 voices in food and beverage to provide summaries on trending topics.
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