



MARD Minister on Food Safety regs, APEC Senior Officials stress food security

FEATURES



Agriculture minister explains new regulations to US firms

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Nguyen Xuan Cuong explained several new regulations regarding agriculture during a working session with Michael Michalak, senior vice president of the US-ASEAN Business Council.

At the session in Hà Nội, a representative from the US's Cargill Corporation expressed concerns that the ban of the use of several kinds of antibiotics for growth stimulation in animal husbandry as specified in Circular 06/2016/TT-BNNPTNT is likely to hinder growth of the sector.



Food security high on agenda of SOM1's second session

The First APEC Senior Officials Meeting (SOM1) entered its second working day in the south central province of Khanh Hoa's Nha Trang city on March 3 with a series of issues high on the agenda, including food security and climate change.



APEC aims at inclusive growth

An agreement to enhance trade linkages and foster sustainable, inclusive and innovative growth marked a positive wrap-up to the first Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM 1) and other related APEC meetings on Friday.



New transfer pricing decree: a step closer to international standards

On February 24, 2017, the Vietnamese government released the new transfer pricing (TP) Decree No. 20/2017/ND-CP 'Providing tax administration applicable to enterprises having controlled transactions' (Decree 20), which will take effect from May 1, 2017.

Decree 20 replaces the existing TP regulations (Circular No.66/2010/TT-BTC) and provides new compliance requirements in Vietnam.

While Decree 20 is loosely based on Circular 66, it extends the interpretation of existing provisions and introduces additional concepts and principles from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines and Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) Framework.



Dong Nai revokes 40 delayed, abandoned FDI projects

The Industrial Zone Management Board of southern Dong Nai Province has revoked investment permits granted to 40 FDI projects that have been abandoned or delayed for a long time.

According to Mai Van Nhon, deputy head of the board, the revoked projects have total investment of over US\$300 million.



White House split on import tax puts Congress in limbo

A major split among senior White House officials over whether to effectively create a new tax on imported goods has stalled the broader tax overhaul effort on Capitol Hill, with Republicans looking to the Trump administration for leadership on an issue that has drawn fierce resistance, according to several officials with direct knowledge of the matter.



New policies take effect in March

A string of new policies on certificates of land use rights, casino business activities for Vietnamese residents, horse and greyhound racing and international football betting, and government guarantee come into force in March.

Events, Meetings, Special Offers



Advanced Purchase Promotion to North America from HCM City

Korean Air, is one of the world's top 20 airlines and carried more than 24 million passengers in 2015. Korean Air operates over 460 flights per day to 132 cities in 46 countries on six continents with a fleet of 174 aircraft including ten A380s. With its modern aircraft and over 20,000 professional employees, Korean Air offers customers convenience and comfort. Korean Air's award-winning offerings of Korean and international meals and state-of-the-art inflight entertainment system provide passengers with a memorable inflight experience.



Women's Month Celebration at PJ's Coffee

Women's Day - a single day dedicated to women? Forget it our beloved ladies!!! Because you are women, you deserve love and affection every day in your life. At PJ's Coffee, we celebrate women throughout the whole month with our special treats:

30% off for ladies' drinks: Hazelnut Love, Caramel Granita & Hot Caramel Cream

This promotion is valid from 8th to 31st March at PJ's Coffee Vincom Dong Khoi & Sala District 2, Ho Chi Minh City.

Ladies, thank you for being so beautiful, smart, kind, inspired and resilient. Enjoy!!!

Visit our [website](#) and "like" us on [Facebook](#) to update about other promotions!



Saturday Brunch at Hotel Equatorial Ho Chi Minh City

Indulge in the freshest seafood, roasted meats, international dishes as well as all-day breakfast and desserts. Children will love our kids favorites buffet and our chocolate buffet and fountains, ice cream trolley and floats, waffles and pancakes. A family brunch your kids will love.

Available: Every Saturday, 11.30am - 2.30pm

VND790,000 ++ per adult / VND395,000 ++ (12 years & under)

Complimentary for children below 6 years old.

Contact us: (08) 3839 7777

Mar 16 Manufacturing Committee March 16 Meeting (For Members Only)

Regular monthly meeting of the Manufacturing Committee for networking, information-sharing, and planning advocacy efforts to improve the business environment and promote trade and investment between Vietnam and the U.S.



Mar 16 Best Practices in Automation of Trade Compliance

The import and export of goods across country borders and custom free zones are often represented by countries as free flowing and with the lack of trade barriers. However, the need for a country to protect its own industries, its markets and its jobs leads each country to implement its own tariff schedules, controls, rules and forms in its own language which complicate the business of cross border trade.

Automation of the process of cross border trade will help reduce the complexity and ensure that your



company will stay compliant with all country regulations while moving goods. This session will highlight the challenges, the best practices in automated trade management; and where automation can bring the highest value to your business.



Mar 16 Methods of Creating Systematic Corporation Innovation

Define and showcase of methodologies used by US corporations, regional corporations, and large organizations to spur transformational change through innovative practices, and provide guidelines for how to effectively build systematic innovation for competitive advantage in the challenging new world of tacit knowledge.

Registration before 5pm Tuesday, March 14, 2017

Contact: **Ms. Huong** | 0979 729 742 if you need any further information.



Mar 22 AmCham Palooza Party at Hotel Equatorial

AmCham will continue its series of monthly informal networking events at the coolest and latest nightspots in Ho Chi Minh City.

The monthly Palooza Party is a platform to develop new friendships, networking opportunities and information exchange.

Come and join us for a night of casual networking, meet other professionals, bring your business cards!



Mar 27-28 Asia Pacific Business Outlook

Now in its 30th year, Asia/Pacific Business Outlook (APBO) is North America's premier event for business leaders who want to expand their trade and investment in the Asia/Pacific region. The USC Marshall School of Business and the U.S. Department of Commerce have been working together on APBO since 1988 to help exporters and investors take advantage of tremendous opportunities and overcome challenges in the constant changing economies of Asia. ...



Mar 29 Cybersecurity - Confidence in your digital future

Cybersecurity is important for companies of all sizes. Small companies are just as at risk for cyber-attacks as larger ones, and should be prepared for a breach at all times.

This workshop will explain why businesses can easily be a target for hackers and provide best practices for your business.



JOIN US: Become a Member of AmCham Vietnam - HCMC

*Application fee will be waived for companies having a D-U-N-S® number.

Expand your business by joining us! We currently have almost 500 organizations represented by 1,000 representatives. They are multinational firms, small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs. **Benefits include:** Networking, Information-Sharing, Advocacy and Problem Solving, visibility and Corporate Exposure.

Contact **Ms. Sam Hoang** for joining or additional information on membership.



Marketing Opportunities with AmCham HCMC

AmCham HCMC offers many opportunities to market your company's products and services to AmCham members, the business community and the general public. Our services include:

- Event Sponsorship
- Event Management Support
- Network (Advertise) on www.amchamvietnam.com: 720K views/yr; 360K visitors/yr (avg. 60K / 30K views/visitors per month) and **11.2K twitter followers**, 9.5K facebook fans (and 60K+ views/month) 5.7k LinkedIn followers.
- Announcement in Weekly Email: 4.8k AmCham company representatives and subscribers.

AmCham Companies are offered 3 complimentary announcements a year.

- Print advertising in AmCham Membership Directory
- Print advertising in AmCham Membership Discount Handbook
- Advertising on AmCham Discount Online



AmCham Premium Membership Packages

The AmCham Premium Membership comes with a range of membership dues, which include events, advertising, and other exclusive benefits. One all-inclusive Premium Membership annual, semi-annual, or quarterly billing simplifies your company's administration efforts. Premium Membership Benefits include:

- Logo on "Premium Membership" banner on AmCham website homepage
- Logo on "Premium Membership" banner in Weekly Update Email
- Company profile on the "Premium Membership" page on AmCham website
- Corporate profile on screen during cocktail reception at Members' Nights
- Special recognition/Thank You Page in Membership Directory
- Special recognition at all business events' backdrop/banner
- Special recognition in all email signatures

For full information on benefits of each package, please click [HERE](#) or contact [Cindy Tran](#).



2017 AmCham Discount Program

The AmCham Discount Program is a mutually beneficial opportunity for both Discount Partners and AmCham Members who are representatives of companies doing business and living in Vietnam.

By offering AmCham Members special discounts on services or products, Discount Partners can enjoy marketing opportunities through listing freely and/or placing an advertisement on the [Discount Handbook & Online](#).

News and Issues



TÜV Rheinland's EMC Laboratory Accredited by Vietnam's Ministry of Science and Technology to Test Household Appliances

TÜV Rheinland's Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) Laboratory in Thang Long Industrial Park II, in Hung Yen Province, has been accredited according to ISO 17025 by Vietnam's Ministry of Science and Technology to test household appliances, information technology equipment (ITE), industrial equipment, scientific equipment and medical devices. It has also been recognized by the Directorate for Standards, Metrology and Quality (STAMEQ) as an EMC testing laboratory for CR mark certification of household appliances.



Japanese Emperor's visit to boost rapport

The first ever visit to Vietnam by a Japanese Emperor and Empress was a historical event of great significance that will reinforce mutual trust and friendship, said a senior Japanese official. Speaking to the Vietnam News Agency (VNA) ahead of the historic visit, Hatsuhsa Takashima, press secretary to Emperor Akihito, recalled the long-standing relationship between the two countries.



Trump, Abe meet to discuss bilateral Free Trade Agreement

along the lines of Senate Finance Committee Chairman Hatch's recommendation. Senator Hatch said the Trans-Pacific Partnership can be ratified under President Trump even if it begins as a bilateral deal with Japan, emphasizing that his plan would be in accord with Trump's pledge to pursue fair, bilateral trade deals instead of larger regional ones.



Vegetable, fruit exports to struggle

The domestic vegetable and fruit industry will face obstacles in maintaining sustainable growth in export value at the current high level, according to the Việt Nam Vegetable and Fruit Association. Total national export value of vegetables and fruits reached US\$2.4 billion in 2016, a year-on-year increase of 30 per cent. Export value is expected to increase to \$3 billion this year.



HCM City and Hanoi lead e-business index

HCM City and Hanoi continue to lead Vietnamese localities in e-commerce, The Việt Nam E-commerce Association (Vecom) announced at the 2017 Việt Nam Online Business Forum in Hà Nội on Friday.

The announcement came from the 2016 e-Business Index (EBI), based on a survey from more than 3,500 businesses in 54 provinces and cities across the country.



ANZ paints rosy outlook for VN economy

Viet Nam is likely to have something to crow about during the Year of the Rooster as several factors will facilitate socio-economic growth, ANZ Vietnam said on Friday.

In a press briefing titled "What lies ahead in the Year of the Rooster?" experts from the Vietnamese branch of the Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd. outlined their views of the global and regional economy, as well as a detailed outlook for Viet Nam in 2017.



Vietnamese SMEs take advantage of online business trend to enhance competitiveness

E-commerce with multi-channel selling has become a popular method in the world which helps small and medium enterprises (SMEs) optimize their operations.

"Online retail in Vietnam will continue to accelerate in the upcoming period as domestic and foreign retailers now move towards multichannel with considerable investment in online retail," said Nguyen Ngoc Dung, vice president of the Vietnam E-commerce Association (VECOM) at the Vietnam Online Business Forum 2017 (VOBF) in Hanoi today.



Foreign investors show interest, will Vietjet's shares fly high?

Vietnamese budget airline Vietjet Air will start trading 300 million shares on the Ho Chi Minh City Stock Exchange (HoSE) on February 28 at VND90,000 (\$3.9) per share.

As Vietnam's largest private airline nears its landmark initial public offering, foreign investors contemplate buying the remaining 25 per cent of the 49 per cent foreign ownership limit. As previously reported by VIR, only 24.39 per cent of foreign ownership has been reached as of January 12.



WhatsApp's New Feature Continues Facebook's Snapchat Mimicry

Facebook offered \$3 billion to buy the ephemeral messaging app Snapchat in 2013. Snapchat's founder, Evan Spiegel, turned down the offer.

Ever since, Facebook and some of its top apps - including Instagram, WhatsApp and Messenger - have been trying to tap into the explosively popular photo-sharing features pioneered by Snapchat.



2011-16: VN gains almost \$60b in footwear export

Việt Nam's export value for leather and footwear gained stable growth every year during the 2011-16 period to reach US\$57.5 billion in total.

Under statistics from the General Department of Customs, export value reached \$6.5 billion in 2011, \$7.3 billion in 2012, \$8.4 billion in 2013, \$10.3 billion in 2014, \$12 billion in 2015 and \$13 billion in 2016.

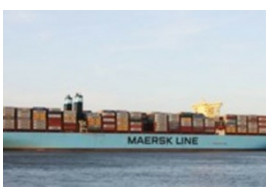


APEC links key to tackle disasters, says official

Regional connectivity should be strengthened to devise more initiatives to cope with the "new norm of natural disasters" facing APEC members, a Vietnamese official said yesterday.

During the 11th meeting of APEC's Emergency Preparedness Working Group (EPWG) in Nha Trang, Khánh Hòa Province, Water Resources Deputy Director Trần Quang Hoài briefed participants about natural disasters in Việt Nam, which have become increasingly frequent and severe recently.

Triple-E container ship docks at Cai Mep international terminal



Margrethe Maersk, a Triple-E container ship which is the world's largest, docked at Cai Mep International Terminal (CMIT) on Monday - a milestone in Vietnam's navigation history. With the arrival of Margrethe Maersk, CMIT, located downstream Cai Mep River of the southern province of Ba Ria-Vung Tau, is the first port in Vietnam and the 19th in the world to be able to handle an 18,300-TEU Triple-E vessel, according to the Sai Gon Giai phong (Liberated Saigon) daily.

Planning in a time of unseen variables



How will US President Trump's policies affect Vietnam's inbound foreign investments, trade, and forex rates? Barry Weisblatt, head of research at Viet Capital Securities, digs into the question on everyone's minds.

Deputy PM out to aid local retailers



Deputy Prime Minister Trinh Dinh Dung has asked ministries and authorities to help support local retailers while better managing the operations of foreign retail firms. The wholesale and retail market is developing rapidly with large potential and attracting the attention of both local and foreign investors, according to a recent note from the Government Office.

Food safety need practical measures



Practical and specific measures are needed instead of general and vague directions from authorities to ensure clean production and food safety. The statement was made by National Assembly Vice Chairman Phung Quoc Hien during a meeting held by the 14th National Assembly Inspection Committee with the Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), and the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOT) on the implementation of food safety policies and law from 2011 to 2016.

Vietnam among the most vulnerable to cyber threats



Viet Nam was named the nation facing the second-highest level of cyber security risk in Asia Pacific markets by a Microsoft Asia report on Thursday. The Asian branch of the American computer giant released regional findings from the Security Intelligence Report (SIR), Volume 21, a twice-yearly report that provides unique insights into the threat landscape to help organisations learn about trend data in industry vulnerabilities, exploits, malware and web-based attacks.

Infrastructure boosts Dong Nai property market



The property market is booming in the southern province of Dong Nai of thanks to its excellent infrastructure. The local Department of Construction said 250 property projects were developed recently, 15 by foreign investors and involving a minimum investment of US\$10 million.

2017 expected to be better for investment funds



Investment funds are expected to perform better this year, following the successful 2016, on expectations that more individual investors will purchase their own investments, reported Đầu tư Chứng khoán (Securities Investment) newspaper. Two factors that will make investment funds attractive to individual investors this year include the trading of some 1,500 companies in the securities market, which will bring investment opportunities to individual investors.

Vietnam to boost ties with US: Ambassador



Vietnam attaches importance to promoting relations with the new administration and Congress of the US, towards further developing the Vietnam-US comprehensive partnership in a practical, effective, stable and long-term manner, the Vietnamese ambassador to the US said. Ambassador Pham Quang Vinh made the statement at a reception in Washington DC on February 10 for more

than 70 advisors and assistants of key offices and committees of the US Congress of the 115th tenure.



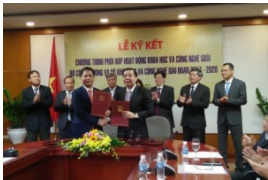
Enterprises see opportunities in 2017

Trần Văn Mỹ, general director of Phong Điền Scavi Company, said that his company is building an industrial centre specialising in textile and garment at the Phong Điền Industrial Park Huế City. The first hub of its kind in Việt Nam was in fact run on a trial basis in 2015 and 2016. Mỹ said the facility is due to be put into operation in the second quarter of this year, bringing together various segments involved in textile production such as feedstock, fabric accessories, design, fashion illustration and finally production of large volumes of finished products for exports.



January 2017 FDI higher year-on-year

Foreign direct investment (FDI) into Viet Nam reached US\$1.42 billion from the beginning of the year until January 20, according to data from the General Statistic Office. The amount exceeded FDI during the same period in 2016 by 6.6 per cent. During this time, Viet Nam attracted 175 newly-approved projects with total registered capital up to \$1.24 billion, up by 37.8 per cent in terms of project number and 23 per cent in terms of capital compared with the same period last year.



MoST & MoIT agree to science and technology cooperation

The Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) and the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT) have signed a cooperative program on science and technology coordination between the two ministries in the 2017-2020 period.

Recognizing its important role, the industry and trade sector has already applied science and technology to its industrialization, modernization and sustainable development efforts.



PwC: Vietnam is set among star performers

By 2050, six of the seven largest economies in the world could be emerging markets. This is according to the latest report from the PwC economists on the theme of the World in 2050: The long view: how will the global economic order change by 2050?

Vietnam could be the world's fastest growing large economy in 2050, rising to 20th in the global GDP rankings by that date, the report stated.



Environmental protection tax hike hurts firms

The Finance Ministry (MoF)'s proposal to almost triple the environmental protection tax on oil and gas consumption would reduce businesses' competitiveness against foreign firms, according to the Việt Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI). VCCI sent their comments on draft amendments and supplements to the environmental protection law to the ministry expressing concerns on the proposed tax hike.



The case for renewable energy

With innovations making renewable energies more affordable than ever, it forces the question - are old technologies like coal actually cost-effective when you correct for all factors? Policy change, reforms, and public education could open the doors to the private investment needed to make the change to sustainable energy sources. John Rockhold, head of the Vietnam Business Forum's Power and Energy Working Group and executive director of ABBO Investment Consultancy & Engineering JSC, shared his opinion on the country's future energy plans.



Vietnam to grant e-visas to citizens of 40 countries

beginning Feb 1, 2017. According to Decree 07/2017-NĐ-CP, 25 Jan 2017, procedures for applying and payment will be done online. It will take 3 days to process applications for an e-visa valid for 30 days. The visa does not require letters of guarantee or invitation. This could substantially boost international visitors and FDI. The regular one-year validity, multiple-entry visas will continue to be available to U.S. Citizens.



Traceability programs improve food safety in HCM City

HCMC vice chairman Le Thanh Liem asserts that the traceability program for pork and vegetables is of paramount importance to ensure that local consumers can have clean foods, especially during the upcoming Lunar New Year when the food demand surges. Liem added that the program is not just about pork and vegetables, but other products in modern shopping



Air Quality Index provides daily updates

amid growing concerns that air pollution in Hanoi has been worsening and reached dangerous levels. Hanoi's air has been repeatedly ranked as "unhealthy" and at times "hazardous," which means everyone should avoid being outdoors



Sustainable Seafood

Nationally prominent chefs, fishermen, academics, and activists call on consumers to choose local species of fish when possible to protect the long-term vitality of harvested seafood and the well-being of the oceans. Some key numbers: 70 to 80% of global fish populations are not sustainably fished. 90% of seafood consumed in the U.S. is imported. 2% of that is inspected by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration..



U.S., Vietnam team up for food safety

The High Quality Việt Nam Products Business Association, the American Chamber of Commerce in Việt Nam and the Washington-based Global Food Safety Forum signed a memorandum of understanding on co-operation in food safety. The US imports 15% of its food, 20% of vegetables, 50% of fruit and 80% of seafood, according to the U.S. FDA, which has established an International Food Safety Capacity Building Plan to train foreign governments and food producers on U.S. requirements for food safety.



ExxonMobile-PetroVietnam sign Ca Voi Xanh natural gas deal

ExxonMobil signed two agreements January 13 relating to the Ca Voi Xanh (Blue Whale) gas project offshore Vietnam. The project could fuel at least four power plants shortly after scheduled first gas in 2023. "The Ca Voi Xanh field is located about 80 km offshore central Vietnam and is an important natural gas discovery in Vietnam that has the potential to fuel the country's economic growth." PVEP said the project could supply enough gas for power plants with total capacity of 3 GW and also allow expansion for the petrochemical or power sectors. It said total investment in the project chain could be \$10bn, contributing \$20bn to state coffers.



SCS [Bien Dong] Reserves and Resources - U.S. EIA

Energy Information Administration estimates the South China Sea contains approximately 11 billion barrels of oil and 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in proved and probable reserves. Conventional hydrocarbons mostly reside in undisputed territory. Undiscovered resources could be greater. In November 2012, the Chinese National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC) estimated the area holds around 125 billion barrels of oil and 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in undiscovered resources, although independent studies have not confirmed this figure.



Vietnam to apply extensive area code changes in 2017

Area code changes in Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, Dong Nai, Binh Duong, and a number of other provinces will take place on June 17, 2017. The new area codes will be applied for 59 cities and provinces in three phases, from February 11 to June 17, with steps taken to ensure the change will not confuse the public, the Ministry of Information and Communications announced. But there are other concerns, such as the need to reprint packaging or business cards once numbers are changed, costing quite a sum.



Launched in August 2006 to answer many questions about Vietnam's accession to the WTO, the Weekly Update Emails provide news updates, upcoming events, explanations of details of trade and investment agreements, developments in laws and regulations affecting the business environment in Vietnam. Click the link for to visit the archives and look back over the years. Links to more than 10,000 documents providing background on a wide variety of topics, from Vietnam's WTO Accession in 2006-2007, revision of the Labour Code in 2008-2012, to the TransPacific Partnership and WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement from 2013 and ongoing.



Prime Minister's Certificates of Merit awarded to AmCham Vietnam - HCMC

At AmCham's 20th Anniversary Celebration Dinner on September 18, 2014, Vice Chairman of HCMC People's Committee Le Thanh Liem handed the Prime Minister's Certificates of Merit to AmCham Vietnam - HCM City and to Mr. Herb Cochran, Executive Director for their excellent performance in supporting and promoting trade and investment in Ho Chi Minh City and Vietnam.



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