1. **Grocery stores devote more space to fresh food, threatening big-name brands** *CNBC, 05/01/17.* American consumers are more interested in quick meals, healthier foods, and locally made products. In response, stores like New Jersey-based ShopRite are building less space for packaged foods in the center aisles and more room for prepared meals. CVS Health’s drugstore chain recently announced that it plans to upgrade hundreds of its stores to focus more on healthier products.

2. **Organic Farms Continue To Grow** *Growing Produce, 04/28/17.* The USDA recently announced new data showing that the organic industry continues to grow at double digits domestically and globally. The number of U.S. certified organic farms and businesses increased by 13% between the end of 2015 to 2016. This is the highest growth rate since 2008. For more information about USDA education resources, click [here](#).

3. **Growing pains: Why supermarkets are struggling to source local products** *Food Dive, 04/26/17.* As demand for local grows, grocers and producers are experiencing challenges. Since retail distribution systems are designed to deliver as much uniform-quality product as possible in as few trips as possible, sourcing locally has presented challenges. For example, small farms may not be adequately scaled up and retailers may not be able to handle the increased number of producers in the supply chain. The author recommends further investment to help small farms and food hubs meet demand from nearby supermarkets.

4. **Farm Loan Delinquencies Continue Higher** *Agricultural Economic Insights, 04/24/17.* The Kansas City Federal Reserve Bank’s Ag Finance databook finds that farm loan delinquencies, which have remained 2.29% over the last 29 years, have recently doubled from .98% in 2015 to 1.47% in 2014. Additionally, the volume of farm loan delinquencies has doubled from $530 million in 2014 to $1.11 billion in 2016. The author suggests that despite farm delinquencies trending upwards, the uptick has been from historically low levels.

5. **Feature: Cuba touts urban farming to boost food production** *XinhuaNet, 04/25/17.* By 2020, the government plans to invest more than 96 million U.S. dollars—80% of international financing—to expand urban farms. The program will also teach children how to plant and harvest vegetables, herbs, and fruits. By 2019, officials expect to produce around 1.2 million tons of organic fruits and vegetables at 10,000 hectares of urban farms throughout Cuba.

6. **General Mills, Conservation Groups Partner to Invest in Soil** *Food Logistics, 04/21/17.* Leaders from General Mills, The Nature Conservancy, and the Soil Health Partnership announced a collaborative effort to support the development of tools and resources for farmers and supply chain stakeholders to improve soil health. General Mills has pledged a 3-year, $2 million commitment to the initiative.

7. **Agronomics: Crowdfunding** *Modern Farmer, 04/20/17.* Some tips to getting funding to build farm facilities include: find the right crowdfunding platform, grow a network email list and social media presence, understand the do’s and don’ts, and develop creative content that connects with people.

8. **Frozen Vegetables Are Sometimes More Nutritious Than Fresh** *Modern Farmer, 04/20/17.* Researchers at the University of Georgia and the Frozen Food Foundation confirmed previous research suggesting that while nutrient content did not differ much between fresh foods or food stored in the refrigerator or in the freezer, frozen green beans, corn, and peas had higher nutrient value than fresh or fridge-stored.

9. **Why LA’s tech community is trying to hack hunger** *CNN, 04/19/17.* Hack for LA recently built a mapping platform similar to Yelp that locates the nearest food bank, farmers market, or community garden. The new tool serves food seekers, policymakers, and nonprofits by streamlining access to healthy, affordable food options.

10. **17 Detroit Neighborhood Upgrades Get $2 Million from Kresge Foundation** *Deadline Detroit, 04/17/17.* Funded projects will: convert a west-side house into a free medical clinic, a community food hub, and small residential space; install a rain garden learning lab on vacant land across the Chandler Park neighborhood’s only public school; and facilitate development in other areas.

11. **USDA Updates Produce GAPs Harmonized Food Safety Audit Checklists** *USDA, 04/14/17.* USDA is updating food safety audit checklists with the newly released Produce Good Agricultural Practices Harmonized Food Safety standards. These standards are part of AMS’ voluntary audit services to specialty crops industry to verify food safety.

12. **Agricultural asset: Bogard Food Hub hopes to extend sales season for Valley farmers** *Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman.* The 10,000 square foot food hub has dry, freeze, and 2,800 square feet of cold storage
capacity to help extend the selling season for local producers. The hub, now distributing fruits, vegetables, and processed meats, will launch in spring of 2017 with eggs and poultry.

13. **Food Hub Puts Delicious, Local Food on Memphis Tables** *Memphis Daily News, 04/14/17*. The Memphis-based Bring it Food Hub sources food from about 40 local farms and distributes it through a CSA and wholesale online marketplace.

14. **Where grocery stores are sparse, one family farm nourishes a California town** *LA Times, 04/10/17*. A family farm supplies produce to the salad bar of a rural California school. Additionally, the farmers have worked with school staff to manage a school garden and host various activities that help to educate children about where their food comes from. The school is in the Sierra foothills town, where 85% of families live below the poverty line.

15. **Study Shows Bumblebees Can Boost Blueberry Yield Big Time** *Growing Produce, 04/06/17*. In a study published in the journal *Environmental Entomology*, researchers found that bumblebees boosted blueberry yield by 70%. Researchers suggest that growers can increase bumble populations by placing hives in fields.

16. **Micronutrients needed for macro yields** *Groundwork Ag, 02/01/17*. In addition to three primary nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium), there are three secondary nutrients (sulfur, calcium, and magnesium) and eight micronutrients (boron, chlorine, copper, iron, manganese, molybdenum, nickel, and zinc) that improve plant health, soil microorganisms, and impact the diets of humans and animals.