

How does international conflict affect Fulton and Mason counties?

Ukraine native teaches ISU class on the international aspects of agribusiness

BY GAVIN MALISKA

Dr. Iuliia Tetteh, an assistant professor of agribusiness at Illinois State University, is a Ukraine native who recently introduced courses on international agribusiness to the ISU offerings.

Tetteh emigrated to the United States as a student in 2008 and earned her MBA from Chadron State College in Nebraska, and her PhD in agribusiness from the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. She joined the ISU Agriculture Department faculty in 2016.

Tetteh grew up on her grandparents' farm in Smila, a city of about 66,000 in Central Ukraine, two hours south of Kyiv.

And although she has been in the U.S. for 14 years, her parents and a sister and her family all live and farm in Smila.

They are somewhat protected by their location in the central area of the country, although Tetteh points out the city of Vinnystia, also away from the border areas, had been "randomly bombed" by the Russians only last week.

The invasion of Ukraine stressed to Tetteh the importance of teaching the international aspects of agribusiness, which she introduced to the ISU curriculum in the last year.

"It's so important, especially now, for our students to understand the complexity and relationships of international agribusiness," she said.

Tetteh said she has been following reports from Ukraine about the winter wheat crops that are nearly ready to harvest.

The troops, shellings and shootings may keep farmers from their fields, she said, which would mean the crop could not be brought to market, creating not only losses for the farmers but a food shortage across the country.

Tetteh responded via email to the Democrat's questions about the impact of the crisis on farmers in Central Illinois which we publish here.

Disruptions to global markets have impacts here

Interview with ISU Prof.
IULIIA TETTEH

Illinois State University professor of Ag Economics Iuliia Tetteh, a native of Ukraine, answered the Democrat's questions on how the crisis in the country where she grew up will impact agribusiness here in Illinois.

In general, how is the war in Ukraine impacting farmers in Central Illinois?

Dr. Iuliia Tetteh: Today the world is very different than it was two weeks ago. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has brought not only immediate and direct devastation in Ukraine (lives lost, infrastructure destroyed and humanitarian crisis), but also potential long-lingering impacts on consumers and producers worldwide.

The economic impacts are particularly due to two reasons:

—Ukraine and Russia play an important role in global ag markets (particularly, grains and oilseeds), and

—The war created significant disruptions in four key global markets: financial market,

energy market, fertilizer, and grain markets.

Because of the nature of agricultural production, farmers in Illinois must deal with all four markets in today's globally interconnected society; therefore, the crisis across the ocean has direct and indirect impacts on farming operations and household livelihoods here in Central Illinois.

Farmers here in Illinois can be impacted in the following way:

1. Higher energy costs
2. Higher cost of fertilizer/availability issues
3. Higher corn and wheat prices

The first two would increase the cost of production, whereas the last one would increase revenue. Therefore, the overall impact on the profitability would be driven by the magnitude of those two impacts.

USDA will publish an updated report on the planting projections (acres) on March 31st; farmers should watch for acres we plan to plant under wheat to make their planting decisions.

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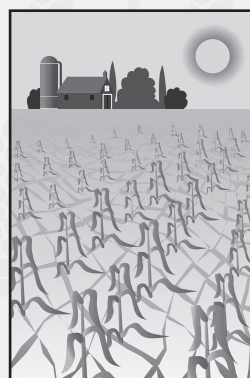
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