

Agri-food Media Content Analysis Monthly Update | December 2010

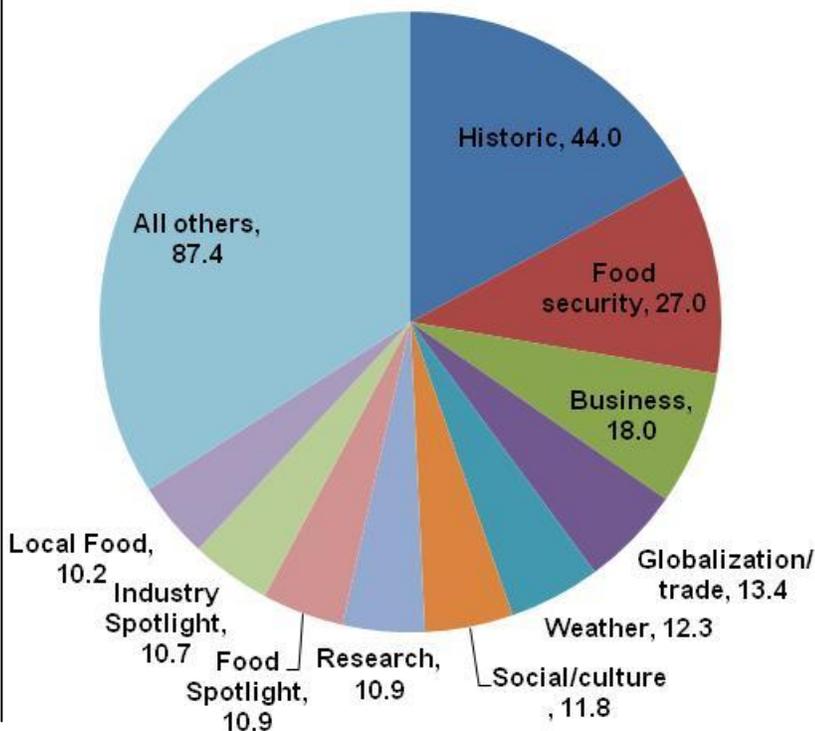
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In December, for the first time in the 32 months of the media analysis project, the “historic” theme received the most exposure from agri-food articles. Coverage in this theme was almost exclusively related to the refit of the Bluenose II, a replica of the iconic fishing and racing schooner. Much of this coverage was negative and focused on the decision to dispose of the old hull by chipping rather than allowing it to be sold in pieces as souvenirs.

As is common during the holiday season, coverage of charitable donations of food and other resources elevate the exposure of food security issues. Also, there was a substantial cover story regarding issues (yields, disease, prices etc) impacting global wheat production and warnings of potential outcome on global food security.

The agri-food business theme slipped to third after the BHP Billiton- Potash Corp takeover bid had led to the theme having the highest exposure score during the previous two months. There was no dominant sub-theme in December.

Agri-food theme exposure- December 2010



Total exposure score = 257.1
Prev 12 month avg = 292.3
Dec 2009 score = 251.6

Globalization/trade similarly lacked a main sub-theme. Articles included concerns over the effect of imports of cheaper US Christmas trees on local producers and the positive impacts that a free-trade agreement with Panama could have.

The impact of European storms on lobster exports to the EU led to the weather theme rounding out the top five.

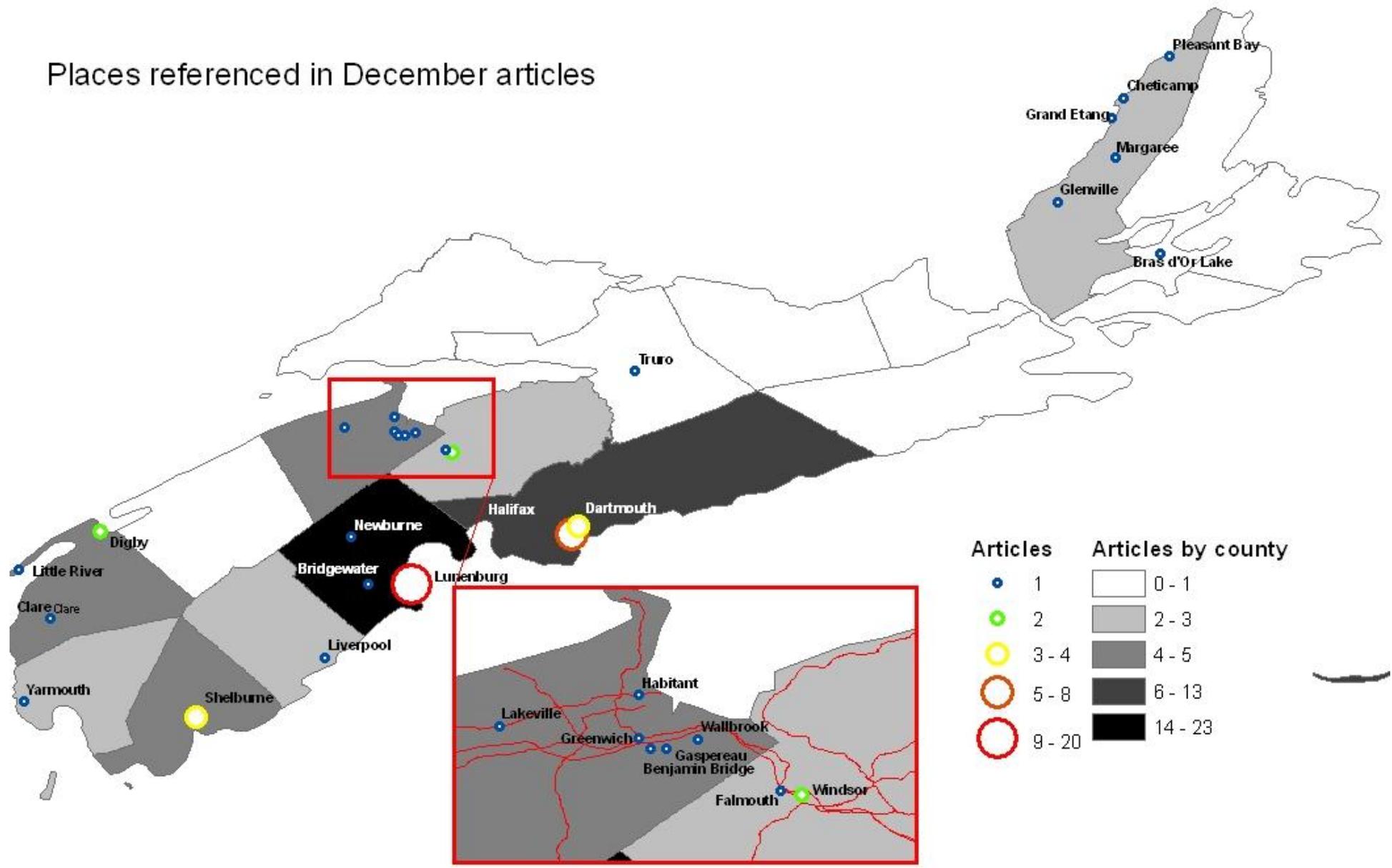
Agri-food themes with media exposure scores above 10, and the relation to total agri-food exposure score, are displayed in the chart.

The top five agriculture and fisheries themes are listed separately in the tables below.

AGRICULTURE THEME	EXPOSUREⁱ	SLANTⁱⁱ	TOP ISSUE
Food security	14.7	Positive	Global food security (wheat harvest)
Local food	8.9	Highly positive	No dominant sub-theme
Food spotlight	7.8	Neutral	No dominant sub-theme
Industry spotlight	7.0	Positive	NS wine industry
Globalization/trade	5.7	Positive	No dominant sub-theme
<p><i>Note: A slant score is only given to a theme in articles where that theme is the main topic of the article. No slant is given to a theme when it is secondary to an article.</i></p>			

FISHERIES THEME	EXPOSUREⁱ	SLANTⁱⁱ	TOP ISSUE
Historic	43.5	Negative	Bluenose II refit
Social/cultural	9.7		Secondary theme to Bluenose II refit
Weather	8.7	Negative	Lobster exports to EU delayed by storms
Research	8.6	Highly positive	Blue shark research at Canadian Shark Research Laboratory
Agri-food business	6.2	Positive	Highliner acquires Viking Seafood
<p><i>Note: A slant score is only given to a theme in articles where that theme is the main topic of the article. No slant is given to a theme when it is secondary to an article.</i></p>			

Places referenced in December articles



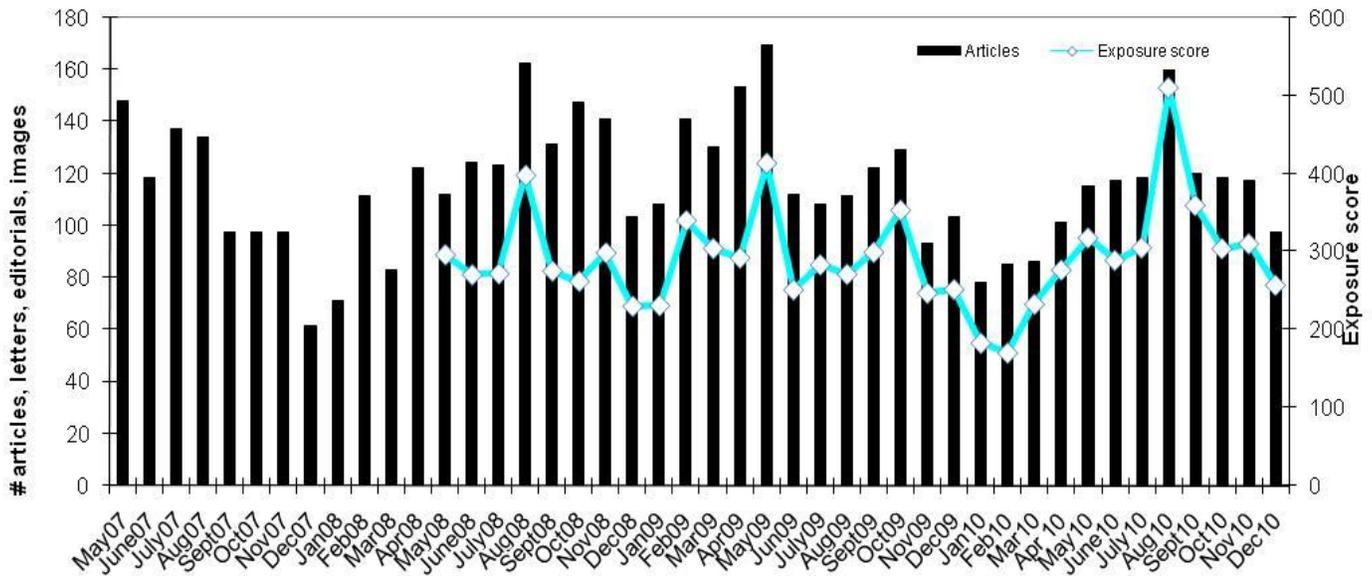
Lunenburg County had the most agri-food coverage in December, followed by Halifax. Lunenburg (Bluenose II refit) had by far the most coverage of specific towns/cities, followed by Halifax (food banks), Dartmouth (no dominant theme) and Shelburne (proposed aquaculture development).

In total there were 97 agri-food articles in December, 30 of which were related to primary agriculture and 43 to fisheries. Eleven articles related to processing and 18 to the food industry in general. The 97 articles are a decrease of 20 articles from November and 6 articles from December 2009.

Compared to the previous four months, there were more front page articles (7 compared to 5.5). Articles were longer in length (2,120 characters vs 2,060) but had fewer images (0.60/article vs 0.70). The overall media exposure score of 257.1 was a decrease of 17 percent over the previous month and a slight increase (2.2 percent) over December 2009.

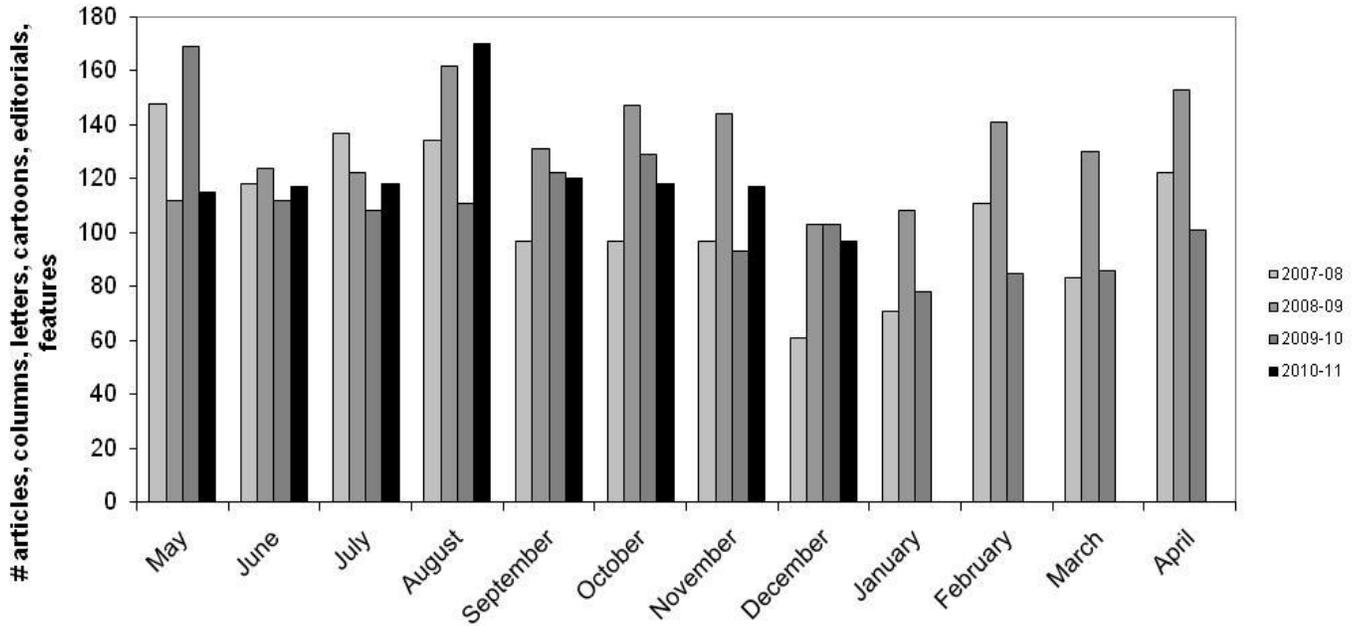
The wine and lobster industries had the most sector-specific coverage in December, followed closely by Christmas trees and fur (mink).

Agri-food articles and exposure score

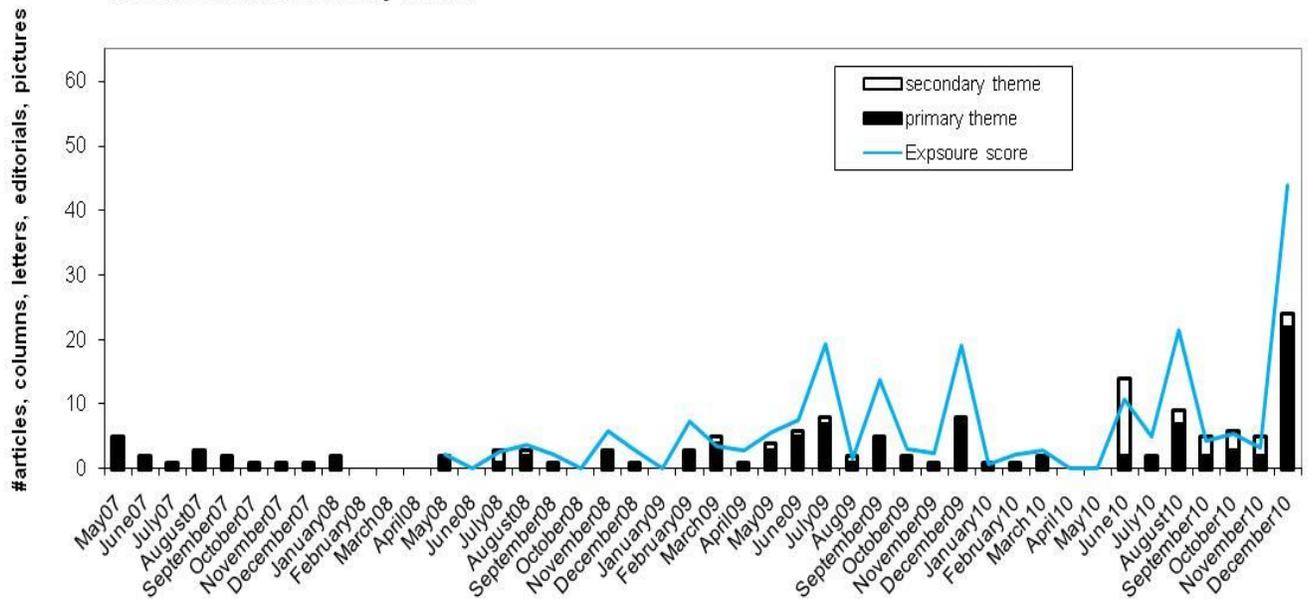


Note: exposure score calculated as of May 2008

Agri-food articles, monthly comparison

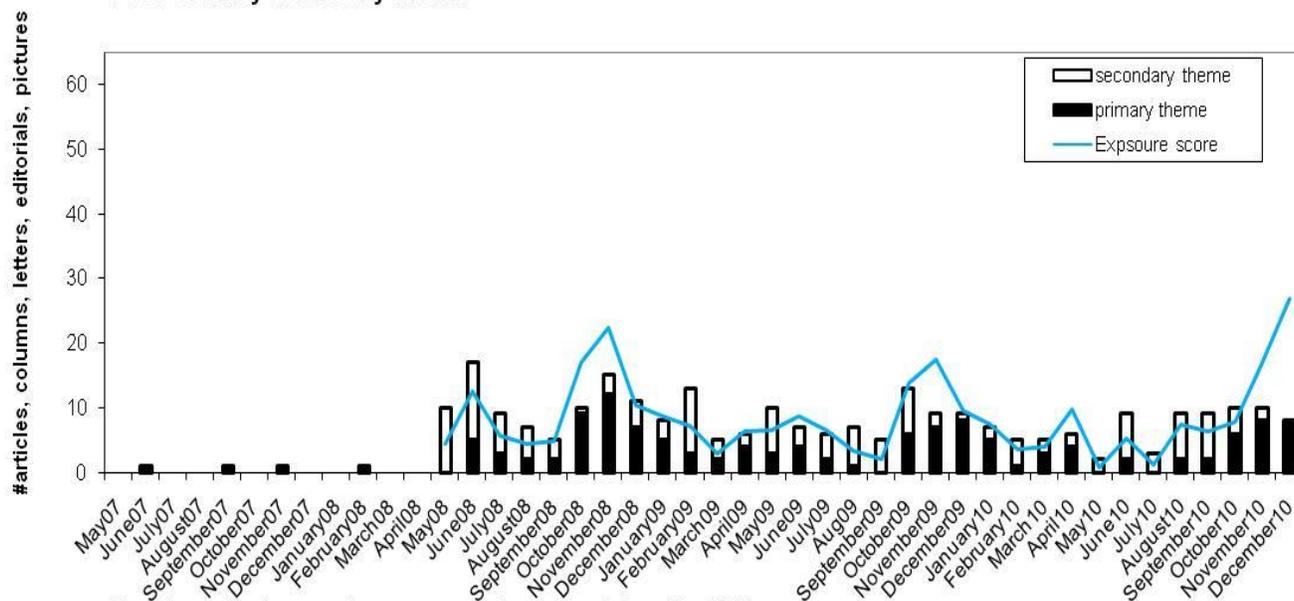


Historic-theme articles by month



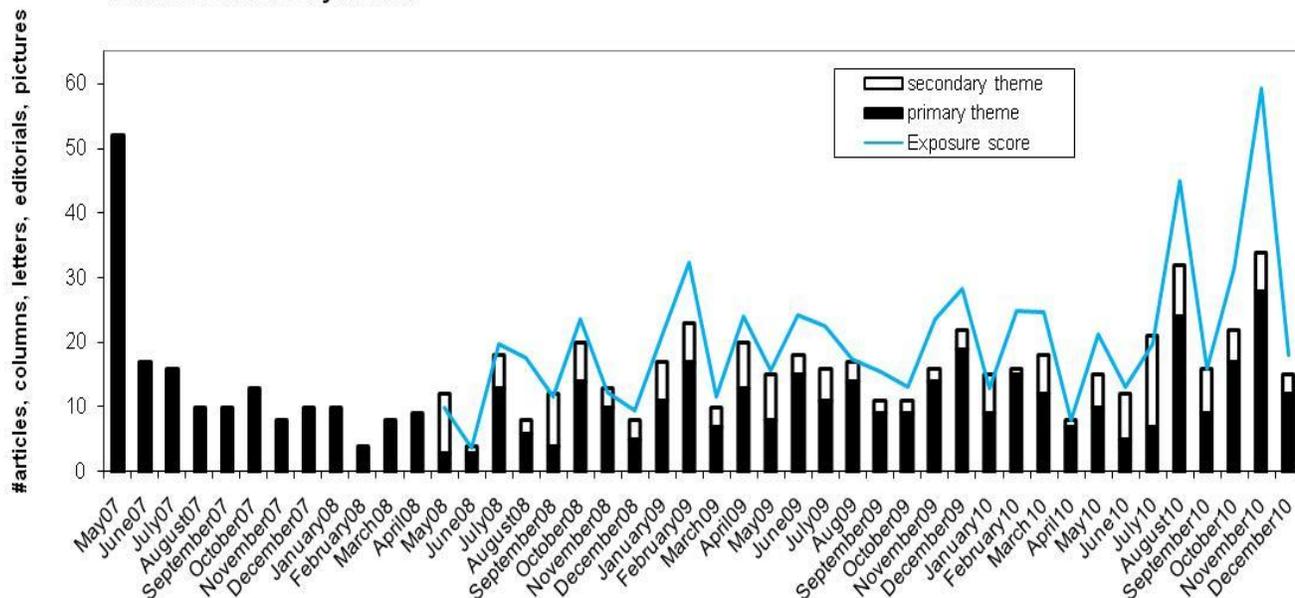
Note: Secondary theme and exposure score data collected since May 2008

Food security articles by month

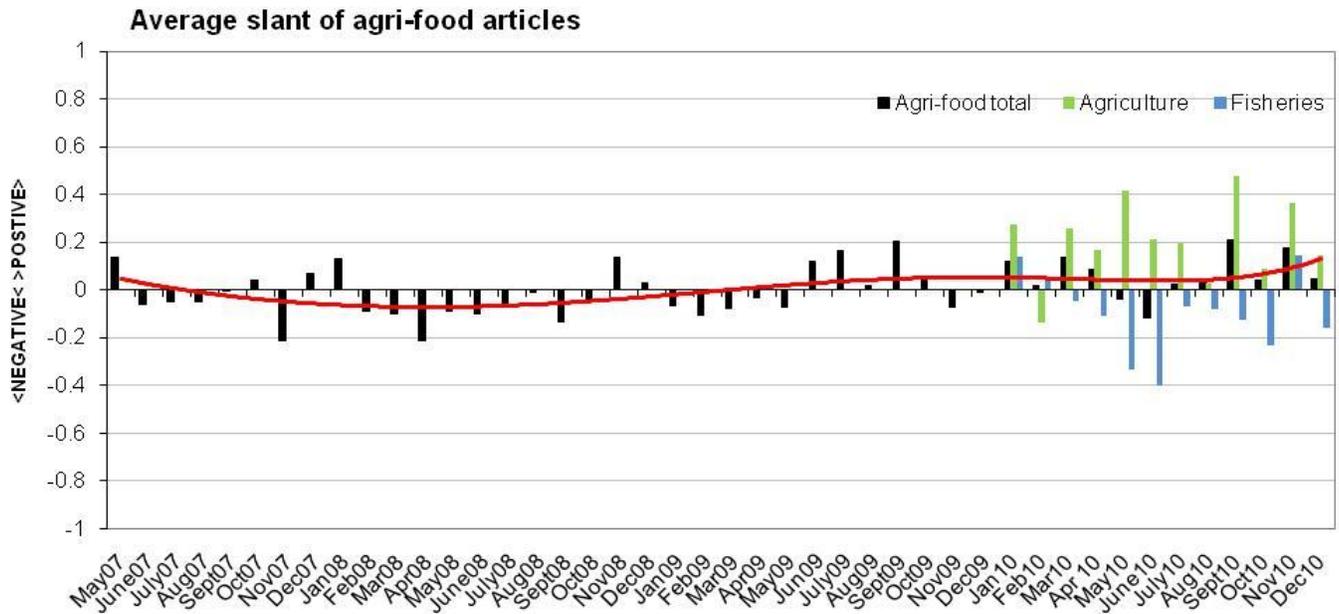


Note: Secondary theme and exposure score data collected since May 2008

Business articles by month



Note: Secondary theme and exposure score data collected since May 2008



The slant of agri-food articles was slightly positive in December, continuing a six month trend. Moderately positive agriculture-related articles were offset by moderately negative fisheries articles (much related to the handling of the Bluenose II refit).

ⁱ Exposure score takes into account # of articles, size of article, # of images, theme appearing as an underlying theme in another article, and front page articles. Full methodology is available from the author.

ⁱⁱ A score between -100 and 100 is assigned to each article in an attempt to assess how positive or negative the issue is presented. There is no implication of a bias simply whether the issue would seem “good” or “bad” to a reader. Highly negative= -100 to -75. Negative= -74 to -25. Neutral= -24 to +24. Positive= +25 to +74. Highly positive= +75 to +100.

List of agri-food topics, by exposure score and number of articles- December 2010

RANK	TOPIC	# OF ARTICLES		EXPOSURE SCORE	PREV MONTH RANK	CHANGE
		Primary	Secondary			
1	Historic	22	2	44.0	24	(+23)
2	Food security	8	0	27.0	4	(+2)
3	Business	12	3	18.0	1	(-2)
4	Globalization/trade	5	14	13.4	6	(+2)
5	Weather	4	4	12.3	32	(+27)
6	Social/culture	1	23	11.8	20	(+14)
7	Research	1	8	10.9	17	(+10)
8	Food spotlight	4	1	10.9	11	(+3)
9	Industry spotlight	4	13	10.7	10	(+1)
10	Local food	3	6	10.2	3	(-7)

Notes:

Only agri-food topics with exposure scores greater than 7.5 are listed