Agri-food Media Content Analysis Monthly Update | October 2011
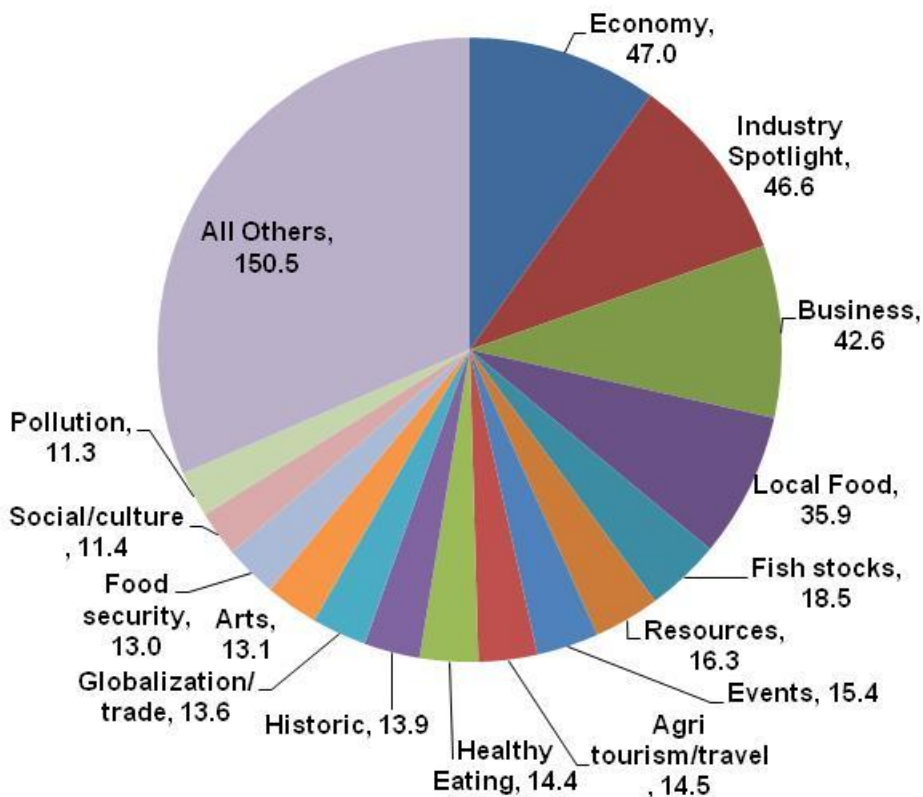
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For the first time since December 2008, the economy was the theme with the highest media exposure of agri-food themes in the Chronicle Herald. This was due exclusively to a special series that the Chronicle Herald ran entitled "Crossroads". The series focused on the struggles faced by rural communities as well as opportunities. Many of these articles mentioned the agriculture and fishery industries.

The industry spotlight theme was a very close second in terms of exposure score. The wine industry generated the most coverage with renewed interest in the legality of stores that wish to sell in-store wine brewing kits combining with spotlight articles on wine, with industry pioneer Wolfgang Blass visiting Halifax and the opening of Rines Creek winery.

The agri-business theme received significant exposure in October. There were numerous sub-themes during October, the main one being the attempted and rejected takeover bid of Clearwater by Cooke Aquaculture. A bid for Luneburg's Highliner to acquire Icelandic Seafood is in jeopardy. This deal would make Highliner the largest seafood processor in North America.

Agri-food theme exposure- October 2011

- Economy, 47.0
- Industry Spotlight, 46.6
- Business, 42.6
- Local Food, 35.9
- Fish stocks, 18.5
- Resources, 16.3
- Events, 15.4
- Agri tourism/travel, 14.5
- Healthy Eating, 14.4
- Historic, 13.9
- Globalization/trade, 13.6
- Arts, 13.1
- Food security, 13.0
- Social/culture, 11.4
- Pollution, 11.3
- All Others, 150.5

Total exposure score = 478.1	
Prev 12 month avg	= 307.3
Oct 2010 score	= 303.9

Local food had the fourth highest exposure score in October. Local food in restaurant reviews and coverage of local wine were the main sub-themes.

Coverage of fish stocks rounded out the top five. Bluefin tuna, lobster, shark and whales were mentioned. The main sub-theme was the debate over a seal cull intended to positively impact fish stocks.
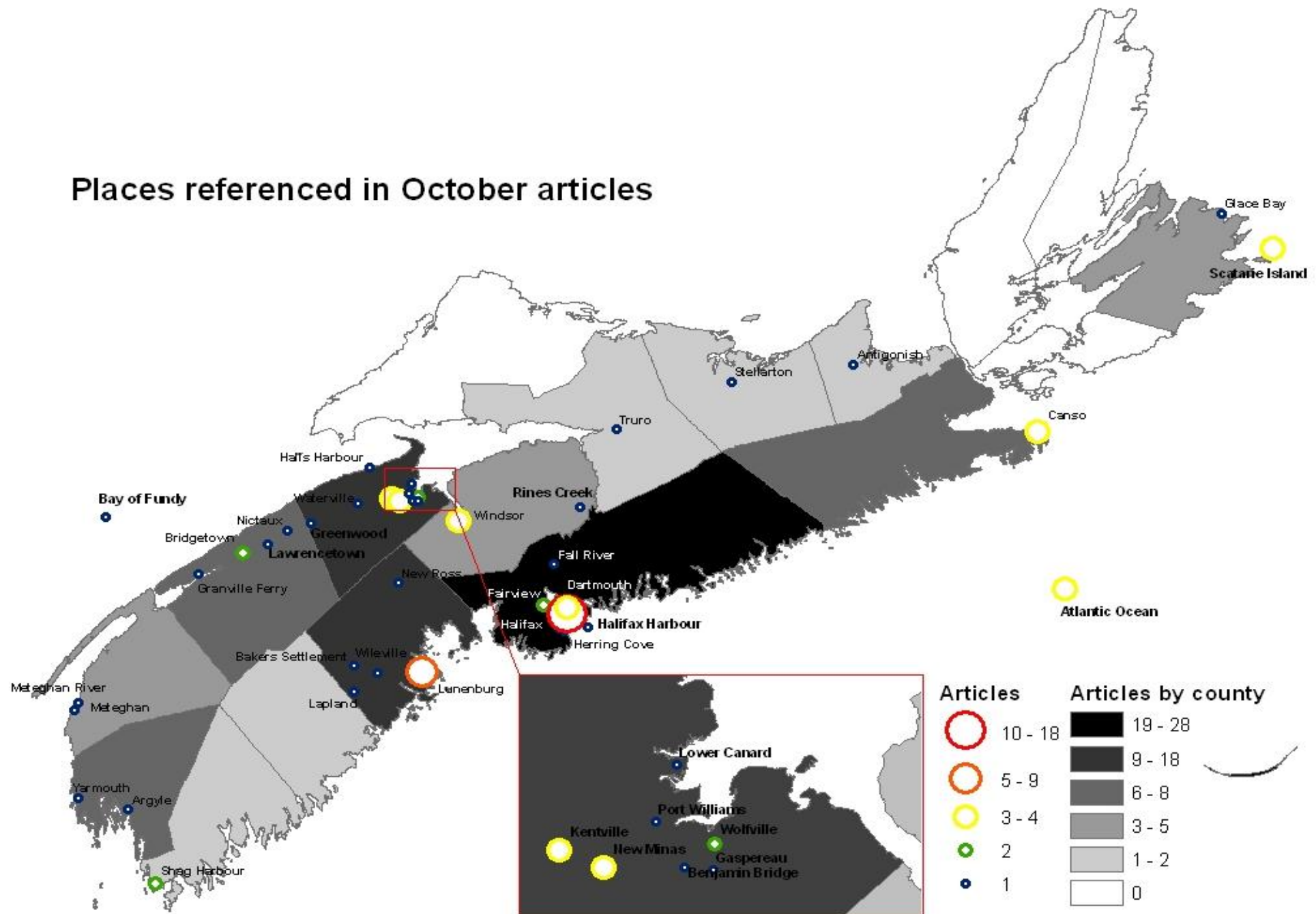
Agri-food themes with media exposure scores above 10, and the relation to the total agri-food exposure score, are displayed in the chart.

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

AGRICULTURE THEME	EXPOSURE[i]	SLANT[ii]	TOP ISSUE
Local food	35.0	Highly positive	Local food in restaurant reviews/ wine spotlight
Industry spotlight	28.1	Highly positive	Wine
Economy	17.2	Positive	Crossroads series on rural economy
Events	14.9	Highly positive	Windsor Pumpkin Festival
Agri-tourism/travel	14.5	Highly positive	Wine regions (California, Portugal)

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.

FISHERIES THEME	EXPOSURE[i]	SLANT[ii]	TOP ISSUE
Economy	29.2	Neutral	Crossroads series on rural economy
Fish stocks	18.5	Negative	Proposed seal cull
Business	15.4	Negative	Cooke-Clearwater takeover bid
Arts	12.6	Highly positive	The Disappeared movie being filmed in Lunenburg
Resources	12.2	Positive	Coast, ocean, wetlands

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.

Places referenced in October articles

Articles

Symbol	Value
◯ (red)	10 - 18
◯ (orange)	5 - 9
◯ (yellow)	3 - 4
◌ (green)	2
• (blue)	1

Articles by county

Shade	Value
Black	19 - 28
Dark grey	9 - 18
Grey	6 - 8
Medium grey	3 - 5
Light grey	1 - 2
White	0

As in September, Halifax County had the most agri-food coverage in October. Halifax (no dominant sub-theme) had the most coverage of specific cities/towns/areas, followed by Lunenburg (Bluenose II refit).

In total there were 154 agri-food articles in October, 78 of which were related to primary agriculture and 52 to fisheries[1]. Ten articles related to processing and 33 to the food industry in general. The 154 articles are an increase of 60 articles from September and 36 articles from October 2010. Agri-food media exposure jumped sharply in October after previously having decreased for three consecutive months.
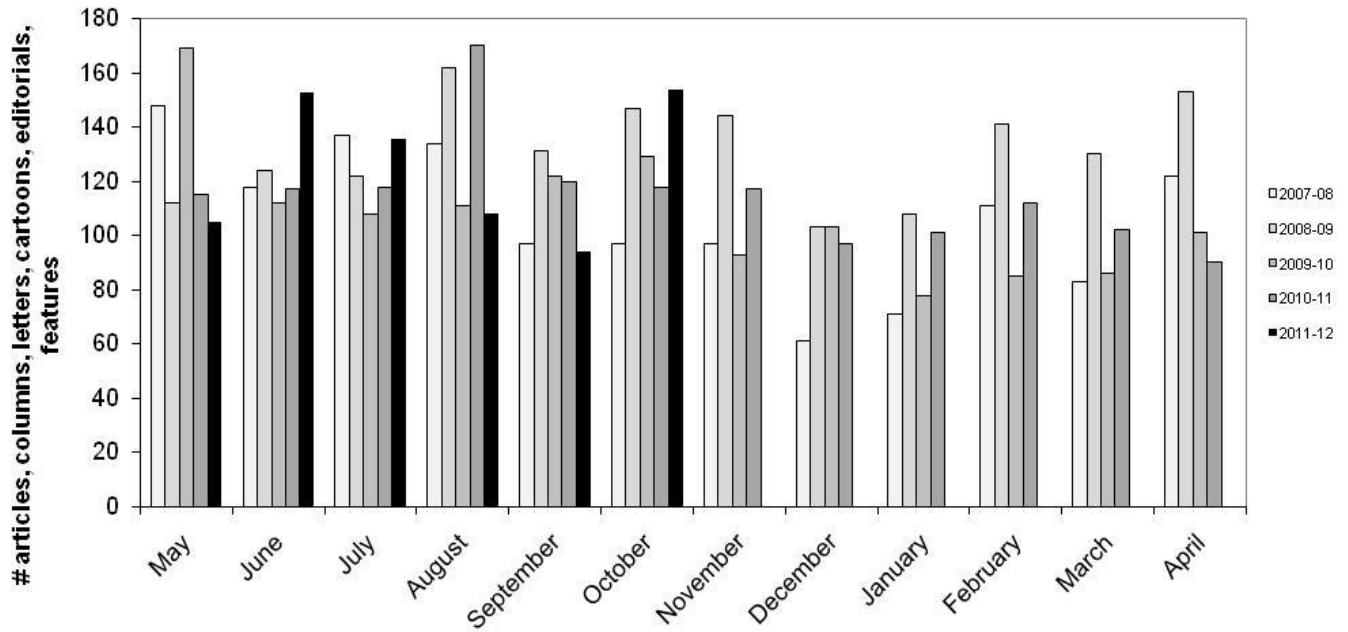
Compared to the average of the previous four months, there were more front page articles (8 compared with 4). Articles were longer in length (2,138 characters vs 2,063) and had more images (0.89/article vs 0.64). The overall media exposure score of 478.1 was an increase of 79 percent over the previous month and was 57 percent higher than in October 2010. Agri-food received the second highest media exposure in the 54 month history of the media content analysis.

The lobster and wine industries had the most sector-specific coverage in October, followed by wheat (Canadian Wheat Board to be disbanded) and pumpkins (Windsor Pumpkin Festival).
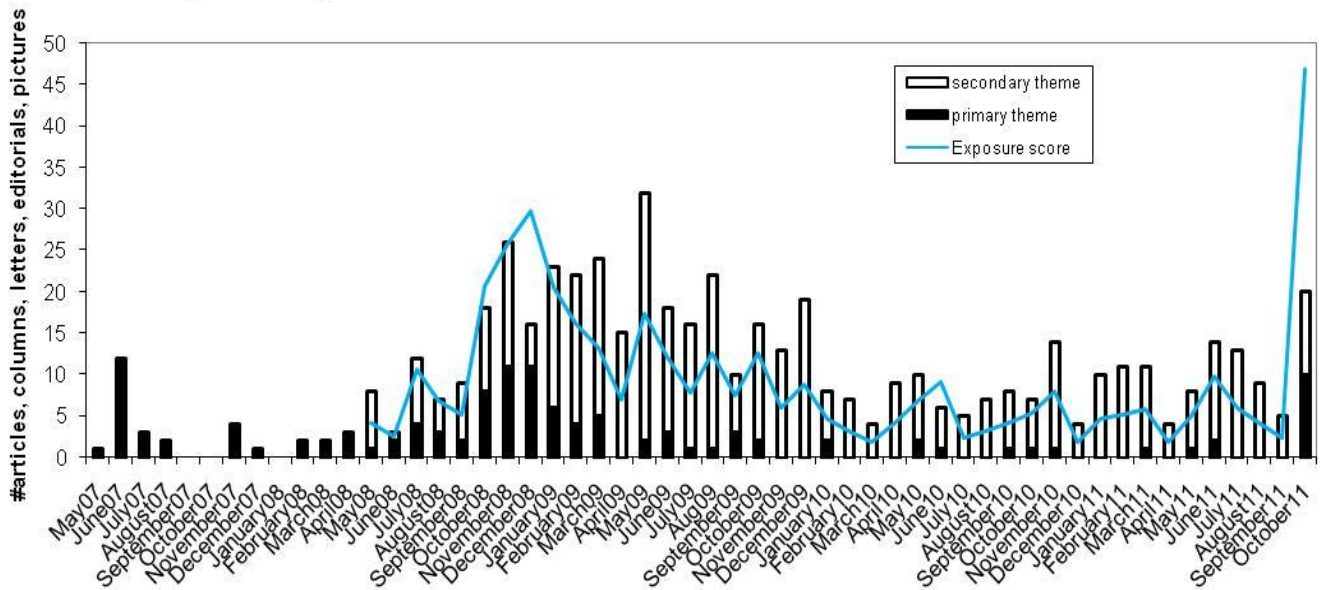
Agri-food articles and exposure score

Note: exposure score calculated as of May 2008

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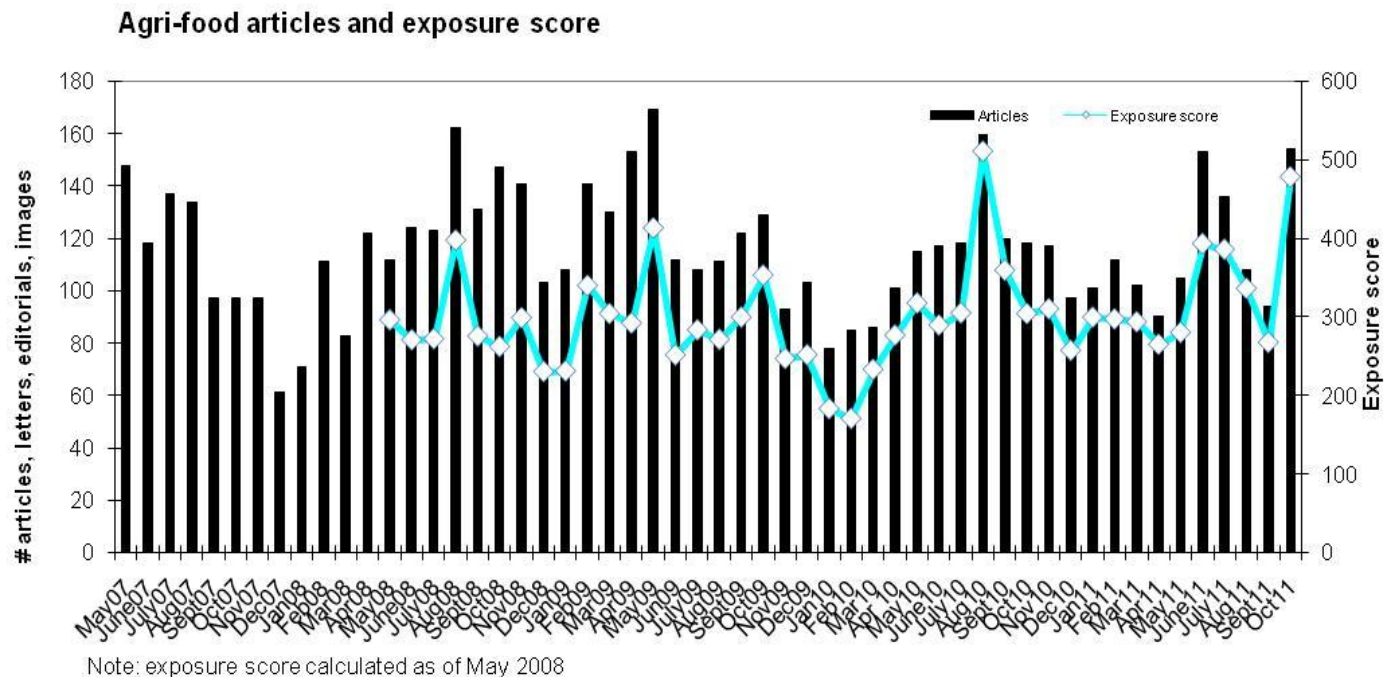
[1] Articles can reference any combination of agriculture, fisheries, processing, and/or the general food industry. For this reason, the sum of these articles will not necessarily equal the total number of articles for the month.
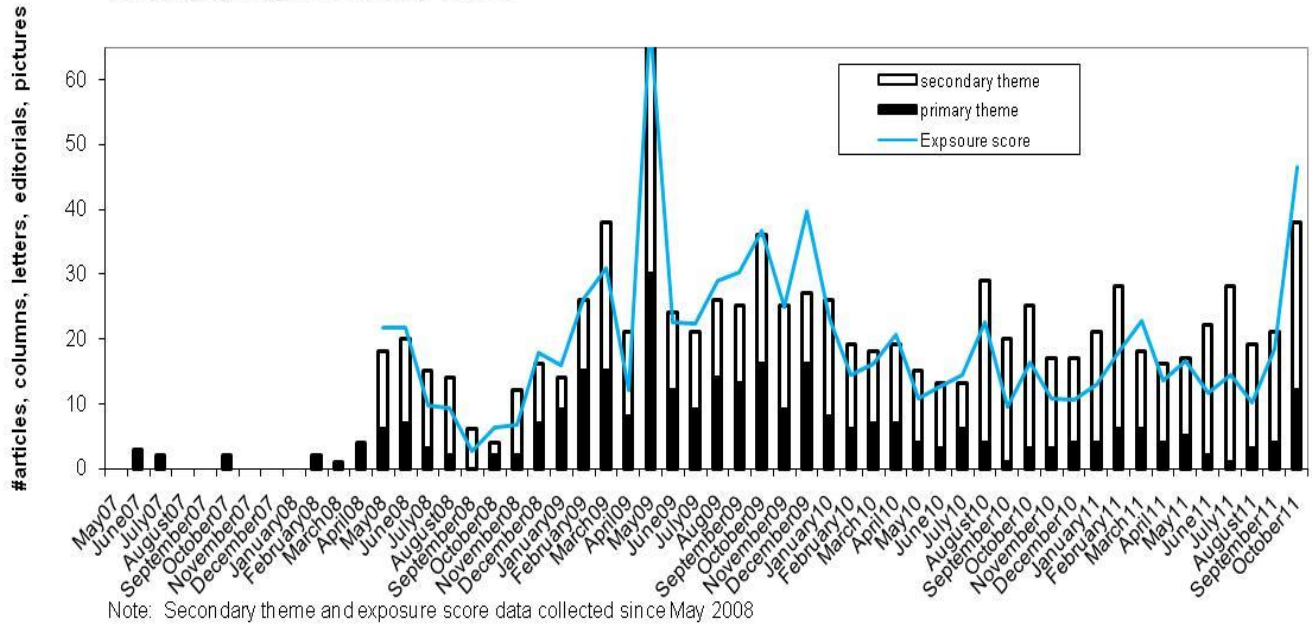
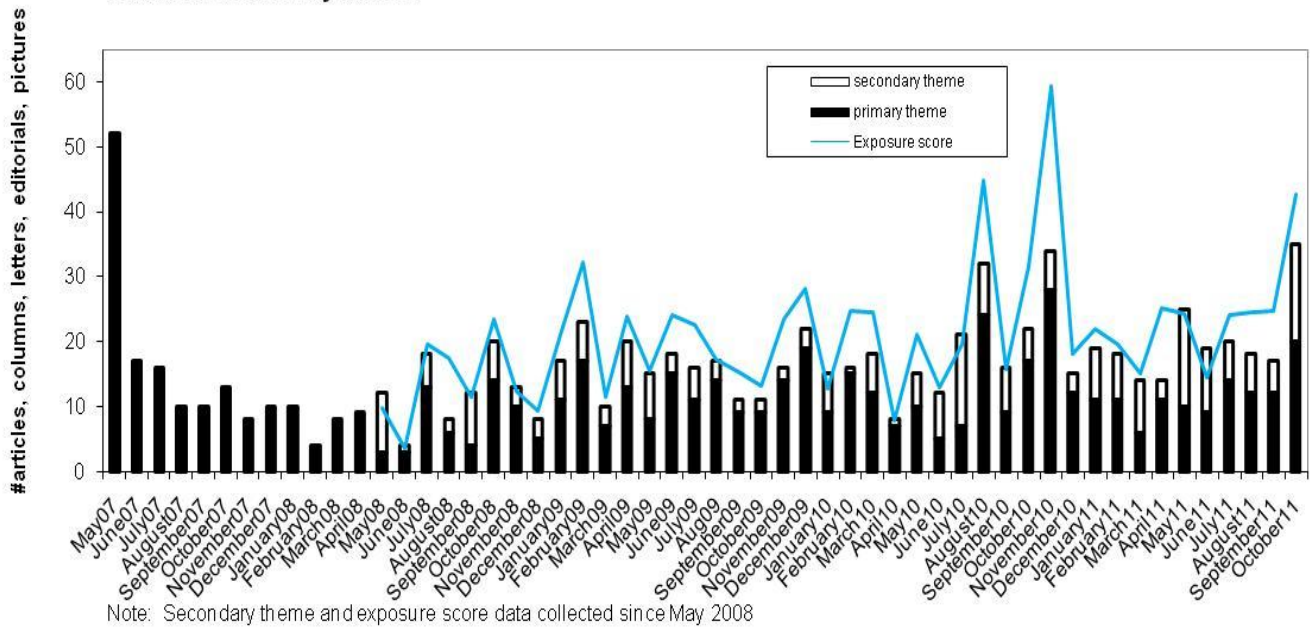# Agri-food articles, monthly comparison
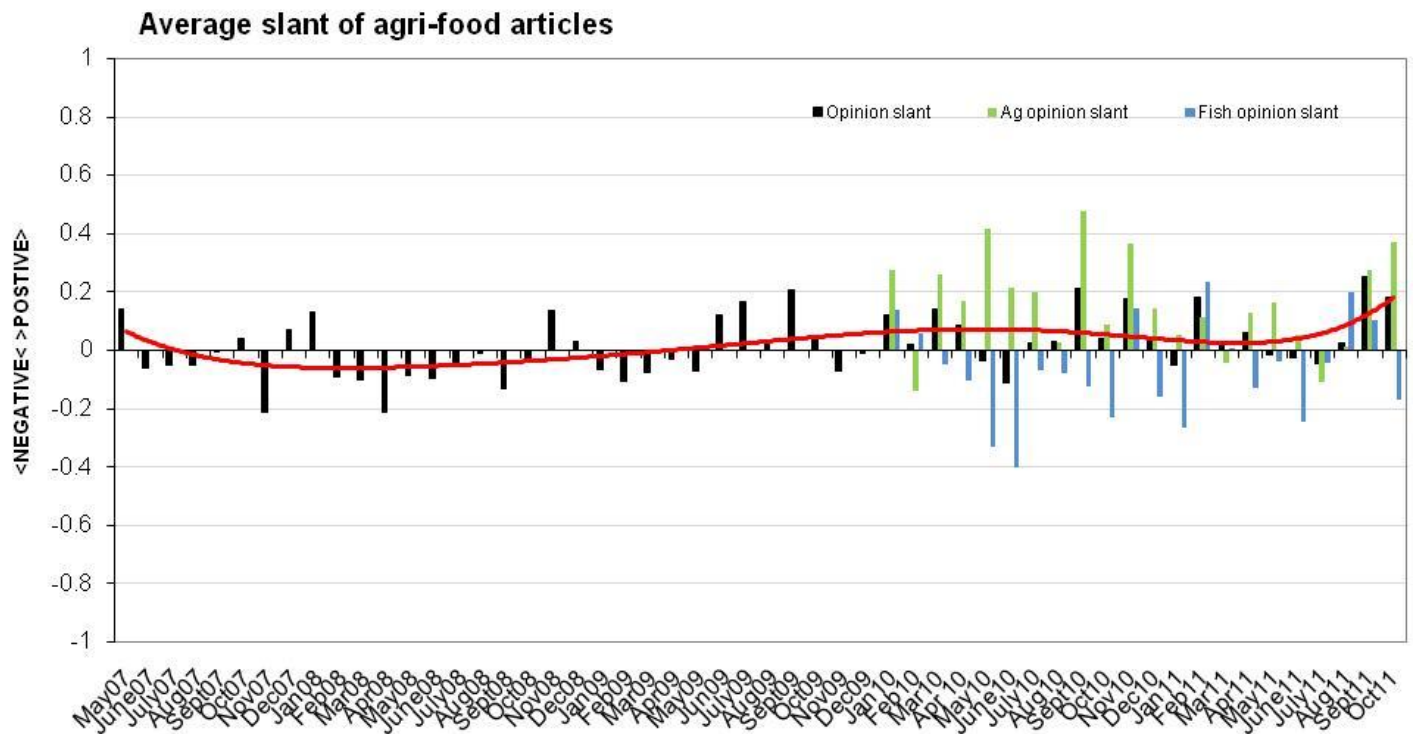

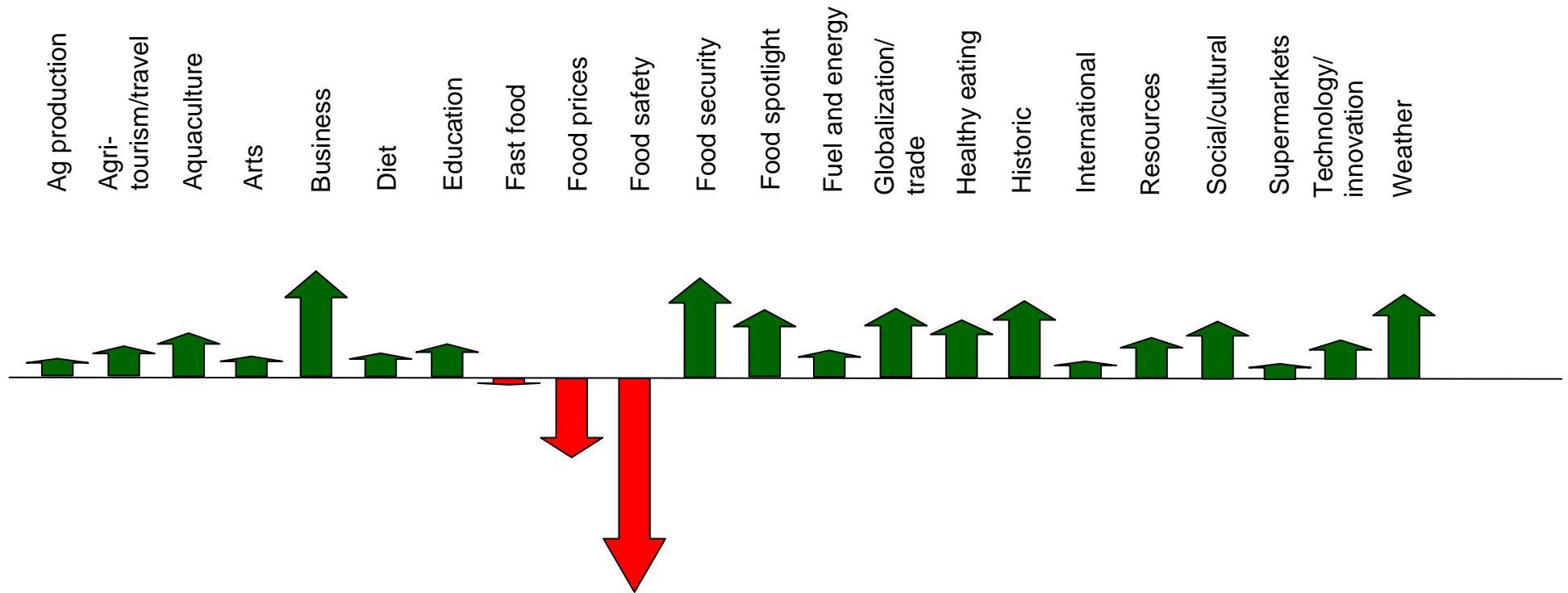# Economy articles by month

Industry spotlight articles by month

#articles, columns, letters, editorials, pictures (y-axis)

Legend:
- secondary theme
- primary theme
- Expsoure score

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

Business articles by month

#articles, columns, letters, editorials, pictures (y-axis)

Legend:
- secondary theme
- primary theme
- Exposure score

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

Average slant of agri-food articles

The slant of agri-food articles was again strongly positive after reaching a record high in September. The slant of agriculture-related articles was highly positive with local food, events and industry spotlight coverage driving up the average. Fishery coverage was negative, with fishery business court cases, fish stock/seal cull debate, shellfish fishery closures due to heavy rains, reader frustration over funds held by the Bluenose Trust, and concerns over pollution from the stranded MV Miner ship and impacts on fishery resources leading negative coverage.

Agri-food themes with a significant[2] trend in exposure over history of media content analysis project:

Ag production · Agri-tourism/travel · Aquaculture · Arts · Business · Diet · Education · Fast food · Food prices · Food safety · Food security · Food spotlight · Fuel and energy · Globalization/trade · Healthy eating · Historic · International · Resources · Social/cultural · Supermarkets · Technology/innovation · Weather

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[2] A significant p value (<0.1) in the simple linear regression model: y=mx+b, where y=exposure score, x is time, m is the estimated coefficient for x and b is a constant.

List of agri-food topics, by exposure score and number of articles- October 2011

RANK	TOPIC	# OF ARTICLES		EXPOSURE SCORE	PREV MONTH RANK	CHANGE
		Primary	Secondary			
1	Economy	10	10	47.0	32	(+31)
2	Industry spotlight	12	26	46.6	3	(+1)
3	Business	20	15	42.6	2	(-1)
4	Local food	12	13	35.9	1	(-3)
5	Fish stocks	7	5	18.5	11	(+6)
6	Resources	3	15	16.3	33	(+27)
7	Events	7	8	15.4	10	(+3)
8	Agri-tourism/travel	3	4	14.5	9	(+1)
9	Healthy eating	7	7	14.4	4	(-5)
10	Historic	7	4	13.9	12	(+2)
11	Globalization/trade	1	28	13.6	8	(-3)
12	Arts	3	2	13.1	43	(+31)
13	Food security	9	4	13.0	5	(-8)
14	Social/cultural	1	22	11.4	7	(-7)
15	Pollution	4	4	11.3	14	(-1)
16	Agricultural policy	7	1	9.4	29	(+13)
17	Food spotlight	3	3	9.4	13	(-4)
18	Trends	3	5	9.0	25	(+7)
19	Supermarkets	3	2	8.9	19	--
Notes: Only agri-food topics with exposure scores greater than 7.5 are listed						