What's ahead for Washington this week: Crop reports, exports, immigration & EPA

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Washington, March 7 – With attention focused on jobs, the heated debate over healthcare reform, and on whether Democrats will or should use a parliamentary end run to pass healthcare despite solid Republican opposition, it's easy to forget a lot else is happening in DC.

First, a string of USDA reports this week, listed below, should deliver important updates on where crops, exports, stocks, and prices are headed this year.

Second, between his healthcare-promoting trips around the country, President Obama is finding time for other priorities. On Monday, he meets with Sens. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) to pursue his goal of bipartisan immigration reform this year. Then on Thursday, the President addresses the Export-Import Bank's Annual Conference in Washington to explain how he intends to achieve his ambitious goal of doubling U.S. exports over the next five years.

Exports will be in the spotlight too when U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk talks about the administration's "Trade Policy Agenda: American Jobs, Global Leadership," in a National Press Club speech Tuesday. The House Agriculture Committee will add another dimension to the trade discussions with its hearing Thursday on U.S. agricultural sales to Cuba.

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson and her determination to crack down on carbon emissions from major emitters like power plants – with or without the passage of controversial cap-and-trade legislation – undoubtedly will generate lively debate when she addresses the National Press Club on Monday.

Congressional hearings this week include:

Tuesday, March 9

- Senate Environment Subcommittee on Superfund, Toxics, and Environmental Health hearing on "Reforming U.S. Chemical Safety Laws" in preparation for rewriting the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA).

- Senate Appropriations Subcommittee hearing with Interior Sec. Ken Salazar on the administration's FY 2011 budget request for the Interior Department.

Wednesday, March 10

- House Agriculture Subcommittee hearing "To review USDA's information technology systems."
- House Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on "Global Food Security."

Thursday, March 11

- House Agriculture Committee hearing "To review U.S. agricultural sales to Cuba."

USDA's NASS, ERS & WASDE reports this week include:

- Tuesday, March 9, Weather-Crop Summary
- Wednesday March 10, Crop Production, Broiler Hatchery, World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates, Season-Average Price Forecasts
- Thursday, March 11, Rice Outlook, Cotton and Wool Outlook, Oil Crops Outlook, Latest U.S. Agricultural Trade Data
- Friday, March 12, Dairy Products Prices, Peanut Prices, Potato Stocks, Price Reactions after USDA Crop Reports, Feed Outlook, Wheat Outlook, Livestock and Meat Trade Data, U.S. Agricultural Trade Data Update

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