

USA TODAY WEEKEND

THE NATION'S NEWS | \$3 | FEBRUARY 6-8, 2026

Maui tells tourists 'come with respect'

Here's how travelers can help island continue recovery nearly three years post-fire. **In Money**



MICHAEL MADRID/IMAGN IMAGES

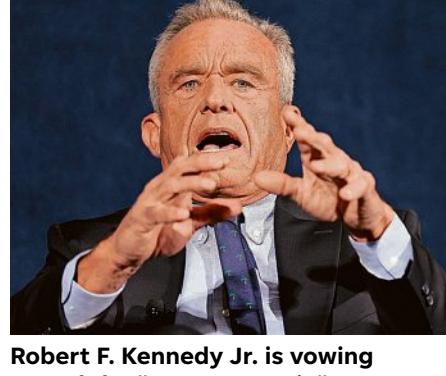
Winter Olympics kick off in Milan

Italy welcomes the world to the 2026 Milan Cortina Winter Olympics, which run Feb. 6-22. More than 3,500 athletes will compete in 16 sports.

In Sports: Inner strength drives injured Alpine ski racer Lindsey Vonn through final Games, columnist says.

In Weekend Extra: Get insights into how Team USA's Alysa Liu and Erin Jackson mentally approach greatness.

On usatoday.com/sports/olympics: Find videos, news and medal counts.



Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is vowing to end the "war on protein" even though experts say it doesn't exist.

HEATHER DIEHL/GETTY IMAGES

Kennedy declares end to war on protein

Experts say it doesn't exist; consumption up

Alyssa Goldberg

USA TODAY

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has declared an end to the "war on protein."

The announcement was posted to the White House's X account on Jan. 11 alongside a dimly lit portrait of Kennedy and a link to the federal government's new Dietary Guidelines, which prioritize protein, dairy and healthy fats.

"Today the lies stop," Kennedy said on Jan. 7. "Protein and healthy fats are essential and were wrongly discouraged in prior dietary guidelines."

But food experts say there isn't a war on protein. Protein consumption in the United States is reaching record highs, and Americans already eat more protein than they need.

In fact, protein has "never been a negative" in prior guidelines, according to Marion Nestle, professor emerita of nutrition, food studies, and public health at New York University and former Health and Human Services senior nutrition policy adviser.

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Kevin James: 'Solo' highlight of career

Actor plays romantic lead for first time in his career. Here's what his wife and kids think. **In Life**



ROY ROCHLIN/
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VIP SCREENING

Jobs report signals economy slowdown

Employers trim 108,435 jobs, the highest tally for the first month of the year since 2009. **In News**

TOP 25 SUPER BOWL MOMENTS

Plays that sealed victory – or defeat



Super Bowl 49: In a play that will live in Seattle Seahawks infamy, Malcolm Butler of the New England Patriots picks off a pass at the goal line to save the day for the Patriots 28-24 on Feb. 1, 2015. TIMOTHY A. CLARY/APP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Nate Davis
USA TODAY

SAN JOSE, CA – Should the Seattle Seahawks have simply run the ball?

It's a question that's been posed countless times over the past decade-plus but has returned to the forefront with a vengeance this week as Seattle prepares to play the New England Patriots in Super Bowl 60 – 11 years after the Seahawks' stunning, controversial, pall-casting 28-24 loss to the Pats in their last Super Sunday appearance.

"I know that's a sore subject for a lot of people but, uh ... we'll say pass?" current Seahawks QB Sam Darnold smiled when asked the question during Super Bowl Opening Night on Feb. 2. (Wrong answer, Sam.)

Said Seattle receiver Cooper Kupp: "I would say probably hand the ball off." (Bingo.)

Head coach Mike Macdonald had had about enough after fielding the same query from multiple media members on Feb. 2.

"I think the more important question is: How many times am I gonna get this question over the next three days?" is where a slightly exasperated Macdonald landed.

It's a fairly understandable response given the typical Groundhog Day patina of Super Bowl coverage. And that's especially true given neither Macdonald, Darnold, Kupp nor anyone on the

IN SPORTS

Seahawks: Welcome to the 'Dark Side'

New generation of Seattle defense leans into nickname. **1C**

Patriots: Another prize still up for grabs

New England looks past Robert Kraft's Hall of Fame snub. **1C**

IN LIFE

Bad Bunny changing the face of Latin pop

Here's how singer's halftime show will break new ground. **2B**

COMING MONDAY

Look for expanded coverage of the big game in Monday's eNewspaper.

TODAY

Tune in

Watch NBC's "TODAY" on Feb. 9 during the 9 a.m. ET hour as USA TODAY announces the 2026 **USA TODAY Ad Meter** Super Bowl commercial winner. Want to rate your favorite ad? Register and rate today at admeter.usatoday.com.

Epstein papers: What's ahead?

Millions of docs later, accountability is elusive

Aysha Bagchi
USA TODAY

To advocates for transparency and accountability surrounding Jeffrey Epstein, the Justice Department's release of 3.5 million pages of files was overwhelming. The department withheld another 2.5 million pages and heavily redacted much of what it did release, and it specifically said it was withholding documents for reasons beyond what transparency legislation actually authorized.

The release follows a decadeslong track record that has left many accusers deeply frustrated.

"These victims have been failed so many times by this government, that they have absolutely no faith in the system whatsoever anymore," Spencer Kuvin, who has represented nine Epstein accusers, including the first child who came forward, told USA TODAY.



Ghislaine Maxwell was an associate of Jeffrey Epstein for decades; she's now in prison on a sex trafficking conviction, and Epstein died in prison in 2019 while awaiting trial. PROVIDED BY THE U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT VIA REUTERS

Amid questions surrounding the Justice Department's handling of sex trafficking and child sexual abuse allegations against Epstein spanning many years, the Epstein Files Transparency Act, signed into law in November, was designed to bring greater transparency about who may have been involved in Epstein's crimes and accountability for those people. But many remain bitterly disappointed because so many files have been withheld or redacted, and some information on victims was released.

"Sadly, the DOJ has failed to properly redact victims' information while simultaneously succeeding in avoiding the disclosure of incriminated individuals," Rep. Thomas Massie, R-Kentucky, a lead sponsor of the transparency law, told USA TODAY in a statement.

Members of Congress, lawyers for Epstein's victims and former prosecutors say the remaining options for achieving greater transparency and accountability in Epstein's case include identifying disclosure failures by the Justice Department, passing legislation or filing lawsuits to force the department's hand, and ultimately exploring charges against others associated with Epstein.

Massie said he has asked to review undisclosed information from the Justice Department and is considering further "legislative and judicial remedies" to bring transparency and accountability.

Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche said in a news conference Jan. 30 that the DOJ withheld or redacted documents for various permissible reasons under the transparency law.

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