

Turn-out in Grand Rapids

# Delegates adopt 1976 policy



Michigan Farm Bureau's 56th annual meeting drew thousands of members and delegates. Climax of the three-day meet was the adoption of resolutions by the voting delegates. Adopted resolutions will be guiding policy for the organization for the coming year.

In a special Bicentennial address to delegates of the Michigan Farm Bureau annual meeting in Grand Rapids, Dec. 10, President Elton R. Smith expressed concern for preservation of the principles upon which the nation was founded. The Kent County dairy farmer listed dignity of the individual and America's economic system as areas endangered by the apathy of citizens.

"Our economic system was given us unparalleled progress in the history of the world," Smith said. "America has reached its position of world prominence because we have always had an incentive-oriented society. In our society, government has always enforced the rules of the game — but let the individual play the game. I am concerned there are many today who would have us change. They would like the government to be the player, referee and rule-maker. When that happens, we no longer have a free society; we have a socialistic society in which individuals are subordinate to the state and the incentive system is crippled."

Smith warned that too many Americans believe a strong, centralized government is the answer to all financial woes and credited Farm Bureau and other

organizations for maintaining "what little sanity there is left in the spending policy of the federal government today."

"Part of this comes from the fact that farmers themselves are used to dealing in the straightforward world of profit and loss," he said. "Every farmer knows that on occasion he must see his banker — but that a day of reckoning will come. Any farmer worth his salt knows that to borrow to repay borrowed money cannot go on forever. The farmer is a businessman. He operates like a businessman on his farm and he expects the government to operate likewise."

Smith expressed concern regarding the taxation policies, labor regulations and costs of labor-related programs in Michigan and their damaging effects to agriculture. If the new Minimum Wage legislation, along with new additions to the Workmen's Compensation Law are enacted, Smith said that the Michigan farmer will be faced with much higher costs which probably could not be recovered in the marketplace.

"As the leading farm organization in this state, we do not intend to let this happen. We will do all in our power to see

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## P.B.B. settlement arrived at

Farm Bureau Services, Inc. has settled its multimillion dollar damage suit against the Michigan Chemical Company and pledged the proceeds of the settlement to a fund from which to pay Michigan farmers who suffered losses due to the accidental introduction of a Michigan Chemical flame retardant known as PBB into their animal feeds. The accidental poisoning has resulted in the destruction of thousands of animals and tons of animal by-products since August of 1974.

Farm Bureau Services and insurance companies for both companies had funded farmer settlements pending the outcome of the cooperative's lawsuit until August of this year, but when Farm Bureau Services' insurance coverage was exhausted, that process stopped. Today's announcement culminated weeks of intensive negotiations among the two companies, Michigan Chemical's insurance carriers, Governor Milliken and members of his staff.

"We were by far the largest single PBB claimant," said Farm Bureau Services Executive Vice President, Donald R. Armstrong. "This compromise settlement and our

willingness to commit all of the proceeds of that settlement to a fund for the benefit of Michigan farmers who have been hurt by PBB is consistent with the position we have maintained since we first learned of the presence of PBB in some of our feed products — that farmers who have been truly hurt by PBB should not be required to suffer while the major parties engaged in a lengthy court battle."

He continued, "Farm Bureau Services has given up its right to recover its own substantial losses in order to create a settlement fund for its customers because we believe that this action will serve the best interests of Michigan agriculture, our members, and particularly those farmers who have patiently trusted us to put their needs ahead of our own."

"We believe that this fund will enable those with legitimate PBB claims to put their losses behind them and get back into full production, just as we are confident that it will enable us, as their farmer-owned cooperative, to again give our fullest attention to our normal business of protecting and furthering the cause of Michigan

agriculture."

Armstrong noted that while the cooperative had obviously suffered substantial losses, both financial and in terms of customer confidence because of the PBB problem, he was gratified to note that its 1974-1975 fiscal year sales and earnings were at "near record" levels. Armstrong also expressed his gratitude to Governor Milliken for his role in the negotiations, pointing out that in his opinion the Governor's veto of an unfunded low interest loan bill designed to assist PBB afflicted farmers pending a resolution of their claims was "an act evidencing a high degree of moral integrity and fidelity to the taxpayers of Michigan, as well as political courage."

PBB is produced by the Michigan Chemical Company in St. Louis, Michigan which supplied Farm Bureau Services with a dairy additive known as magnesium oxide. The two products were packaged in similar containers and were virtually indistinguishable in appearance. A shipping error resulted in an undisclosed number of bags of PBB being delivered to the cooperative's feed mixing plant in

(Continued on Page 23)

**PRESIDENTS, FARMERS, COLUMN**



Through Farm Bureau

# Put beliefs into action

I'm convinced that if Farm Bureau had been organized in 1776, the Minutemen, the drafters of the Declaration of Independence, and the molders of this great nation of ours would have been members. Those who attended the Michigan Farm Bureau annual meeting displayed enthusiasm toward our nation's Bicentennial which indicated that today's farmers are cut from the same bolt of cloth as the minutemen. They are ready and willing to be leaders in rekindling the Spirit of '76 in the hearts of all Americans.

They are qualified to do so. For 200 years, we, as farmers, have preserved our heritage of love of liberty and belief in the dignity of the individual. Perhaps this is because, in our particular vocation, we share a special affinity with this land of ours that has sustained these basic principles. When we hear the song, "Oh, beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain, for purple mountain majesty, above the fruited plain," it has special significance to us. Those amber waves of grain and fruited plains are more than pretty words; they are our love and our labors.

If we are to accept the challenge of spearheading a revitalization of the love of freedom and devotion to God and Country which guided our Founding Fathers, we must do so as a well-organized, cohesive unit. There are many who would have our country stray far from the basic principles upon which it was founded. There are many who have forgotten what made this country great. There are many who will accuse us of excessive flag-waving and of being over-zealous patriots. There are many who scoff at our beliefs in the dignity of the individual, our proven economic system, and our Constitutional form of government.

There are many people who now believe in a centralized form of government. However, a strong central form of government does not provide liberty and protect the dignity of the individual for a long period of time. Equally alarming is the fact there have been many forces in this country, under the guise of freedom and liberty, that have worked hard to remove from this country our religious underpinnings.

And when the moral reasons for having laws are removed, then we have gone a long way in removing the reason for such laws and respect for them. This is clearly evident in the number of crimes perpetrated every day in America, not only in cities, but in rural areas as well.

Our economic system has given us unparalleled progress in the history of the world. I honestly believe that America has reached its position of world prominence because we have always had an incentive-oriented society. Our incentive system has been the very foundation of our economic strength and our personal

freedom. We have always been concerned with producing plenty. In contrast, most socialistic systems are primarily occupied with ways to distribute scarcity.

Many people fail to realize that the fuel of production is profit. Profit is not a four-letter word, it is a good word and we must never forget this.

Too many Americans believe that a strong, centralized government is the answer to all financial woes. They seem to believe that somehow government is wiser than the combined judgement of all its citizens. I am particularly proud of our Farm Bureau because as an organization, we know that the Federal government and other governments can give out no money except that which it takes from taxpayers first. I honestly believe that Farm Bureau and several other organizations have been responsible for maintaining what little sanity there is left in the spending policy of the Federal government today.

These are just a few of the challenges we face as we strive to rekindle the Spirit of '76. How, then, can we effectively tackle this tremendous task? First, we must recognize that in our society, the power lies in the people. Our forefathers recognized this when they began the Constitution with the words, "We, the people . . ." We must believe that the power lies in us and we must act accordingly.

We must recognize that citizenship means more than voting. It means speaking out on issues, working on behalf of issues. It means writing letters to Congressmen and legislators. It means being active in the political process. It means shaking the apathy out of our neighbors and making them realize what is at stake in issues. We must understand our economic system and "sell" it to others. We must actively promote the principles of our Founding Fathers and continually work to make this nation even greater. We must have courage in our convictions and willingness for involvement.

Nowhere can we do these things more effectively than through Farm Bureau. It provides us with the unique structure to add to the strength we need to be heard, to be effective, to have an impact on changing those things which need changing.

All of us have reasons for belonging to Farm Bureau -- its legislative programs, marketing strengths, health care protection, insurance coverage, the opportunities for leadership development, the social satisfactions, pride because it is the recognized voice of agriculture.

Now, during this Bicentennial Year especially, we have yet another reason for belonging to Farm Bureau -- the opportunity to put our BELIEFS in the principles of our Founding Fathers in ACTION to preserve those ideals. When we pay our membership dues, we are adding to the strength of "We, the people . . ."

**MICHIGAN FARM NEWS**

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**OFFICERS:** Michigan Farm Bureau: President, Elton R. Smith, Caledonia, R-1; Vice President, Dean Pridgeon, Montgomery, R-1; Administrative Director, Robert Braden, Lansing; Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer, Max D. Dean; Secretary, William, S. Wilkinson.

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**WOMEN OF FARM BUREAU:** Mrs. Andrew Jackson, Howell, R-4.  
**FARM BUREAU YOUNG FARMERS:** Tom Atherton, Gaines.

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## DONNA

**The Price of "Fame"**

For many years now, Farm Bureau members have requested that their organization bring the story of agriculture to the non-farm population. Perceptive elected and volunteer leaders and professional staff have worked hard to make this happen. It hasn't always been easy, with the general public not particularly interested in, or concerned about, the agricultural sector.

Now, however, Farm Bureau and agriculture can, and do, effectively compete for time and space in the public media. What we do is news, as evidenced by the amount of press activity at the state annual meeting. More news media people than ever before recognized that the action taking place at the Civic Auditorium in Grand Rapids

December 9-12 was newsworthy and of interest to their readers, viewers and listeners.

I (who can remember when more than one newsman at our annual meeting was a real accomplishment) was disappointed to hear some complaints from members about the bright lights of the television cameramen and photographers' obstruction of full view of center stage action. This is the price we pay for getting our story to the non-farm public -- and a small price, indeed!

It's when those bright lights are NOT there that they should complain.

**Nice People**

Among those who did not complain about the bright lights were our "image" families for the two slide-tape productions shown at the annual meeting. No

one could ask for more cooperative "stars" than Steve and Nancy Shook who appeared in "Turn Around, Look at Me" (A Tribute to Young Farmers) and Al Alber who portrayed the American Farmer and Farm Bureau Member in "200 Years of American Agriculture." Working with these folks and their families was a rewarding experience, and their willingness to help make our job easier.

Although they had no lines to learn, their great response to our sometimes rather unusual directions ("look defected," "kneel and touch the corn plant," etc. . . .) would give Broadway's super-stars some competition.

Steve is the former Young Farmer chairman in Branch County and he and Nancy are this year's membership campaign chairmen. Al and his family are farmers from Washtenaw County and wife, Jean, is a rural mail carrier in addition to keeping their lovely farm home a warm and welcome place to visit.

The secret to their effectiveness, I think, was that they are exactly what they portrayed in the productions. A bouquet of

thanks to all of them. Hopefully, that will be enough to keep them down on the farm and out of Hollywood.

**Other Stars**

Those who attended the state annual meeting just had to go back home assured that the Farm Bureau and agriculture will be in good hands! There was articulate, enthusiastic Mike Pridgeon, young Branch County president who got the membership campaign managers' adrenalin flowing with his inspiring remarks. There was vivacious Mary Weidmayer who chaired the Young Farmer banquet like a pro. And how proud Gary Nye would have been of his wife, Mary, and vice-chairman Tom Atherton! Then there was the young FFA essay winner, Sherry Fisk, who defined building horizons on our heritage so appropriately. There was the youth of many of the voting delegates and award-winning county presidents.

The pessimists who bemoan the fact that young people are not going into agriculture better take another look at our Farm Bureau leadership!

## MOVING?

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# Join Farm Bureau Today--It Pays

# Elton R. Smith re-elected Board has four new members



President Elton R. Smith.

Elton R. Smith of Caledonia, Kent County dairy farmer who has headed Michigan Farm

Bureau since 1964, was re-elected as president Dec. 12. The action took place during the reorganizational meeting of the 16-member board in Grand Rapids, following the close of the MFB's 56th annual meeting, Dec. 9-12.

Also re-elected were Dean Pridgeon, Montgomery, vice-president, and John Laurie, Cass City, third member of the board's executive committee.

Earlier on Friday, voting delegates re-elected Arthur Bailey of Schoolcraft, to represent District 1, including the counties of Berrien, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph and Van Buren. They also re-elected Andrew Jackson of Howell representing District 3 -- Livingston, Monroe, Oakland, Washtenaw and Wayne. Bill

Spike of Owosso was re-elected to represent District 5 -- Clinton, Eaton, Genesee, Ingham and Shiawassee. Donald Nugent of Frankfort was re-elected to represent District 9 -- Benzie, Kalkaska, Manistee, Missaukee, Northwest Michigan (Grand Traverse and Leelanau) and Wexford Counties. Re-elected to represent District 11 in the Upper Peninsula was Franklin Schwiderson of Dafer.

Newly-elected to the Michigan Farm Bureau board were Robert Rider of Hart, Lowell Eisenmann of Blissfield, Tom Atherton of Gaines and Mrs. Andrew (Claudine) Jackson of Howell. Rider, an Oceana and Osceola Counties. Eisenmann, Lenawee County beef cattle feeder, is a director-at-large. Atherton, Genesee County dairy farmer, will represent the young farmers of the state's largest farm organization. Farm Bureau Women will be represented by Mrs. Jackson, Livingston County dairy farmer.

Other officers re-elected: William Wilkinson, Executive Secretary; Max D. Dean, Okemos, treasurer and chief financial officer, and Robert E. Braden, Byron, was reappointed administrative director and assistant secretary.

# F.B. Women has new leaders

Election of a new chairman and vice chairman, recognition of award winning women's programs and a stirring speech by guest speaker Lenore Romney were all a part of the 1975 Farm Bureau Women's annual meeting.

Newly elected as chairman of Farm Bureau Women is Mrs. Andrew (Claudine) Jackson, of Howell. Mrs. Jackson has served as F.B. Women's vice chairman for the past two years. Elected by the voting delegates as vice chairman was Mrs. James (Jeanne) Sparks of Cassapolis. Third member of the executive committee of F.B. Women is Mrs. Robert (Martha) Thuemmel, Jr. of Port Austin.

The large number in attendance at the meeting was treated to a moving speech by Lenore Romney, wife of the former Michigan Governor. Mrs. Romney spoke strongly on the importance of maintaining traditional American morality and of strengthening the home and family.

While recognizing the need for equal pay for equal work she disagreed strongly with some members of the "so called" women's movement who consider their husbands and children

as irrelevant in modern society. "If your husbands and children are irrelevant, then what are we," she questioned.

Six counties were recognized for outstanding projects developed during the year. Winning counties were Chippewa, Mrs. Marie Postma, chairman; Mason, Mrs. Joan Allison, chairman; Montcalm, Mrs. Ruby Jeppesen, chairman and Sanilac, Mrs. Cathy Knoerr, chairman. Honorable mention went to Washtenaw County, Mrs. Barb Trolz, chairman and Gratiot County, Mrs. Lola Godley, chairman.

Each county recognized was presented a plaque and a check to help them send one of their leaders to a leadership training meeting.



Mrs. Andrew (Claudine) Jackson.

# MFB Queen from Muskegon County



MFB Queen for 1976, Geraldine Tensen.

A blonde beauty from Muskegon County is Michigan Farm Bureau's Queen for 1976. Geraldine Laura Tensen of Ravenna was picked from a field of 33 contestants in ceremonies at the young farmer banquet during annual meeting. The Queen's Pageant climaxed a full day of young farmer activities as part of the MFB's annual meeting.

The 20-year-old graduate of Hope College is currently an undergraduate at Michigan State University, working on a degree in Agronomy. Miss Tensen's future plans include attending graduate school in Soil Science and research work for a fertilizer company. The new Farm Bureau queen is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Nicolaas Tensen, who operate a family farm near Ravenna. She will represent Michigan at the American Farm Bureau Federation annual

meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, in January. She will make numerous appearances throughout the coming year at farm and non-farm activities as a spokesman for Michigan agriculture.

Runner-up in the annual contest was Diane Mittlestat, 19, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Mittlestat of Brown City, Sanilac County.

In other young farmer activities, David Peckens, Livingston County dairy farmer from rural Howell, won the annual "discussion meet" and will compete for national honors at the American Farm Bureau Federation annual meeting in January. Peckens talked his way to honors at the county and district levels before advancing to the state contest.

Runner-up in the contest was Bill Boldt, young farmer from Sanilac County.



1975 Discussion Meet winner, David Peckens (right).

# Milliken re-names Pridgeon to DNR commission

Michigan Farm Bureau Vice President Dean Pridgeon has been reappointed to the Natural Resources Commission by Gov. William Milliken.

In an announcement released by the Governor's office Dec. 10, Pridgeon was described as, "a farmer and lifetime resident of the Montgomery, Branch County area.

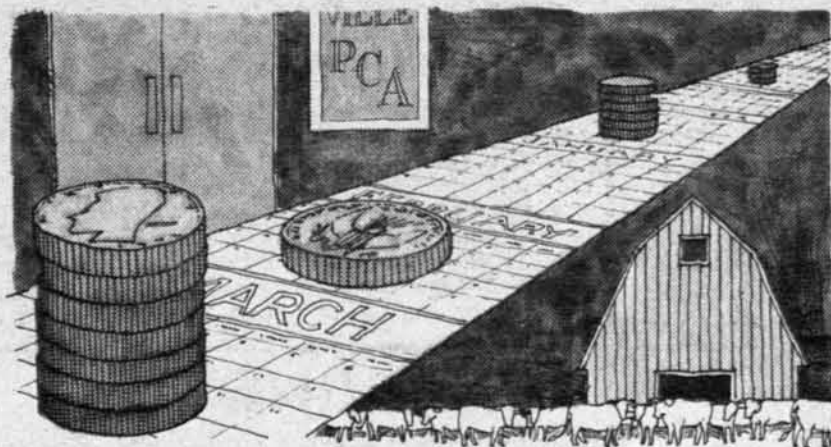
"He farms 1,500 acres and raises 4,000 head of hogs and 1000 acres of corn annually. He is an agricultural conservationist who has been a leader in prevention of water pollution from farm activities."

Pridgeon's term expires Dec. 31, 1979. The reappointment is effective Jan. 1, 1976, and is subject to Senate confirmation.



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# CAPITOL REPORT

Robert E. Smith



## Colleges, ORV's and more

**COMMUNITY COLLEGE REORGANIZATION** -- One issue before the Senate that is gaining strength but will not be considered until next year, is mandatory reorganization of community college districts, S.B. 1080. Under this program, all school districts would be assigned to an existing community college district in the event that they are not already a part of a district. The issue is that such assignment carries with it the tax load for the community college without a vote of the people in the district being assigned. For example, a district is assigned to a community college district which has two or more mills. That district would be subject to those taxes even though the citizens have never voted on the issue. The bill provides in any event that at least one mill could be levied without a vote in newly organized community college districts.

It further provides that a school district could annex itself to another college district or help create a new community college district within three years after the effective date of the Act. However, during that period, it would still be subject to the taxes levied by the community college district to which it is assigned.

Farm Bureau has submitted a letter to the Senate Education

Committee opposing this legislation. Farm Bureau's voting delegates spoke out on this issue at the annual meeting December 9-12 and they said, as part of a lengthy resolution on educational reforms, that "reorganization of K-12 districts, intermediate districts and community college districts should continue to be voluntary."

There is ample opportunity under present laws for the citizens of any school district to be annexed to a community college district if they so desire. Many school districts and intermediate districts are in the process of creating county-wide vocational tech centers to provide job training for those young people in high school and also for adults and others in the community. Some delegates maintain that votes on vocational tech centers have failed because the county taxpayers were fearful that the Legislature might pass S.B. 1080 assigning them to a community college district and forcing them to accept the additional tax load.

**OFF ROAD VEHICLE (ORV) LEGISLATION** -- New legislation providing for the registration and regulation of off-road recreation vehicles has been passed and is awaiting signature by the Governor.

Farm Bureau was successful in

strengthening the portions of the law concerning the problem that landowners have with such vehicles trespassing upon their property. It applies to all types of vehicles that can travel cross country, over land, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, etc., etc. but does not include registered snowmobiles or farm vehicles used for farming. The law lists several prohibitions on the use of such vehicles. Under the bill as introduced, such a vehicle could not be used "on premises which are fenced or otherwise enclosed in a manner to exclude intruders or are posted in a conspicuous manner or where notice against trespass is personally communicated to the operator by the owner or some other authorized person." Farm Bureau amendments removed this language so that the law is passed is very strong in that it states that such a vehicle shall not be used on "private property without the consent of the owner or lessee of the land." The operator of the vehicle is also liable for damages to private property including crops, trees, animals, etc., etc.

The owner of the private property may recover damages from the responsible person. Failure to post property or to fence it, or to personally warn the operator does not imply any consent for ORV users. These provisions are extremely important to farm landowners as well as other property owners.

Farm Bureau also supported a provision in the bill to require the operator of an ORV to immediately stop when he is

"visibly hailed by the owner or the owner's authorized agent." "The owner must bring the vehicle to an immediate stop and provide personal identification." "Refusal to obey such a request to stop or subsequent escape or attempt to escape is a misdemeanor."

This Act, as amended through Farm Bureau efforts, should give a great deal of protection to owners of farmland and other property.

### LEGISLATIVE NOTES

**Farm Labor** -- Substitute S.B. 181 (Worker's Compensation bill) has been stalled until next year. Farm Bureau efforts were effective. This legislation in its present form means at least doubling farmer's premiums.

H.B. 4921 requiring overtime payment, restrictions on piece rates and discriminating against farmers under state minimum wage is still in Committee. Between 700 and 800 farmers appeared at the hearings that were held. Opposition was uniformly overwhelming. No other state has such a law. Congress also has always recognized the special problems in agriculture on the overtime issue.

S.B. 837 (Agriculture Labor Commission bill) has been changed a great deal because Farm Bureau insisted on amendments. Of the four workers to be added to the Commission, two must be year-round employees and two seasonal, one of whom must be a migrant. Eliminated was the requirement that workers could be

represented "by their organization."

**Saginaw Bay Dredging** -- An Appropriations Bill containing \$7.1 million for the dredging and deepening of Saginaw Bay is on President Ford's desk for approval. Farm Bureau has been a leader in seeking approval for this project and overcoming many obstacles such as state and federal environmental regulations. This project, together with the deepening of the Saginaw River, which will come later, is essential if Michigan is to maintain its foreign trade especially in farm commodities.

**Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (PA 116)** -- There are now 526 applications before the State Land Use Office, totaling between 75,000 and 100,000 acres. It is estimated that hundreds of other applications are at various stages of approval at the local level.

**Pesticide Legislation (H.B. 5310)** has passed the House. It is essential legislation in order to meet federal restrictions. It also updates Michigan's present pesticide laws. All pesticides would have to be registered with the state and potentially dangerous "restricted use" pesticide dealers would have to obtain a license for each business location. This is true in Michigan's present law. Applicators including farmers would be required to be certified to use "restricted use" pesticides. The federal law, as recently interpreted, permits "self-certification" for farmers.

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### Political reform act

## MFB and others challenge it

Michigan Farm Bureau has joined an effort to legally challenge the Political Reform Act (PA 227) passed by the Legislature this year. The groups contributing the necessary funds to make the court challenge presently consist of Michigan Farm Bureau, Michigan Association of School Boards, Michigan State Chamber of Commerce, Michigan Townships Association, Michigan Community College Association, the Michigan Chapter of the Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities, Michigan Association of Counties, and the Michigan Association of County Road Commissions. Other organizations and individuals are expected to lend their names to the effort.

A restraining order will be requested from the Ingham County Circuit Court to prevent the Act from going into effect during the time that the constitutionality of various parts of the Act is being challenged. The constitutional questions being raised include the financial disclosure sections of the Act requiring not only disclosure by a candidate for any office -- elected

or appointed -- but also by the candidate's spouse and immediate family. Other issues include freedom of the press and speech and (probably the most important issue) whether the Act has "embraced more than one subject." Michigan's constitution states that "no law shall embrace more than one subject which must be expressed in its title." It is contended that PA 227 embraces several subjects.

Voting delegates at the Michigan Farm Bureau Convention December 9-12 said in a policy statement that the "so-called political reform law may create as many problems as it is intended to solve," and that it is "so complicated and confusing that it is almost impossible to understand its ramifications." "It affects thousands of elected and appointed officials, paid and unpaid, at township, city, village and county levels, including school boards and court employees as well as state office holders." They said further "that participation in the political process by the average citizen will be discouraged and will result in fewer responsible and capable citizens serving in local government." "This could mean

even more powerful special interest groups." They pointed out that "no reform law will guarantee clean, competent government." "This can only be accomplished by individual voters becoming informed and paying attention to all levels of their government."

Many Farm Bureau members throughout the entire state have been active in local governmental affairs such as serving on school boards, various appointive local boards and commissions, township and county offices, etc. Many have voiced their concern that their civil rights and constitutional rights are being abridged by PA 227. Many have also stated that they will resign or refuse to accept public responsibilities rather than bow to such an oppressive law. They have shown special concern over the financial disclosure section, especially the requirement that financial disclosure must also be made by their spouse and other members of the family living in the household.

Further information will be provided as the details of the court challenge are determined.

# NATIONAL NOTES

Albert A. Almy

## Saginaw dredging approved

The 1975 session of the 94th Congress adjourned in mid-December. Several events have occurred since early December concerning federal legislation and regulations which affect agriculture.

### BEEF PROMOTION

Following earlier approval by the House, the Senate passed an amended version of the Beef Research and Promotion Act. The Act would establish a national beef check-off to finance a national beef promotion program. A Beef Board would be created to administer the program which would not be implemented until approved by producers voting in a referendum.

Among the Senate amendments attached to the Act was a requirement that 26 percent of the members serving on the Beef Board be consumers. The amendment also required 25 percent consumer representation on the Cotton Board, Potato Board, Egg Board and a similar promotion board representing wool producers. Farm Bureau successfully opposed a similar amendment when the legislation was considered by the House on the basis that only those who pay money into the promotion fund should decide how it is spent.

Another Senate amendment approved limits the assessment charged a producer on the sale of his cattle to one-half of one percent.

Because the House and Senate-passed versions differed, a

Conference Committee was appointed to seek agreement on specific provisions. The conferees quickly reached agreement and sent the legislation back to the full House and Senate for concurrence.

Conferees accepted the Senate amendment to limit the rate of assessment to one-half of one percent. The conferees also deleted the amendment requiring 25 percent consumer representation on the Beef Board and instead adopted language recommending that the Secretary of Agriculture appoint five ex officio consumer advisory members to the Board.

On December 16 by a vote of 268 by 112, the House voted to send the legislation back to the Conference Committee. This action was consistent with Farm Bureau policy because the bill does not provide for registration or a valid producer referendum.

### SAGINAW PORT

On December 15, word was received from Congressman Robert Traxler (D-Bay City) that Congress had approved a Public Works Appropriations bill containing \$7.1 million for FY 1976 to finance dredging of the Saginaw Bay shipping channel. President Ford is expected to approve the measure.

Passage of this legislation concludes strong efforts by Michigan Farm Bureau, Farm Bureau Services, and others to initiate the dredging operation. An additional \$13-14 million will be

necessary to complete the total project in FY 1977.

Siltation of the Saginaw Bay and Saginaw River channels seriously restricts entry of large oceangoing vessels at the Saginaw Port for loading of agricultural commodities bound for export markets.

### GRAIN EXPORT EMBARGO

Following the announcement last summer by the Department of State that grain sales to Russia and Poland were being suspended, Congressional leaders asked the Department to cite legal authority used to suspend the sales.

In early December, the Department of State acknowledged that the temporary halt of U.S. grain sales to Poland was "not legally binding or enforceable under U.S. law." No mention was made to the halt of grain sales to Russia.

Under the Export Administration Act, the President cannot stop grain exports unless the Secretary of Agriculture certifies there is a shortage of the commodities involved, or unless the President certifies the action is being taken for national security reasons. In the action on grain exports to Russia and Poland, the Export Administration Act was not invoked.

### PESTICIDE BAN

Several months ago, Mr. Russell Train, Administrator,

Environmental Protection Agency, announced intent to suspend the use of Chlordane and Heptachlor. Both pesticides are cleared for use on a wide range of crops. The sudden announcement of intent to suspend the use of these pesticides was justified by Mr. Train on the basis of evidence that large amounts fed to laboratory animals had carcinogenic effects. This evidence was widely disputed by many individuals.

The announcement resulted in an Administrative Law Judge being appointed to review the evidence and other information provided surrounding the action to suspend. On December 15, the Administrative Law Judge recommended dismissal of Mr. Train's notice of intent to suspend Chlordane and Heptachlor.

The recommended findings and conclusions have been submitted to Mr. Train who now has 7 days to render a final decision on the issue of suspension. At this writing, the decision of Mr. Train has not been announced.

### ESTATE TAX REFORM

Legislation to provide federal estate tax reform was not considered by the House Ways and

Means Committee during 1975 as expected. The Committee does plan to consider the legislation in 1976, however.

Farm Bureau strongly supports updating the current federal estate tax law which was enacted in 1942. Inflation and rising property values have rendered the current personal and marital deductions ineffective. Also, the appraisal of property of highest potential use of estate tax purposes has added to the problem.

Over 70 Congressmen have introduced H.R. 1793 at the request of Farm Bureau. Seven Michigan Congressmen including Garry Brown, Al Cederberg, Marvin Esch, Ed Hutchinson, Jim O'Hara, Robert Traxler and Guy VanderJagt are among the sponsors.

H.R. 1793 would increase the federal estate tax personal exemption from \$60,000 to \$200,000; increase the marital deduction from 50 percent of the adjusted gross estate value to \$100,000 plus 50 percent of the gross estate; and allow heirs to take an option of having the estate appraised at its agricultural value rather than potential value.

## Washington seminar set for March

The annual Washington Legislative Seminar, sponsored by Farm Bureau Women, has been scheduled for Monday, March 29 through Thursday, April 1, 1976.

"Legislative Leaders", to be selected by County and State Farm Bureaus, will travel by chartered plane from Lansing to Washington. Other Farm Bureau will travel by chartered plane from Lansing to Washington. Other Farm Bureau members who would be interested in this Seminar also are encouraged to participate in a Heritage Group

that will have more opportunity for sightseeing. The "Legislative Leaders'" main interest will be in discussing issues with Congressmen.

The cost of this Seminar will be about \$175. per person, which includes travel by plane from Lansing to Washington and return, motel for three nights, bus and luggage transfers, plus one full day of sightseeing in and around Washington.

Reservations should be sent to the Women's Department, Michigan Farm Bureau, Box 960, Lansing, Michigan 48904 not later than March 1, 1976.

## Cattle course planned Jan. 6, 7

A two-day practical short course is being planned for Michigan cattle feeders, Jan. 6-7, at the Hospitality Inn in Lansing.

"Producers will be updated on the latest developments in feeding and marketing practices, research and the grading system," says Dr. Roy Black, Michigan State University agricultural economist.

Some of the topics to be discussed are: feed ration and evaluation; nutritional considerations in corn variety selection; selection of feeder cattle; marketing issues, including grading problems and impact of ration and feeder types on gradability.

The Jan. 6 evening program will feature "What's Your Beef With the Vets," a discussion of mutual problems of producers and veterinarians.

Each producer will have the opportunity to have their current feed ration evaluated for nutritional adequacy. "If the rations are not adequate, or the producer wishes to examine alternative feeding practices, we will help in finding the solution," Black says.

The course will also project the pay-weight to pay-weight rate of gain and feed disappearance for the feeding system currently used by the producer or the alternative feeding practice selected.

### 2.5 million families

## AFBF sets record

A new American Farm Bureau Federation membership record of 2,505,258 member families has been reported by Roger Fleming, secretary-treasurer of the world's largest farm organization. The 1975 increase of 111,527 marks the fifth consecutive year that membership has increased in excess of 100,000 members and the fifteenth consecutive year of increase.

Forty-seven states gained members; while forty-six states achieved 1975 membership quotas.

The excellent state membership gains resulted in attainment of membership quotas in each of the four Farm Bureau regions and the AFBF. The Southern, Midwestern and Western Regions reached new all-time highs in membership.

Every state in both the Midwest and Western Regions achieved quota while thirteen of the fourteen states in the Southern Region achieved all-time membership highs.

FARM BUREAU SERVICES, INC. & FARMERS PETROLEUM CO-OPERATIVE, INC.

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Farm News interview:

# Local Affairs Specialist Nelson explains job

**FARM NEWS:** How did the position of Local Affairs Specialist come about?

**RON NELSON:** The position came about through action of Michigan Farm Bureau voting delegates at a special meeting last June 28. As you recall, a Michigan Farm Bureau Study Committee was appointed approximately a year ago to study Farm Bureau, what it is and what it should be in the future relative to member needs. The Study Committee then made recommendations to the delegate body this past summer. Among the recommendations approved by the delegates was the addition of a Local Affairs Specialist to the MFB staff.

**FARM NEWS:** What is your background in this area?

**RON NELSON:** My background is with MFB as a Regional Representative in the West Region, working in a seven county area, and then most recently working in the Market Development Division of Michigan Farm Bureau. In addition, I currently am a member of the board of review of my home township, which gives me some insight into problems dealing with local taxation.

**FARM NEWS:** What do you feel your major responsibilities in this job will be?

**RON NELSON:** The major responsibilities will include working with County Farm Bureaus on problems they choose to work on. I will make every effort to give suggestions, direction and assistance, as requested by the county.

**FARM NEWS:** How do you see the Farm Bureau member using your office?

**RON NELSON:** I see the Farm Bureau member using the Local Affairs Specialist through his county Farm Bureau. The issue needs to be taken to the county Farm Bureau first and then the local affairs specialist will become involved at the request of the county.

**FARM NEWS:** What will the Local Affairs Specialist be trying to accomplish?

**RON NELSON:** The major emphasis will be to encourage county Farm Bureaus to analyze local issues and adopt policy positions on the issues they feel are important to local agriculture. Assistance will then be given at the request of county Farm Bureaus to help them solve the problems they feel are most important.

**FARM NEWS:** What need is there for a Local Affairs Specialist?

**RON NELSON:** The need, as I see it, is basically an issue-oriented situation. Let me try to give you some examples to try to answer this question. First, zoning is currently a critical issue in several counties. I recently met with one county Farm Bureau at its request that is working to try and maintain the zoning ordinance that now exists. Land use is an issue that can result in action programs in many counties. Rural services such as ambulances, doctors, rural roads, schools and many others are of utmost importance to Farm Bureau members.

**FARM NEWS:** How do you intend to help the farmer with his local government problems?

**RON NELSON:** I think we can be helpful in local affairs through process of information and involvement. First, there is a need to become fully informed relative to local government. Let me tell you the experience that I had last year sitting on a local board of review. I'm sure you are well aware of the responsibility of the board of review to review the assessment on property as assessed by the township supervisor. In one case, we had a resident of the township come in and complain relative to a water problem. The board of review had no responsibility or authority to do anything about the water problem. The point is this particular individual had a problem but was talking to the wrong group to get the problem solved. So, I think education is important in knowing who to talk to about specific problems.

**FARM NEWS:** How important are local governments to the farmer?

**RON NELSON:** I think they are extremely important because the farmer can easily talk directly to individuals involved in local government and, even more important, become directly involved - become a township supervisor, attend meetings of the county commissioners and other similar opportunities. He can actually become involved in local government.

**FARM NEWS:** Can a Farm Bureau member have influence on his local government?

**RON NELSON:** Definitely, as I've just pointed out by attending meetings, by running for office and by writing and visiting with local officials, he can have a very profound impact on local government and the decisions of those local units.

**FARM NEWS:** Are you going to be helping individuals or groups?



**RON NELSON:** Basically, we will be working with counties rather than individuals. As you know, there are 69 organized county Farm Bureau units with over 61,000 members. It would be impossible, physically, for me to work with each one of these members and even difficult to work simultaneously with each county. I will be able to assist county Farm Bureaus through a combination of letters, telephone and personal contact. Hopefully, this will assist members to take necessary action to work for solutions to their local problems through their county Farm Bureaus.

**FARM NEWS:** So, the idea is that the member must get involved and you will be assisting, but the member must still carry the load through their county Farm Bureaus.

**RON NELSON:** We will assist that member in any way possible, but we simply can't be at every meeting and it has got to be the local people who carry the load.

## FBIG manager heads Rural Safety Council

Ron Converse, Personal Lines Underwriting Manager for the Farm Bureau Insurance Group has been elected president of the Michigan Rural Safety Council for a two-year term, effective

January 1. Ron was elected to the top post during the annual meeting of the Rural Safety Council at Michigan State University on December 2.

With his extensive agricultural

background, Ron has a first-hand knowledge of farmers and the safety problems they face.

He was raised on a dairy farm in Eaton County and during his youth was active in Future Farmers of America, earning the State Farm Degree and numerous other awards and offices.

Ron graduated from Michigan State University in 1962 with a major of General Agriculture. He farmed full time for ten years and still lives on a 210-acre farm he owns near Charlotte.

In 1969 he received the Outstanding Young Farmer Award given by the Maple Valley Jaycees and was chairman of the Eaton County Farmers Home Administration Committee from 1971 to 1974.

The Michigan Rural Safety Council organizes safety programs and educational projects and works with youth groups to promote safety on the farm.

"The rate of accidents on farms is a great concern to me," said Ron, who joined FBIG in 1970. "I know the number of accidents can be reduced if more emphasis is put on safety."

Ron and his wife have three children who are also active in agricultural projects.

## MAFC annual held



Allison Green, State Treasurer (left) and Tony Cieslinski (right) Chairman of MAFC Administrative Council participated in the Annual Meeting of the Michigan Association of Farmer Cooperatives December 2 at the Hilton Inn, Lansing. Green explained the problems of balancing the state budget this year and proposed action to be taken in meeting the state's financial obligations. Cieslinski reviewed activities of the association during the past year and some of the problems facing Michigan Cooperatives in 1976. Lapel pins for leadership in Michigan Cooperatives were presented to Paul Darling, Ken Graham, Carl Heisler and Eugene Erskine. Michigan's new single business tax as it affects cooperatives and farmers was explained by Thomas Hoatlin, Administrator, and Chester Zawislak, Revenue Commissioner. Jim Kelley, Manager of the Caro Farmers Cooperative Elevator was elected to MAFC Administrative Council. Ken Bull had charge of the luncheon program and Larry DeVuyst introduced the afternoon program on Energy-agriculture and the future with Hermon Koenig of MSU.



## HAWAII IN 1977

- \* Make plans now to attend the AFBF annual meeting in Hawaii in January 1977.
- \* Special arrangements are being made to fly Michigan Farm Bureau members to Hawaii by chartered aircraft from Michigan departure points.
- \* Hotel reservations and chartered airplanes have been confirmed.
- \* Reservations must be made through Michigan Farm Bureau.
- \* See the February, 1976 issue of this paper for details.

# FBIG offers life program to Farm Bureau members

No physical examination, automatically updating coverages, protection for men and women serving in the armed forces are a few of the advantages offered by Farm Bureau Member Life Insurance. Effective January 1, 1976, the program was reopened for Member participation.

Farm Bureau Member Life Insurance was first developed by Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company of Michigan at the direction of Farm Bureau's Board of Directors and introduced March 1, 1974. From that time through September 30, 1975, 95 claims totaling over \$94,000 in benefits have been paid to Farm Bureau Members. Some 5,700 Farm Bureau Members participating in the program received an added benefit announced early in 1975... a 10 percent increase in their schedule of benefits at no extra cost.

By Member request, the Farm Bureau Member Life program is reopened again on a 90 day, no physical exam or health question basis, between January 1 and March 31, 1976.

## THE BASIC PLAN

Designed for Michigan Farm Bureau members only, this insurance plan is an individual, level premium, decreasing term policy. Level premium means that all Farm Bureau members ages 18 to 71, pay the same premium. And named Member coverage decreases as the Member's age increases. The amount of coverage bought is determined by the Member's last birthday. This plan is most

valuable to members in their early and middle adult years when family financial responsibilities are heaviest.

## "NO PHYSICAL" 90-DAY SIGN UP

Since Farm Bureau Member Life is being marketed to over 60,000 Michigan Farm Bureau Members, individual policyholders benefit. Current Farm Bureau Members can take advantage of the 90-day enrollment period beginning January 1, 1976 and ending March 31, 1976. After that time, new Farm Bureau Members also have 90 days to exercise their right to purchase Farm Bureau Member Life with no physical examination or health questions. After these two initial 90-day sign up periods, applicants will be required to answer a health questionnaire and possibly take a physical qualification examination.

## AUTOMATIC FAMILY COVERAGE UPDATING

Farm Bureau Member Life is automatically updating. When a Farm Bureau member marries, as children arrive, protection is expanded automatically. Each child is automatically covered from the age of 15 days until age 22 (as long as the child is single and does not own a Farm Bureau Member Life policy). A Farm Bureau Member family is eligible for one Farm Bureau Member Life Insurance policy.

Following is an example of the four benefit schedules available to Farm Bureau Members. For equal comparison, a 25 year old Farm Bureau Member during the

first coverage year is used:

1. An unmarried Member's life insurance is \$7,639.
2. A married Member without children has \$6,639 of life insurance. The spouse has \$1,000 of protection.
3. A married member with children was \$4,903 of life insurance, the spouse \$1,000 and each child \$1,000.
4. A member without spouse but with children has life insurance protection of \$5,903 with each child insured for \$1,000.

## PREMIUM COST

About 48c a week... \$25 annually... provides life insurance protection for Farm Bureau Member families. And for that cost you receive the following benefits:

1. An insurance policy created exclusively for Farm Bureau Members.
2. Coverages for Farm Bureau Members and spouses 18 to 71, and children ages 15 days to 22 years of age (if single and not a Farm Bureau Member).
3. Men and women qualifying for Farm Bureau Member Life Insurance and serving their country in the armed forces are protected while in military service.
4. No physical exam or health questions during sign up periods or renewal.
5. Automatic updating of coverages for members... as they marry, as children arrive.
6. The program is participating... as experience permits, benefits can be increased.

Your Farm Bureau agent or County Secretary can help you enroll in this special Member benefit.

# farmers of the week

QUALITY FARMING OPERATIONS • AGRICULTURAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

## Ronald Clark

2,800 acre Mackinac County cattle and cash crop farm + Soil Conservation Director + Director, Mich. Animal Breeders - Trustee on Engadine School Board - Chairman of Mich. Advisory Council at Chatham.



## Ivan Sparks

100+ cow dairy herd in Saginaw County + On Thomas Township Board of Review + Member of Saginaw County Farm Bureau Board + On Swan Valley School Board.



## Reginald Van Sickle

600 acre Sanilac County dairy farm - Past county Farm Bureau young farmer chairman + Active in church and civic affairs + Barn and manure handling facilities observed by County Extension tour.



## Robert L. Underwood

160 acre Grand Traverse County fruit farm + President, Grand Traverse Fruit Growers Council + Director, Mich. Horticultural Soc. + Past Director, North West Farm Bureau.

sponsored by

**MICHIGAN FARM RADIO NETWORK AND FARM BUREAU INSURANCE GROUP™**

# Study shows causes of farm injuries

The chief causes of Workmen's Compensation injuries among farm workers are falls from ladders and mishaps involving farm machinery, according to an analysis prepared by FBIG.

The report, based on 161 agriculture-related Workmen's Comp claims from FBIG's active files, indicated that 40 claims resulted from falls from ladders and that 55 claims stemmed from machinery mishaps. The majority of these claims are from the 1974-75 period.

The information was requested by M.J. Buschlen, Operations Manager of the Michigan Agricultural Services Association, who is a member of the Advisory Committee to the State Occupational Safety Commission.

"We wanted to find out what was causing on-the-job injuries among Michigan farm workers," Buschlen said. "With this information we can form needed safety standards for agricultural workers. For example, there are a lot of falls from ladders. This means we's better examine the standards for ladder safety."

The Safety Commission is the organization that reviews all industrial safety standards in the state.

About half of all Workmen's Compensation claims handled by FBIG involve agricultural workers, according to John

Leary, Workmen's Compensation Manager.

"We find that farm accidents tend to peak during October and November, the prime harvest season," John said. "That means our heaviest load of agriculture-related Workmen's Comp claims are coming in right now."

Many of the falls from ladders involved orchard workers picking apples, peaches and cherries.

In the machinery category, several of the injuries resulted when clothing or parts of the body became entangled in power takeoffs, corn pickers and other farm equipment. Machinery mishaps also occurred while harvesting cherries, celery, potatoes, carrots, pickles and onions.

The smallest category in the report related to agricultural injuries caused by farm animals. Of the 161 cases cited in the report, only six related to animals. Four of the claims in this category resulted from kicks from cattle.

Probably the most interesting category is miscellaneous, because of the variety of claims. One farmer, for example, suffered a hernia while moving a privy.

Some of the other claims in the miscellaneous category resulted from inhaling silo fumes, slipping on an apple, and injuring the back while working with bales.

# START 'EM FAST WITH THE NEW DRYNYNAMIC BATTERY



Ask your Farmers Petroleum dealer about the new Co-op Drynynamic battery. It's the freshest battery you can buy! Your Farmers Petroleum dealer merely fills your battery and you're ready to go with power to spare. No other charging is needed. Co-op Drynynamic batteries are available for your car, truck or tractor. Be sure this winter and start 'em fast with Co-op Drynynamic batteries.

**Farm Bureau**  
FARMERS PETROLEUM

ASK THE FARM BUREAU PEOPLE

# Michigan Marketing Outlook

## PRODUCT SHOW COMMENTS

The Market Development Division extends thanks to everyone we met and visited with during the Product Show at the Michigan Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in Grand Rapids.

We hope everyone had an opportunity to discuss and pick up information on the Freddie Computer Farm Records Program.

We hope you enjoyed the eggnog. Visitors at our booth consumed 40 gallons, or approximately 1900 samples. Winner of the drawing for the Monroe "30" Calculator is Mr. Paul Koviak of Cheboygan, Michigan. Congratulations, Paul!

Market Development Division  
Michigan Farm Bureau

## CORN

The U.S. average price of corn dropped to \$2.33 a bushel in November, down 21 percent from the seasonal high in August and 30 percent below a year ago.

Exports have become extremely important to our market in recent years, as you well know. You can expect exports to again reach 25 percent of our corn crop,

and keep in mind that this year's crop is much larger. A near record, 132.5 million bushels of corn, exported in October, and the November export inspections continued at this heavy pace.

What are the implications of the devastating Soviet crop of only 137 million metric tons? This is the smallest crop for the Soviets since 1965 and has occurred at a time when a large buildup of livestock was in process. All of this should indicate substantial sales to Russia.

However, the Soviets have already bought a total of 28 million tons of grain for shipment through June. With Russia's limited import ability, due to land transportation and distribution, they have enough grain bought to keep their ports full into the summer. Thus, they will have to liquidate some of their livestock numbers.

Economics in the U.S. and Western Europe show signs of improving. There is a much larger demand for meat; thus, while corn prices remain low, farmers will be encouraged to continue their increase in livestock production.

Increased feeding, plus the fact

that our exports continue at a high pace (cumulative total of 333 million ton compared to 174 a year ago), could have a strengthening effect on our cash grain over the next few weeks. But, don't hold all of your crop for the high's we experienced a year ago.

Tom Reed, Marketing Specialist  
Market Development Division

## SOYBEANS

Statistics still show a large crop of soybeans, but we are beginning to see some good news come across the wire.

Our domestic and export usage of soybeans and soybean products, since last month's report, shows a substantial increase. During the first 13 weeks of 1975-76, soybean exports have averaged 315,000 metric tons per week. The apparent export commitment for 1975-76 increased by 112,000 metric tons, primarily reflecting increased commitments to the European Community, Japan, Taiwan, and Canada.

The strong export demand, coupled with the largest October and November soybean crush on record, should help to stabilize

our markets some. Another possible plus factor is the latest Russian grain report which once again lowered their total crop of feed grains from the previous month estimate. The Soviets' 1975 crop is now set at 137.2 million metric tons, 60 million below last year and nearly 80 million under their target. This seemingly leaves the Soviet Union two choices: large increase in purchase of grains or a large increase in livestock slaughter to compensate for the lack of feed.

I predict we will see both of these occurring. They will decrease the livestock on feed substantially, but they will also be in the market for more feed grains after the first of the year.

Whether or not the U.S. will sell more to Russia still depends a great deal on our ability to control the political football that seems to have taken over agriculture in recent months.

Keep a close eye on the market for a rally that may bring the soybean price to a profit level for your operation. In the last two years, we have seen seemingly insignificant news stimulate large price fluctuations on our markets.

Tom Reed, Marketing Specialist  
Market Development Division

## HOGS

Prices are still continuing well ahead of last year, and there are some other factors in the swine business that look favorable for the near future.

If the U.S.D.A. surveys on farrowing intentions are accurate, it appears that hog production will be below 1975 levels for most of and possibly all of the first half of 1976. Another plus for the industry is very little pork in cold storage. We should also consider the increasingly optimistic economic climate which will give the consumer more money to spend for food.

The level of hog slaughter has turned sharply lower from the levels of the last half of November. This is partly a seasonal phenomenon; but when you look closely at the statistics, the butcher hog weights offer some explanation.

In October, butcher weights averaged pounds above year ago levels. This gap started closing two weeks ago, and today the butcher weights have slipped below year ago levels. If this marketing attitude continues, it will do a great deal to hold prices at the current level or higher.

Tom Reed, Marketing Specialist  
Market Development Division

## Some plain talk about health care protection.

More than ever, you and your family need health care coverage that protects against rising costs. If you're like most people, you want a plan that also gives you the best value for your money.

Your Blue Cross and Blue Shield group coverage does both. And adds a very personal kind of service.

For one thing, you can depend on your Blue Cross and Blue Shield coverage to take care of most of your hospital and medical bills. And you have no claims to file. No paperwork to do.

Other advantages built into your Blue Cross

and Blue Shield coverage: an I.D. card that's instantly recognized and accepted by participating doctors, hospitals and clinics, coverage that can never be cancelled because of health or age, and protection that goes right along with you wherever you go. As a non-profit organization, Blue Cross and Blue Shield returns almost 95 cents out of every dollar in benefits.

True, your Blue Cross and Blue Shield coverage is going to cost more. Inflation is the major reason. But we want you to know Blue Cross and Blue Shield is working in every area we can to slow down rising costs. Our continuing cost-containment program has saved our

members many millions of dollars.

Now, a new massive cost-containment program is underway in Michigan. It's an expanded effort involving hospitals, physicians and Blue Cross and Blue Shield, and designed to help Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan reduce potential payout even further while still continuing to meet the health-care needs of our members.

Plainly speaking, you can depend on your Blue Cross and Blue Shield coverage to provide the very best health care protection at the lowest possible cost.

Isn't that what you want for yourself and your family?



Blue Cross  
Blue Shield  
of Michigan

Belonging is a good thing to do.



# MFB's 1976



# Resolutions

This special section is a complete text of resolutions on state affairs and Farm Bureau as approved by the delegate body representing Farm Bureau members through county delegations at the annual meeting in Grand Rapids, December 9-12.

Every Farm Bureau member has an opportunity to take part in policy development. This is done through community groups, county committees, county annual meetings, district meetings, etc.

This year policy recommendations were sent in in record number by the counties to the State Policy Development Committee made up of farmers from throughout the state. Several state commodity advisory committees, also made up of farmers from throughout the state, also provided recommendations to the committee.

Many of the following resolutions can be carried out through legislation and many others in other ways and at the local level. Recommendations on national and international issues as passed by the delegates will assist Michigan's voting delegates in helping to determine policies on national and international affairs at the AFBF Convention, January 4-8, 1976.

### PURPOSE OF FARM BUREAU

Farm Bureau is a free, independent, nongovernmental, voluntary organization of farm and ranch families united for the purpose of analyzing their problems and formulating action to achieve education improvement, economic opportunity, and social advancement and, thereby, to promote the national well-being. Farm Bureau is local, statewide, national, and international in its scope and influence and is nonpartisan, nonsectarian, and non-secret in character.

### RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU BOARD OF DELEGATES

56th Annual Meeting  
Grand Rapids -- December 9, 10, 11, and 12, 1975

#### FORWARD

Farmers look to 1976 -- the Bicentennial Year of the United States of America -- as a time to rededicate themselves to preserving the principles upon which our nation was founded. Through our organization, and individually, we will take leadership in rekindling the spirit of the Minutemen who left their plows in the fields to fight for their independence. We will strive to renew the fierce love of freedom and devotion to God and Country which gave purpose and direction to our founding Fathers.

We are proud of our Minuteman heritage and the vital role farmers have played in the birth and growth of this great nation. It is because of a fantastically productive agriculture that the United States of America has enjoyed a growth and affluence unparalleled anywhere in the world.

But we cannot rest on our pride. Our organization's Bicentennial motto, "Building Horizons on Our Heritage", is a charge to each Farm Bureau member family, a charge which will be taken seriously during the days ahead. First, we must recognize that we have the basic foundation, the strength, the structure, and, most of all, the desire to renew the "Spirit of '76" in the hearts of Americans. Once we recognize this potential power, then we will be ready to assume a leadership role as farmers did 200 years ago. They built this nation, it is up to us to sustain its greatness.

Our Farm Bureau beliefs parallel very closely the principles outlined in the Constitution of the United States. We have a proud record of standing strongly and consistently -- sometimes very much alone -- for the concepts set forth by our nation's founding fathers 200 years ago. This heritage provides a strong base upon which to build new horizons.

Throughout the history of our country, farmers have unselfishly "left their plows in the fields" to speak up, to act, to become involved in solving problems which affect their profession and the future of their nation. This tradition is still followed today, as farmers, through Farm Bureau, go about the challenging task of policy development and policy execution. It is a task which takes them from their fields to speak their views to lawmakers in Lansing and Washington, to the cities to tell the story of agriculture and gain consumer understanding and support, to hearings where farmers' knowledge and experience are vitally needed.

It is a task which brings them to this meeting to consider the policy recommendations gathered through our grassroots process and presented by the Policy Development Committee. These policies, after consideration and adoption, will set the direction for our organization for the Bicentennial Year. They will form the strong foundation upon which we will begin "Building Horizons on Our Heritage."

Dean Pridgeon, Chairman  
MFB Policy Development Committee

### RECOMMENDATIONS OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

The recommendations on National and International Affairs adopted by the voting delegates have been forwarded to the American Farm Bureau Federation for use by the national Resolutions Committee, which is made up of representatives of every State Farm Bureau. Michigan's recommendations will also serve as a guide for our voting

delegates to the forthcoming Annual Convention of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

The National and International Policies adopted at our National Convention will serve as the policy for all State Farm Bureaus.

This is essential in order that there may be effective harmony and unanimity among Farm Bureau organizations throughout the Nation.

Michigan's recommendations on National and International Affairs are available to County Farm Bureaus and others upon request.

### APPRECIATION

During the 1st session of the 79th Legislature, much legislation consistent with Farm Bureau policies was passed, or implemented, including:

1. Implementation of the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (PA 116) encouraging preservation of land including property tax relief.
2. Amendments to the Homestead Tax Exemption Act (PA 20) by raising the property tax rebate from \$500 to \$1200 and clarifying its application to farms. Other reforms include changes in local revenue sharing formulas, assessment reforms, etc.
3. Retention of the Sales Tax Exemption on agricultural production inputs.
4. Continued changes in school finance including improvement of the "equal yield" concept.
5. Legislation permitting certification of "animal technicians" to work with veterinarians.
6. Marketing legislation (PA 153) providing for marketing fee collections.
7. Several public health measures including malpractice legislation.
8. Several livestock, dairy, and crop measures including modernization of Michigan's fertilizer law, feed law, fluid milk act, weights and measures act, etc.
9. Several transportation measures including progress in establishing special registration provisions for farm trucks used only to haul commodities from field to storage; special consideration for farm trucks on covering requirements.
10. Legislation permitting the state to match federal funds to retain essential state railroads not included in CON RAIL.
11. Continued appropriations for the Extension Service and agricultural research programs at Michigan State University and progress toward a new MSU Plant Science Building.
12. Progress in amending Michigan's Pesticide Act to comply with FIFRA to allow farmers continued access to essential pesticides.

# Taxation

### TAXATION REFORM

Major changes have been made in basic tax reform including:

... Adoption of the "Circuit Breaker" concept. For the first time, property taxes are based on household income. It also contributes to agricultural property tax relief. Farmers also have the additional alternative of taking advantage of the new Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (P.A. 116) which also provides property tax relief based on household income and exemptions from certain special assessments. It is voluntary and requires a contractual agreement to preserve farmland.

... Total restructuring of Michigan's business tax system. Several taxes have been repealed and replaced with a Single Business Tax which affects everyone engaged in business. The sales tax on food has been repealed and the lost revenue replaced by increasing the state income tax.

... A Tax Tribunal has been created to assure individual taxpayers and local governments an efficient and impartial appeals procedure.

Numerous other reforms have also been accomplished, all of which should lead to a better balanced tax structure for Michigan.

We believe these major changes should be permitted to operate for a sufficient period of time to determine whether Michigan's tax system is balanced and equitable to all taxpayers. Only time can provide that answer.

We further believe that the tax system should be continually studied to determine equitable means of providing necessary revenues for education and other local and state governmental services. Such additional reforms should include:

- ... Revision of the Michigan Inheritance Tax law.
- ... Continued improvement of assessment and equalization procedures.
- ... Maintaining limitations on property taxes for educational purposes.
- ... Possible new sources of revenue for schools and local units of government, including possible use of the income tax.
- ... Study of possible constitutional revision to limit state and local spending to a percentage of state personal income.

... Prevention of inequities arising from special assessments on property that receives no benefit from the project.

A balanced tax system will result in every citizen paying his fair share toward the support of his schools and other local and state government services.

### TAXATION OF MOBILE HOMES

Presently, mobile homes in trailer parks pay, in lieu of property taxes, a fee of \$3 per month. Two dollars of this amount goes to the school, 50 cents to the township, and 50 cents to the county. This fee system, enacted in 1959, is no longer realistic. The increased value of trailer homes is not reflected, nor do they contribute a proper share of the cost of schools and local government.

We support legislative action to increase the fee to a level in relation to the property taxes paid by other homeowners.

### FISH FARMING

Fish farming is developing as a food production industry in Michigan. Presently, fish farming is recognized as a farming operation for tax purposes by the Internal Revenue Service as well as a number of other states. We support legislation which would give similar recognition to fish farming in Michigan.

### AGRICULTURAL LAND TAXATION

We believe that a great deal has been accomplished to help relieve the excessive tax burden on agricultural land. The passage of the "Circuit Breaker" concept in 1972 which provides relief for homestead and agricultural land based on household income, was a major step in the right direction. Increasing the refund limit from \$500 to \$1,200 will be helpful to many farmers throughout the state.

Many farmers in excessively high property tax areas are victims of an insidious "real estate roulette." With the inability to pay the taxes, they are often forced to sell to a developer with the resulting loss of agricultural land. The new Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act provides a voluntary method of preserving farmland through a contractual arrangement and limiting property taxes to a percentage of household income. It also provides relief for certain special assessments. We are pleased with the excellent support that farmers are giving this program. More than 500 will have qualified for tax relief during the first year of the Act's implementation.

We believe these tax reforms will prove to be an effective method of preserving farmland for future food needs and open space, and an effective tool to conserve water, help purify polluted air and provide for aesthetic and recreational values. Open land creates no cost, traffic jams, or parking problems. It requires no service such as sewage, water or schools and actually helps moderate the service load to the community.

We commend the administrators of P.A. 116 for implementing this Act as quickly as possible and providing information and the necessary forms that are understandable and easily prepared. We continue to support this voluntary legislation and, as experience is gained, we will work to improve it.

### ESTATE SETTLEMENT AND INHERITANCE TAXES

Past experience has proven that the settlement of estates in Michigan can be a time-consuming, costly, and demoralizing process. We recommend that:

1. The Legislature give a priority position to legislation changing the probate code to provide for a uniform, prompt and equitable method of estate settlement, which would require the services of an attorney only in situations of litigation.

2. Legislation be passed to update Michigan's Inheritance Tax laws. Present exemptions are unrealistic and should be increased consistent with inflationary pressures. We believe that joint accounts, insurances and jointly-owned property should continue to be exempt. In the case of jointly-owned property, the wife should not have to prove a monetary contribution. The period of time in which transfers of property are held to be in contemplation of death should not exceed two years. Farmland should be appraised only at its value for agricultural production. These and other reforms should provide an equitable and uniform system of estate settlement.

### GAS TAX REFUND

Recent legislation now permits applications at any time during the year for the previous year's gas tax refund on gasoline used for non-highway purposes. We believe that further progress can be made by permitting the refund to be applied as a credit to the income tax similar to the federal system. The taxpayer should be permitted to use either system.

Presently, approximately one million dollars of agricultural gas tax refunds are unclaimed each year. We would support legislation to transfer these moneys that have been paid by agricultural producers to a special fund to be used in research or other uses for the betterment of Michigan agriculture.

# Education

### EDUCATIONAL FINANCE

Major changes in the financing of education have been

made resulting in a "new equity in Michigan school finance." Reforms included the initiation of the "equal yield" concept guaranteeing a specific dollar yield for each mill of taxation, a new formula for funding intermediate districts, and a formula for assistance for bonding millage.

While these and other changes are highly commendable, the property tax remains the major source of local school finance. However, the "circuit breaker" concept and other reforms have aided in relieving the property tax burden. Continued voter rejection of millage proposals throughout the state clearly indicates the need for continued study and further efforts on school finance and educational reforms.

We recommend:

... Continued efforts to maintain or reduce property tax limits for school purposes.

... Increased use of the income tax as a major source of funds, including the possible use of the income tax by a local school district or intermediate district.

... Expanded state aid to assist in the cost of needed facilities.

... Sufficient funds appropriated to pay in full all state aid formulas.

... Legislation to require each taxpayer to identify his school district on his income tax form.

We believe it is possible to achieve further educational finance reform without eroding the fundamental right of the local community to determine educational goals within broad general guidelines provided by law.

#### EDUCATIONAL REFORMS

We believe that additional reforms should be made in our education system. We recommend:

... The present State Board of Education should be replaced by a bipartisan, odd-numbered Education Commission appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Commission should employ the Director of Education.

... Constitutional clarification of the relationship between school districts (local and intermediate) and the State Board of Education.

... Intermediate school district reorganization should be voluntary. However, if reorganized, the policy making board should be representative of all local boards of education and all areas of the district.

... Statewide testing and assessment of student progress and total evaluation of education should be continued and expanded, with the goal of advisory educational accountability standards.

... Reorganization of K-12 districts, intermediate districts, and community college districts should continue to be voluntary.

... Cooperative programs among small K-12 school districts to help provide a broader curriculum.

... The use of program budgeting should be encouraged at the local level as a means to equate program costs to student needs.

... In-service training for teachers be encouraged.

... Local school facilities be used to their fullest potential for education purposes for both youths and adults. Year-round school would be feasible in many areas.

... Vocational-technical programs for both youth and adults be made available to all areas of the state. Existing educational facilities should be used wherever possible. The "World of Work" demands salable skills.

... Building accountability into the educational system. School boards, administrators, teachers, students and parents must work together to set goals and objectives to improve student learning and performance.

... Evaluation of teacher education programs in the college.

... Full implementation and funding of special education programs for handicapped children. It has been proven beyond a doubt that these children can be educated to lead productive lives with dignity and contribute to society.

... New and innovative instructional methods be researched and used whenever possible.

... Full funding of all special programs mandated by the Legislature such as driver training, bilingual education, special education, vocational education, transportation, etc. Such legislative actions should not have the effect of mandating the raising of property taxes above the 15-mill constitutional limit.

... Educational programs be constantly re-evaluated to determine the priorities and needs of our economy and work force. Education at all levels must meet the constantly changing needs of society.

#### TEACHER TENURE

The inflexibility of the present teacher tenure law makes it unreasonably difficult for school boards to discharge incompetent personnel. School boards are often forced to sit in hearings for unreasonable periods of time. We believe the tenure act should be streamlined to include the use of outside hearing officers, removal of administrators from the act unless specifically included by board action, require a single approach to removal procedure either through the employee contract, tenure act or court system.

The probationary period should be increased only with several reforms to assure a more workable and equitable legal document.

#### CAREER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Occupational education should be an integral part of the total education process. Constructive attitudes and concepts involving the dignity of all kinds of work should be woven into existing curriculum especially in the beginning grades. An integrated program can develop positive attitudes toward work, create awareness of the vast occupational opportunities, and provide knowledge and skills to meet the demands of a constantly changing society.

Vocational centers are rapidly developing, many through existing local educational units including community colleges, intermediate school districts, and high school districts. We fully support these programs and believe that the ultimate goal should be to develop and implement effective occupational programs in all areas of the state. Such training should, whenever feasible, include "on the job" training in cooperation with local businesses. Skilled people should be permitted to become instructors even though they may not meet the present certification requirements.

Where necessary, state minimum wage and child labor laws should be revised to permit the greatest possible opportunity for individuals to become trained for the world of work.

Citizen involvement is an important part of vocational education programs. Presently a separate local Vocational Education Advisory Council for each program is a requirement for state reimbursement.

The Legislature should adequately finance the construction of vocational education centers, the operation of all such programs, and also the transportation of students. Local property cannot be expected to assume the total additional burden. The control of the center should remain in the hands of the local intermediate school district.

#### SCHOOL CURRICULUM

School curriculum is primarily the responsibility of the local school board. Parents and teachers should work with the local school board members in developing curriculum that upgrades the educational opportunities in our schools. This is especially important as career and vocational education become more established. Curriculum should be continually updated. For example, the metric system of measurement should become a part of the curriculum as should a program for the especially gifted or talented child. Other exceptional children are already provided educational opportunities. School boards should not ignore the teaching of patriotism, concern for one's fellowman and instruction in our economic system and government.

#### SCHOOL BOARDS' COOPERATION

We believe that it is imperative that school boards work together in all areas in an effort to effectively deal with the increasing problems of school districts, including the rising cost of education, teacher and employee contract negotiations, curriculum, etc.

We commend the Michigan Association of School Boards in its efforts to correlate the attitudes and positions of all school boards.

#### UNIVERSITY BOARDS OF CONTROL

Michigan's three major state-supported universities have boards of control nominated and elected through the political system. We believe this system could be improved. Too often, the nominations at political conventions for these positions are based on political reasons rather than ability or dedication.

We believe that the State Constitution should be amended to provide that the boards of control of Michigan State University, University of Michigan, and Wayne State University be appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. We believe this system has worked well for other colleges in the state.

#### MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

The Agricultural Experiment Stations have played a valuable role in our society. 1974 marked the centennial year. Historically, research done in these facilities has helped to increase efficiency in food production. Both farmers and consumers have benefited from developments by this system.

In this time of world shortages of food and fiber, additional research is needed if demand is to be met. New techniques must be applied to farming to aid in solving environmental concerns and conservation of energy and natural resources. Such research aids all people, both farm and nonfarm.

The Agricultural Experiment Station at Michigan State University is one of the finest in the country. It serves eight colleges, including Agriculture and Natural Resources, Engineering, Human Ecology, Human Medicine, Osteopathic Medicine, Social Science, and Veterinary Medicine. There are more than 400 research projects with over 250 scientists.

We are proud of the work done by the Experiment Station. However, we are concerned over the fact that appropriations have not kept pace with rising costs. The station has no other source of income. This, at a time when many states are increasing similar research programs by as much as 40 - 60 percent. Good research is a continuing process and cannot be turned on or off. While Michigan faces a serious fiscal situation, we believe that Agricultural research has proven to be an investment that has returned great dividends to all citizens for over a century. We urge the Legislature to continue to recognize the need for sufficient funds to carry on research projects in:

- ... Optimizing energy, land and water.
- ... Improving food and feed crop production.
- ... Dairy systems.
- ... Livestock and poultry.
- ... Improving food quality.
- ... Housing for non-urban communities.
- ... Environmental monitoring network for agricultural production.

#### AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

The Institute of Agricultural Technology, MSU, reports a constantly increasing enrollment and demand in many occupational fields for employees with agricultural background and training. The Federal Vocational Act of 1963, and 1968 amendments, finally recognized the urgent

need for technical training in agriculture. Since that time the number of students involved in technical training in agriculture has quintupled. A study by the National Academy of Science indicates that three technicians are needed for every college graduate in the agricultural-related fields. Presently the ratio is only 1-1.

The demand for more teachers of vocational and technical agriculture continues with the advent of "career education" and specialized programs on both secondary and post-secondary levels in vocational centers and community colleges. It is estimated that Michigan could need as many as 2000 teachers by 1980. We urge capable students to consider this career opportunity.

There are 7 areas of training available including agricultural production, ornamental horticulture, agricultural mechanics, natural resources, agricultural supplies, services and products.

We strongly urge that teachers of vocational agriculture continue to be employed on a 12-month basis. Summer months provide the opportunity for students to put into practice much of the vocational agricultural instruction provided during the school year. Providing this on-the-farm instruction to students is an important part of the vocational agriculture teacher's responsibility. Vocational agriculture and FFA are unmatched in teaching "individual enterprise" through practical application of classroom training.

We continue to support these programs and urge that greater emphasis be given to the increasing opportunities in technical agriculture and agribusiness.

#### EXTENSION SERVICE

The Cooperative Extension Service has played a vital and successful role in the development of American agriculture. With the help of the Extension Service's information and education programs, American farmers have developed their operations into the most efficient industry in the world. This development has definitely been a financial benefit to individual farmers, but also has helped make it possible for the American consumer to spend a lower percent of his net income for food than any other consumer in the world.

We, within agriculture, believe that every effort should be made to use successful Extension Service methods for all people in our society who desire them; however, at the same time we are concerned that this will be at the expense of the Agricultural Extension Service and research programs.

In light of these considerations, we recommend:

1. That any appropriations for nonagricultural programs be in addition to, not in place of, already existing appropriations.

2. That any requirement for special reports put upon the Extension Service be financed by the necessary appropriation, not by siphoning off a part of the already overtaxed budget.

3. That efforts be made to develop Extension-type programs for urban people where they are needed under the jurisdiction of the Extension Service with special appropriations being made for these programs.

4. That Extension continue its traditional educational role of supplying unbiased factual information but avoid taking positions pro or con on public issues.

5. That the Cooperative Extension program continue to be administered through the Director within the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

6. We recognize the monetary crisis that takes place in Michigan. We believe, however, that the Extension Service is so valuable in the supplying of food both here and abroad that the service be restored.

#### SPECIALIZED EXTENSION AGENTS

Due to the transition from general farming to more specialized agriculture, we feel the movement in the Cooperative Extension Service to specialized multi-county Extension Agents will provide better service to all farmers.

We support this concept and urge the Cooperative Extension Service to continue to create these positions whenever feasible.

We encourage County Boards of Commissioners to cooperate with the Extension Service in providing funds for these agents.

#### MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY VETERINARIAN SCHOOL

The economics of Michigan is greatly dependent upon agriculture and the livestock industry makes a major contribution. Large animals are important to agriculture and the state economy. We urge the Michigan State University School of Veterinary Medicine to consider these facts and increase the proportion of students entering the large animal practice.

#### MSU PLANT SCIENCE BUILDING

The basis for all agriculture is in the ability to efficiently produce crops for food and fiber. Michigan State University is well known for outstanding research work in the area of plant science. Presently, the Plant Science and Horticultural divisions are scattered in several locations. There is a serious need for a Plant Science Building for greater efficiency.

Legislation was passed three years ago appropriating moneys to plan a new Plant Science Building at Michigan State University. We are concerned that planning has not moved more rapidly, and ask that this project be treated more urgently.

We will support further appropriations to complete the Plant Science Building.

4-H

We commend the Michigan Cooperative Extension Service for its role in the development of the 4-H Program.

This program has proven valuable by providing educational opportunities to both rural and urban youth. We note that 250,000 youth and 25,000 adult leaders participated in the current year's program, of which 53 percent are from rural areas.

We urge that competition be an integral part of the program. Society demands competition every day of one's life.

We also commend the 4-H leadership for the new and exciting projects developed to gain interest and participation on the part of Michigan youth.

## Roads and Highways

### PART-TIME USE OF FARM TRUCKS

Many farms have extra trucks that are used for only limited periods of time during the year for hauling crops from the field to storage. They travel on public roads only short distances with most of the travel on the farm land. The rest of the year they sit idle. The licensing of such farm equipment together with the federal use tax and insurance premiums, combine to create an unnecessary high expense. We recommend legislation to establish a special category for such vehicles in the same manner as certain other types of vehicles are presently treated.

### HIGHWAY VIOLATION FINES

Currently, no money raised from fines levied for weight and size violations on motor vehicles goes into highway funds. If the premise on which these fines are levied is that such violations cause damage to the roads, then fines from this source should be returned to road funds.

We urge legislative action be taken to return revenue received from fines levied on overweight, overlength, or overwidth vehicles be returned to the county road fund in which the infraction occurred, with the exception that revenue derived from permanently installed stateowned weigh stations should be returned to the State Highway Fund.

### HIGHWAYS

Considerable progress has been made in equitable funding of Michigan highways. However, spiraling inflation and the cost of maintenance and construction of highways, along with reduced revenues from decreasing gasoline use, has resulted in a more severe financial problem. According to one study (TRIP) 36 percent of the state's country roads are considered "intolerable" by federal and state engineering standards. Nearly 34,000 miles of these roads need to be improved because of ruts, lack of paving, narrowness, dangerous curves, and obsolete bridges. It is estimated that over \$40 billion would be needed over the next 20 years for Michigan roads. More than 90 percent of our roads cannot accommodate modern grain, feed and livestock trucks. Hundreds of miles of rail lines have been abandoned with the probability of hundreds of miles of other abandonment. As these lines are taken out of service, additional freight will have to move by truck over the state's rural roads.

While the interstate system in Michigan is near completion, counties have the additional costly job of fitting county roads into that system to accommodate the increased traffic on local roads caused by small industry, recreational users, etc., which create added stress on such roads and structures. Proper development of rural areas including agricultural transportation needs and industrial expansion is dependent on an adequate road system. For instance, Class A, or frost-free highway system, permits trucks to carry the same weight the year around; but to service county areas, they must often reload.

We recommend:

- ... Any needed increase in revenues be met through "user taxes" rather than a return to the old system of taxing property to build roads.
- ... No further diversion of motor vehicle funds for nonhighway uses.
- ... Opposition to any diversion of highway funds for other modes of transportation.
- ... Opposition to any increase in or additional motor vehicle taxes for nonhighway use.
- ... Present local matching requirements for local roads should continue to be decreased. (Most local units of government are financially unable to increase their contributions.)
- ... Local bridge replacement and reconstruction matching funds should be eliminated as they represent a specific problem and are extremely costly.
- ... Consideration be given to counties with large areas of public recreation lands, not only because of the heavy financial burden placed on such counties, but adequate roads can also be a part of an effective safety program.
- ... There should be no further increases in gross weight, width, and length limitation of trucks using any road system in the near future. Most systems are inadequate to carry even the existing loads.
- ... Routes be chosen to avoid diagonal highways and the use of productive agricultural lands where feasible.
- ... Multiple use of highway rights-of-way for pipelines and other utilities where feasible.
- ... County Road Commissions should be authorized to establish their own priority road needs. Therefore, they should be allowed to spend as much money as they deem advisable on construction and maintenance of both primary

and secondary roads without the present restrictions.

Good local roads are essential if rural areas are to be developed to their fullest potential and if transportation costs are to be kept to a minimum.

### HIGHWAY SAFETY

Accidents on highways take many lives each year; many people are injured, and much property damage occurs. To help reduce auto accidents, we recommend that:

1. Motorcycles be required to operate with headlight and identifying light on, even during the daylight hours, making them clearly visible to oncoming vehicles on all public roads.
2. Hard-top roads should be marked with center lines and side lines as an aid to safer nighttime driving.
3. STOP AHEAD signs should be placed an appropriate distance from every STOP sign where a particular hazard exists.
4. County Road Commissions clear roadsides and intersections of hazards within road rights-of-way that obstruct the view of motorists.
5. Signs within the traveled lanes of any highway be the flexible or break-away type.
6. Red and amber reflectors be banned as mailbox and driveway markers and only blue or green markers be used.
7. Slow-moving vehicle signs be used only on vehicles as intended by law, with stricter enforcement and penalties for violators.
8. The state make greater effort to remove intoxicated drivers from our highways.
9. Bumpers on cars should be a standard distance from the ground.
10. The checklane system be continued, instead of the proposed mandatory annual vehicle inspection.
11. Roads not be used as headlands, because it is dangerous to farmers and hazardous to traffic.
12. All rural roads be marked with a name or number. This is especially needed during emergencies.
13. The 55 mile per hour speed limit be maintained and enforced as a safety measure and to conserve energy.
14. Stop or yield signs be placed at all unmarked road intersections so that traffic on at least one of the roads must stop or yield.
15. Place mail and paper boxes on same side of road to make travel with wide machinery safer and easier.

### COUNTY ROAD COMMISSIONS

The Board of County Road Commissioners is a unit of local government responsible for maintenance and construction of most roads within a county. The three-member Boards have six-year staggered terms and are, in most cases, appointed by the County Board of Commissioners. They are elected in 12 counties.

We believe this system has insulated the jurisdiction of our county road systems from direct politics and has resulted in efficient highway management throughout the years. We continue to support the Road Commission concept and oppose any effort to shift control of county roads to some other agency. However, we will support legislation to reduce the term of office from six years to four years. We believe the shorter term will encourage a more responsive commission.

### RAILROAD CAR REFLECTORS

Many serious traffic accidents resulting in death, injuries, and great monetary loss are occurring at unprotected railroad crossings. Most of these accidents are happening during the night hours. We believe that luminous paint or reflectors should be required on the sides of new or repainted railroad cars as a safety measure. We further recommend that reflectors be placed on both sides of the railroad tracks on the opposite side from which motor vehicles approach. As the train passes, this would give a flashing effect from the lights of the motor vehicle.

### BICYCLE SAFETY AND LICENSE

The number of bicycles being used on Michigan streets and roads has increased greatly in the past few years. Unfortunately in too many instances, misfortune has struck owners and operators of bicycles.

Fatal accidents involving bicycles have increased. The theft of bikes have reached epidemic proportions.

It is evident that action needs to be taken to curb these happenings. Safety devices need to be installed on bikes. Riders need to practice better riding habits. A means of identifying bikes for the prevention of theft and reporting of unsafe operation needs to be developed.

We will support legislation which establishes realistic safety equipment on bicycles including flags and reflectors as well as a state coordinated program of licensing bicycles administered by local government.

We encourage County Farm Bureaus to work with other local groups in assisting law enforcement agencies to develop bicycle safety programs.

We are concerned that Michigan utilities are presently experiencing major problems in raising capital financing for construction to meet projected energy demands. A steady decline of their bond ratings indicates serious financial weakness and can only be detrimental to all Michigan residents. Construction of several energy generating plants, both coal and nuclear, has been curtailed. Several thousand jobs have been lost. In addition, several generating plants throughout the state are becoming obsolete.

Farmers, the same as other consumers of electrical energy, are concerned with rising costs, but they also recognize the problem of the cost-price squeeze. They, too, are the victims of ever-rising costs of production, unrealistic and costly regulations, and inability to add such costs to the prices they receive due to the competition from lower cost states.

If Michigan is to maintain its agriculture prominence and attract new jobs through industrial expansion, it must prepare now for the energy needs. Such a basic energy need must not become a political issue, but rather reason, understanding, good judgment and concern for Michigan's future is needed.

### PUBLIC UTILITIES

Electric and telephone utility transmission lines, gas lines and oil lines rights-of-way agreements are often confusing to property owners. Many are based on different statutes. We believe that the acquiring of rights-of-way for these purposes should be standardized as nearly as possible with contracts or other legal instruments including as many protections to the landowner as possible. We further believe that consideration should be given to the leasing rather than sale of rights-of-way.

We support legislation to require that a utility give present landowners first option to purchase utility corridors crossing their land when no longer needed by the utility.

### ENVIRONMENT

Public concern for the environment continues to be a powerful force. This concern poses serious implications to agriculture. The future of agriculture is dependent on air, water and land as natural tools of production. Agriculture has an important responsibility to improve the quality of our environment.

All persons engaged in agriculture should become informed of pollution sources and discipline themselves so as not to add to the problem. Good housekeeping and a good neighbor policy can do much to prevent environmental problems from occurring. We urge that agricultural representatives be consulted during the development of pollution regulations and such regulations, when implemented, should be realistic and consistent with good production practices.

Continued research is necessary to find adequate answers to agricultural waste disposal problems. Continued emphasis should be placed on developing recycling systems for agricultural waste.

We recommend that whenever an environmental impact study is required, an economic study should also be required to inform the public of the probable consequences of the proposals.

Agriculture should continue to be a voting member of the Air Pollution Control Commission and Water Resources Commission.

### LAND USE

Land is an essential resource to those who make their living from the soil. It is also an essential resource to the economy of Michigan and to the well-being of all citizens. About 33 percent of Michigan's 36.3 million acres is farmland. The production of food and fiber on this farmland contributes over \$1.7 billion annually to the economy making agriculture our second largest and most stable industry. Although less than one out of every 100 Michigan citizens operates a farm, 27 percent derive some part of their income from agriculture.

Michigan produces approximately 50 percent of its food needs within the state. However, urban sprawl and unplanned development are moving steadily across much of our most productive farmland. At the present conversion rate of farmland into urban uses, it is estimated Michigan will be down to 2.5 million acres of farmland by the year 2000. It is imperative to the future well-being of every Michigan citizen that our essential farmlands be protected for food production.

We support continuation of the Office of Land Use within the Department of Natural Resources. We will support legislation to create a Land Use Commission within the Department of Natural Resources. A majority of the Commission should represent forestry and agricultural interests. The Commission should have responsibility for coordinating the development and implementation of broad statewide land use guidelines to include such areas as agricultural land, urban development, recreational land, unique areas, forest lands and utility and transportation corridors. Any statewide land use program should identify and encourage the preservation of productive farmland. Our state ranks fifth or higher among the 50 states in productive farmland. Our state ranks fifth or higher among 50 states in production of 25 food crops grown on a wide range of soils. Productive farmland should not be based solely on soil capability for one or two major crops.

The state should provide necessary guidelines to local governments to assure the implementation of adequate land use programs. The state guidelines should provide for strong local involvement in the land use planning process and include the following principles:

1. Private property rights and the right of individual appeal must be preserved.
2. Planning for land resources which are essentially local

## National Resources

### ELECTRICAL ENERGY

We are extremely concerned with the projected future shortages of electrical energy. Our studies of this issue indicate some farmers have already experienced brown-outs and in some cases black-outs. Electrical energy vitally affects Michigan farmers. Milking machines, coolers, barn ventilator systems, feed unloaders and conveyors, crop dryers, water systems and a host of other essential equipment on the farm are totally dependent on electricity.

in character must be a responsibility of local government.

3. Enforcement of land use regulations and the settlement of conflicts must be a function of the level of government closest to the people affected.

4. Planning for local land resources must be permitted some flexibility to allow local planning bodies to adopt plans that reflect local goals.

5. A partnership approach in implementing sound land use programs should be developed between all levels of government and the private sector.

State land use programs should be instituted only if local land use programs cannot meet established guidelines. We urge Farm Bureau members to take an active part in land use planning in all levels of government. If local land use control is to be maintained, it is imperative that local people accept the responsibility to plan the use of their land resources.

The newly enacted Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act can do much to prevent the conversion of farmland into other uses due to confiscatory taxation and special assessments for utilities such as urban water lines, sewers, streets, etc. We urge all Farm Bureau members to become informed of this law and consider its merits according to their individual situations. In many instances, this law will provide an effective land use program.

Funds available to a state should not be withheld as a weapon to enforce compliance with any federal land use program.

#### WATER POLLUTION CONTROL

The Water Resources Commission has made rapid progress in water pollution control and is now authorized to administer the federally required permit program system. The WRC has developed a good program to protect and improve our abundant water resources.

We appreciate the continued efforts of WRC personnel to work with agriculture in advising and informing farmers on water pollution issues. We will continue efforts to maintain this working relationship.

We support continued authority for water pollution control in Michigan by the WRC and will work to protect such authority.

We oppose federal programs that threaten to reduce state water pollution control to a custodial level.

#### AREAWIDE WASTE MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Section 208 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act requires each state to designate appropriate agencies to study area water quality problems and prepare and implement plans to control pollution sources. Plans prepared under Section 208 must identify, if appropriate, agriculturally related nonpoint sources of pollution, including runoff from manure disposal areas and from land used for livestock and crop production. The plan must also set forth procedures and methods, including land use requirements, to control to the extent feasible such sources.

Each of the 11 Regional Planning Commissions in the Lower Peninsula have been designated to prepare Section 208 plans for their respective geographic jurisdictions. Agency designations covering the Upper Peninsula will be made soon. Public participation is required. We urge Farm Bureau members to participate in any discussions, public hearings and exert influence to whatever extent possible regarding this planning process which can greatly affect agriculture.

We recommend that County Farm Bureau Boards appoint committees to work with the local Soil Conservation Districts to identify nonpoint agricultural sources of pollution and, at the same time, make an assessment of the economic impact of controlling such sources.

#### AIR POLLUTION POLICY

We support an amendment to the Air Pollution Act that will exclude from the definition of air pollution dust associated with normal agricultural pursuits and natural odors associated with agricultural pursuits exercising recommended management practices. Producers need these amendments to the Act to prevent legal harassment in the name of environmental quality.

#### CERTIFICATION OF PRIVATE PESTICIDE APPLICATORS

The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act of 1972 requires that after October 21, 1976, private pesticide applicators must be certified before using "restricted" pesticides. The administration of the certification program has been delegated to the respective states.

The Environmental Protection Agency has published regulations requiring that the certification program consist of an oral or written test or equivalent system to reveal the competence of the individual applying for certification. We support the administration of such a testing program for individuals desiring to apply "restricted" pesticides.

#### AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS AND DRUGS

Modern agriculture cannot continue to provide sufficient quantities of high quality food and fiber to meet the nation's needs without the use of agricultural chemicals and drugs. Any undue curtailment of the safe and appropriate usage of these products will result in lower quality food and fiber at higher costs to consumers.

We believe governmental agencies, research organizations and manufacturers of chemical products must conduct comprehensive research studies about the toxicity to humans, disease causing effect, and the life duration of the chemical.

We urge that responsible agencies not issue scare warnings until they are certain a problem exists. This has happened on numerous occasions in the past, in every instance, has harmed the market for some products of American agriculture.

In any evaluation of chemicals and drugs, the possible detrimental effects must be considered in relation to the benefits derived. Only through a complete evaluation can a balance between environmental control and chemical control be effectively attained.

#### MINERAL RIGHTS

In many areas of the state, mineral rights were either sold or retained by original owners throughout the years resulting in the fact that many present day owners do not own the mineral rights to their property. Farming operations are disturbed when the owners of mineral rights exercise their right to develop the property. While compensation is due the owner of the surface rights, often there are other losses incurred for which no compensation is received. We believe that the owner of the surface rights should receive some portion of the royalties to compensate him for these losses and the fact that he has paid taxes on the property over the years.

Presently there are laws permitting oil and gas mineral rights to revert to the owner of the property. We believe this principle should be extended to other kinds of mineral rights. However, we believe that the present 20 year claim period should be reduced to ten years.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES

Data gathered from highly sophisticated exploratory techniques indicates Michigan has large amounts of untapped gas and oil beneath state owned lands. These energy supplies represent important resources to keep agriculture and other segments of the economy operating while alternate energy sources are being developed. We support the development of these vast oil and gas supplies beneath state-owned lands such as the Pigeon River Country State Forest providing strict environmental controls are assured. A portion of the sales of oil and gas from state and federally-owned property should be returned to the county in which the property is located.

#### LAND DISPOSAL OF WASTEWATER

The use of land to dispose of industrial and municipal wastewater is receiving much attention due to national water pollution abatement goals established by the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. The supply of nutrients in the wastewater could be beneficial to agriculture. There are also several potential problem areas of concern to farmers. We believe any proposal to use productive farmland for wastewater disposal should:

1. Permit private enterprise agriculture with voluntary participation.
2. Require that the disposal of wastewater from any city, county, village, or township may not be transferred to another without the consent of the affected units of government.
3. Provide flexibility in amount and timing of wastewater application according to agricultural needs.
4. Provide indemnity payments for unsaleable crops due to Food and Drug Administration regulations or crop losses caused by wastewater components.
5. Provide indemnity for land should it become unfit for use because of wastewater components.

We support the formation of a Task Force to develop guidelines for use by municipalities and farmers that will assist in adapting wastewater disposal on land to private agriculture.

#### SOIL CONSERVATION AND SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Good soil conservation practices, minimizing erosion and conserving water, is one of agriculture's most important contributions to a clean environment. However, responsibility for the use and improvement of land and water resources rests on all citizens, urban as well as rural. The unprecedented world and domestic demand for food places a tremendous responsibility on all segments of society to safeguard our land resources from soil erosion.

The Soil Conservation Districts, now organized in every Michigan county, are operated by elected directors serving without salary and are effective units of soil-saving activity. We pledge our support to work with Soil Conservation Districts to conserve soil and water through sound conservation practices. We believe Soil Conservation Districts should remain within the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

#### WILDLIFE PRESERVATION

Wildlife is important to the economy of Michigan and its public recreational opportunities. Federal and state wildlife areas contribute much to the preservation of wildlife and migratory waterfowl.

Establishing new and expanding existing wildlife areas often causes serious problems. These include acquisition of good farmlands, increased crop damage to surrounding farmlands, and loss of local tax base.

We urge that practical safeguards including advanced notification to land owners in the affected and surrounding areas be established to provide equitable protection to farmers against unreasonable land acquisition for federal and state wildlife areas. Alternate site locations, consideration for continued farming of wildlife areas, and an assessment of the impact upon surrounding agricultural land should be considered when establishing new or expanding present wildlife areas.

An effective weed control program should be carried out within a strip inside the wildlife area boundaries to minimize weed infestation on adjacent farmland.

#### DEER HERD

We support the deer habitat improvement program of the Department of Natural Resources. The Department should continue to consider the opinion of local people when establishing its policy regarding the shooting of antlerless deer in the overall deer management program. The shining of deer should be banned at all times of the year. Local

property owners should receive priority in the issuance of antlerless deer permits.

#### DESTRUCTIVE WILDLIFE AND PESTS

Blackbirds, crows and starlings are causing serious damage to crops and property in many farming areas. They are also a potential carrier of disease to humans and livestock. We recommend that intensive research efforts be continued by state and federal agencies to find an effective method of control and eradication. Federal compensation for proven crop damage should be provided where there are concentrations of bird pests and wildlife such as the Sandhill Crane.

We recommend that farmers experiencing crop losses from bird pests and wildlife call upon United States Bureau of Fisheries and Wildlife personnel headquartered in the Michigan Department of Agriculture for assistance in minimizing these serious crop losses.

#### COYOTE BOUNTY

We support retention of the bounty on coyotes.

#### NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

The Department of Natural Resources administers many programs affecting agriculture. We are pleased that in 1974 a farmer was appointed to the Natural Resources Commission. This appointment has created a balance on the Commission and resulted in a better overall understanding of environmental problems. We will continue to support appointment of a farmer to the Commission.

#### NONRETURNABLE BEVERAGE CONTAINERS

For many years farmers have encountered serious problems with glass and metal beverage containers thrown along rural roads and adjoining fields and woodlots. These discarded beverage containers pose hazards to farm implement tires, auto and truck tires, livestock and crops consumed by animals and humans.

Legislation has been introduced and considered several times in recent years to establish a mandatory return value on certain beverage containers but has not yet been enacted.

A recent survey conducted by Market Opinion Research to determine public support for such legislation indicates that 73 percent of the people favor a ban on nonreturnable beverage containers. The survey also indicates that 85 percent of the people favor such legislation to reduce litter and save energy even if it means a 5 cent increase in the cost of a beverage container. In view of this strong public support, we will support action to place the question of nonreturnable beverage containers on the ballot for voters to decide in a future general election.

We continue to encourage all Farm Bureau members to actively report and assist in the prosecution of persons contributing to the litter problem. Law enforcement agencies should rigidly enforce anti-litter laws when violations are observed or brought to their attention.

Recycling of many products has been found to be less expensive than producing a new product. Due to our dwindling resources, we strongly support and encourage public officials and private enterprise at all levels to initiate recycling programs to accommodate the waste from our affluent society.

#### HUNTER ACCESS PROGRAM

Michigan Farm Bureau supports legislation to increase hunting license fees to finance a statewide program of providing hunter access to farmland if accompanied by adequate safeguards to the landowner. Such safeguards must include the following:

1. Provide for voluntary participation by landowners.
2. Ensure landowners control over hunter access regarding unharvested crops and number of hunters allowed at any given time.
3. Opportunity to cancel the agreement if hunter access proves to be unsatisfactory.
4. Require hunters to stop at the farmstead and obtain permission before entering the property.
5. Provide distinctive program signs to participating landowners and require them to post the signs in a manner to clearly define the property boundaries.
6. Automatic penalty to hunters who trespass on property of participating landowners.
7. Relieve participating landowners of liability of injury to complying hunters unless caused by deliberate action of the landowner.

#### DRAINAGE AND IRRIGATION

Many acres of productive farmland would be lost without adequate drainage systems to handle water. Also the number of irrigated crop acres in Michigan has increased annually in recent years. We are opposed to legislation that would restrict agricultural drainage and any efforts to further restrict the riparian rights of farmers.

#### AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

The Agricultural Environmental Committee, composed of producers representing major commodity interests and agricultural groups, has conducted many activities to assist Michigan agriculture in meeting some of its environmental challenges. We commend the members of this committee for their involvement in this important issue to Michigan agriculture and support their activities.

#### TRESPASS

Farmers are concerned with the increasing disregard for private property rights by trespassers and the inability or unwillingness of local authorities to protect such rights. We will support an amendment to the Horton Trespass Act that would authorize all law enforcement officers to arrest without a warrant or complaint any person who does not have written permission from the property owner or lessee.

#### SNOWMOBILES AND ATV'S

Many property owners report that the rapidly increasing number of snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles are causing damage to crops, young trees and fences on private

property. We should be aware that the Horton Trespass Act has been amended to include these vehicles.

Snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, trail bikes and similar machines should be covered by mandatory liability and property damage insurance when operating on property other than that of the owner.

We support efforts of the Department of Natural Resources to develop more trails for these machines on public lands.

#### LAND ACQUISITION

Private ownership and operation of land resources is in the best interests of our nation. Acquisition of fee title or interest in land by government for a public use should require individual state legislation or congressional approval following clear demonstration of the need for such use. In these cases, every effort should be made to select less valuable land. We urge that state and federal government consider leasing of needed land or taking easements rather than outright purchases.

#### SUBDIVISION CONTROL

The present Subdivision Control Act permits a tract of land to be divided into not more than four parcels of ten acres or less without platting. However, many instances of circumventing the platting of land has been observed through the selling of land in parcels of 10.1 acres or greater. This practice has led to several areas of unplanned developments.

We will support legislation to require platting whenever the practice of dividing land creates more than four parcels of 40 acres or less.

#### RIGHTS-OF-WAY

In the exercise of "Eminent Domain" and obtaining rights-of-way for utilities, highways, and other uses we urge that procedures be as uniform as possible. This would enable property owners to better understand and use the provisions to obtain fair and equitable settlements.

#### AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Many discussions of the Michigan economy often seem to forget the vast rural areas of the state. Yet much of Michigan's progress and problems are based within rural Michigan's economy. For example, the economies of most rural areas are based on agriculture. Michigan agriculture, the 2nd largest industry, makes a unique contribution to our state and in turn the national economy and international balance of trade. It is estimated that more than 25 percent of all Michigan citizens receive some portion of their income from agriculture as a result of the combination of production, transportation, processing and marketing. Nearly 50 agricultural products are commercially grown in Michigan. Michigan leads the nation in the production of six crops and is fifth or higher in 19 others. Investment per worker in agriculture is estimated to be three times the amount invested per worker in the auto industries and in some types of farming, much higher.

Agricultural productivity has increased twice as fast as manufacturing productivity in the past two decades. The farmer now produces 3.3 times more per manhour than he did 20 years ago. As a result, over the years food costs have plummeted as a percent of workers take home pay. During those same years, years, however, agricultural income for most farm families has not kept pace nor has a reasonable return been realized on their investments. Farmers are the victims of inflation which result in spiraling cost of inputs for food production. Agriculture has become "decapitalized" at a time when capital needs have increased dramatically and income growth has not kept up with those needs.

Rural poverty has also been overlooked in Michigan as being of little significance. However, one study documents that "only 26 percent of all Michigan families live in rural areas but 34 percent of all 'poor' families are concentrated there. . . ." Rural poverty is often more serious but less visible than in urban areas. Many of the costs of living are higher. Educational, cultural and recreational facilities are often not as readily available. Many public and private assistance programs are not available. Distances and transportation are added problems resulting in a lack of "equity of access."

We believe that greater attention must be paid to Michigan agriculture and development of rural areas. Some approaches include:

1. Improve rural transportation networks by maintaining a viable railroad system, development of Michigan ports, maintenance and upgrading of rural road systems, and availability of railroad cars.
2. Recognition of the crucial role of education in future rural growth including equal educational opportunities and student loans, especially to those pursuing an agricultural education.
3. Investment credits to encourage expansion of agricultural and rural industry.
4. Continued expansion of the rural tourist industry.
5. Tax incentives as an aid to new job creation. Michigan is 49th among the 50 states offering such incentives.
6. Recognition that costly restrictions of various kinds can further "decapitalize" agriculture and discourage development and expansion.
7. Recognition of rural credit needs.
8. Changes in inheritance laws to maintain farmland through easier and less costly transfer.
9. Assurance of necessary energy resources for maximum production.

These and other approaches can result in positive programs to revitalize and further develop rural areas.

# Agriculture

#### STATE AND FEDERAL MARKETING ORDERS

Marketing orders, at both the State and Federal levels, have provided for the orderly marketing of several commodities. Both producers and consumers have benefited because one of the objectives of a marketing order is to provide a constant supply of product. Two examples of federal marketing orders are:

1. The federal red tart cherry marketing order is successful in removing cherries from the market during a surplus crop year. This management of supply benefited producers, processors and consumers.

2. The federal milk marketing order is an excellent example of a highly perishable commodity with a relatively constant consumer demand. The milk marketing order has helped provide a daily supply of fresh milk.

By supplying the market with a relatively constant supply of product prices to both consumer and producers tend to fluctuate less.

Orders should not be used to control production directly, establish closed markets, maintain artificially high prices, or collect funds for the purchase of agricultural products for diversion purposes.

Any federal marketing order should meet the following criteria:

1. Be producer oriented.
2. Be market oriented and used to maintain and expand markets.
3. Provide opportunity for new producers to enter the industry.
4. Contain provision for periodic review through referenda to determine if the producers covered by a marketing order favor its continuation.
5. Allow a minority of producers to petition for rehearings or a new referendum.
6. Cover commodities which are produced for the same general market irrespective of the production area.
7. Provide that rejection of a proposed amendment shall not result in termination of the entire order.
8. Provide for termination of an existing order only by producer referendum.

#### PRICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

At times, fruit and vegetable growers have had to deliver produce to processors without the benefit of knowing what price the processor is going to pay and later find that the prices paid by the processor are unrealistic. We urge the Michigan Legislature to enact legislation that would require fruit and vegetable processors to post prices to be paid for fruit and vegetables a reasonable length of time prior to the beginning of the delivery date of the products for which the price would apply. The posted prices should include the date on which the prices are effective. If new prices are subsequently posted which are lower than the previous prices, the new prices should not apply to any produce delivered or contracted before the posting of the new price.

#### PAYMENT FOR PRODUCE POLICY

We deplore the practice by some fruit and vegetable processors and handlers of operating on growers' money due to delayed payment for produce delivered. Sometimes this period extends for as long as a year or more. Growers must pay farm workers immediately after work is performed and are required to pay for other costs of production within a set period of time in accordance with normal business practices.

We support legislation that would require processors and handlers purchasing fruits and vegetables from growers to make full payment within thirty days of the date of purchase unless other provisions are made by written contract.

#### FILING OF PRODUCTION CONTRACTS

Michigan ranks high as a producer of processing vegetables. This important segment of Michigan agriculture should be expanded. Two of our major competitors, Wisconsin and North Carolina, have legislation which requires processors to file proof of financial responsibility and contract terms with the Department of Agriculture. In both states farmers, processors, and the industry have benefited from this requirement, and the industry has grown.

We recommend that all processors and handlers offering contracts to producers for the production of vegetables be required to file a copy of the contract offered, including contract terms and financial rating of the contractor with the Michigan Department of Agriculture before offering contracts to producers.

#### PROMPT PAYMENT FOR EGGS

Instances occur in Michigan where egg producers are not paid for their eggs for up to 30 days after the buyer has taken delivery.

We support state legislation that will require buyers of eggs to make full payment within ten days of the date of purchase unless other provisions are made by written contract.

#### STATE EGG PROMOTION

Marketing conditions over the years have caused financial hardships for egg producers. The Michigan Agricultural Commodities Marketing Act of 1965 provides a means of developing a state egg promotion program to help alleviate some of these problems.

Farm Bureau has a long-standing policy of encouraging self-help programs. We support the development of an educational and marketing program, and urge producer

participation in a referendum to implement a state egg promotion program under the current enabling legislation.

#### SOYBEAN RESEARCH AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT

Soybean acreage is increasing in our state. This crop is an important part of Michigan's farm income. We believe the research on this crop should be intensified at Michigan State University. We support a checkoff for soybean market development and research. Moneys collected could be used to promote overseas and domestic sales of soybeans and for the testing of new varieties adaptable to Michigan soils and climatic conditions and for soybean disease, weed, and insect control research.

#### AGRICULTURAL MARKETING AND BARGAINING ACT

Because of the nearly one year delay in the implementation of the Michigan Agricultural Marketing and Bargaining Act (P.A. 344 of 1972), and because the opponents of this law have tried everything possible to delay and cripple the implementation of this Act including litigation in the Michigan Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court, we urge that the expiration date of the Act be eliminated.

#### PROMOTION OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

The Michigan Agricultural Commodities Marketing Act, P.A. 232, passed in 1965, provides uniform procedures permitting producers of any commodity to establish a program for product promotion, market development, and information, research, product standards and inspection, determination of surplus and producer assessments. The producers of apples and cherries have adopted programs using one or more of the permitted provisions. Producers of other commodities are also considering programs. The Act contains the following provisions which we support:

1. Producer petition of 25 percent or 200, whichever is less, to initiate a referendum for adoption, amendment or termination of a program.

2. The right of individual producers to vote in a referendum on initiation, amendment or termination of any promotion program for a commodity which they produce.

3. In order for a referendum on any proposal to be approved, either of the following conditions must be met:

- a. If 66-2/3 percent or more by number of those voting representing 51 percent or more of the volume of the affected commodity produced by those voting assent to the proposal.

- b. If 51 percent or more by number of those voting representing 66-2/3 percent or more of the volume of the affected commodity produced by those voting assent to the proposal.

4. Review and referenda during each 5th year to determine whether the program should be continued, amended or terminated, or at any time upon petition of the producers with voting requirements the same as those required for initiation of the program.

5. If producers, through a referendum, enact a program, all producers must abide by the majority and all contribute to the program.

We believe that producers of any commodity wishing to promote their product should do so within the broad and uniform provisions of the Act. We will work with the Michigan Department of Agriculture to assure that this enabling legislation continues to be available to producers wishing to establish such programs.

Any Commission or body created under an agricultural commodity promotion program must provide complete accountability of the expenditure of funds collected from producers. Funds released to any agricultural organization, public agency or private firm for promotion or research purposes should be on a contractual basis with complete accountability required.

#### BRUCellosis VACCINATION

Reports from USDA and state officials indicate a substantial nationwide increase in the number of cattle herds and individual animals infected with brucellosis. We support a nationwide calf vaccination program to minimize further outbreaks of brucellosis.

We support adequate funding of the federal brucellosis program.

#### CALFHOOD VACCINATION POLICY

Michigan presently requires calfhood vaccination for brucellosis of female beef and dairy breeding stock imported into the state or sold from one farm to another within the state.

Since Michigan is brucellosis free, and one of only three states with this strict regulation, we believe we should maintain our present calfhood vaccination program. To aid in maintaining this law, we believe the indemnity should be paid only to owners of calfhood vaccinated animals.

#### ANIMAL HEALTH POLICY

The income from livestock and livestock products represents the largest segment of Michigan agriculture. We are concerned about the increasing incidence of diseases such as fatal disease of newborn calves, IBR, BYD, P13, and shipping fever in feeder cattle and dairy cattle.

We support research at the MSU Agricultural Experiment Station on these diseases and ask the Legislature to continue appropriations for this needed research.

#### LIVESTOCK INDEMNITY PAYMENT

We recommend that indemnity payments for breeding livestock condemned because of contagious disease or manmade disaster be increased to reflect the current market value of animals.

#### PBB CONTAMINATION

Tragedy has hit Michigan agriculture through the accidental mixing of a flame retardant (PBB) in livestock

feed. While we are concerned for the agricultural industry, we suffer for the victims who have had the direct effect of contaminated herds and flocks.

We recognize that many people believe that little is being done to assist these victims. The facts do not support that belief.

Farm Bureau Services has worked diligently in an attempt to search out, investigate and settle claims. It has settled claims by establishing a "Settlement Fund," made up of moneys from Farm Bureau Services, its insurance carrier, borrowed funds and money from the insurance carriers of the company which supplied the contaminant. While this fund is now depleted, negotiations to raise more are being conducted.

While we as members and the general public are anxious to know progress being made in settling claims, we realize that Farm Bureau Services has filed a suit to collect damages for over 200 million dollars. Public statements, though they keep the public informed, sometimes may also be used to the disadvantage of all parties involved in litigation. We ask, however, that as much factual information as possible be made public.

We appreciate the interest and involvement of Governor Milliken to put an end to this tragedy. We encourage all parties involved to move rapidly to that end.

#### ANIMAL WASTE RECYCLING

Utilization of processed animal wastes as a feed source has been demonstrated by land grant universities to be feasible. We urge appropriate agencies to authorize the use of properly processed animal wastes as feed for livestock and poultry when handled in a sanitary manner.

#### LIVESTOCK INDEMNIFICATION

We live in a world dependent on numerous chemicals. All segments of society, including the homeowner, gardener, industry, commercial users, and agriculture, use various chemicals to achieve desired results.

Various agencies are charged with the responsibilities of assuring the public a safe source of food. To do so most agricultural products are monitored very carefully for chemical residue.

Products can be removed from the market and animals quarantined for indefinite periods. If the source of the contamination cannot be traced, the producer has no recourse.

We support the enactment of federal and state legislation to provide indemnification, low-interest loans or other appropriate financial assistance to producers whose products are quarantined from the market or condemned as a result of manmade disasters caused by no fault of their own.

#### DAIRY INSPECTION

We commend the Dairy Division of the Michigan Department of Agriculture for an outstanding job of maintaining and assuring the public of high quality milk products.

We believe valuable assistance could be provided to the producer in the event his milk is rejected. For example, information on the rejection notice should include the reasons for rejection, alternative markets, at least two names and telephone numbers of persons who can be contacted 24 hours per day, and any other information and assistance helpful to the producer at such a critical time.

#### QUARANTINE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS POLICY

In trying to meet the growing need for food, farmers are doing all they can to increase food production. This often calls for new methods, production techniques and often use of chemicals.

While great care must be taken to use precaution with handling these chemicals, we recognize that sometimes accidents may occur. This may lead to quarantine of farms and possible disposal of products.

We believe that for all products except poultry the quarantine period should not exceed sixty (60) days. By the end of that period, the governmental agency imposing the quarantine must take one of three actions:

1. Revoke the quarantine.
2. Continue the quarantine for an additional thirty (30) days. Total quarantine should not exceed ninety (90) consecutive days.
3. Condemn the product and dispose of it in ten (10) days.

In the case of poultry, the total quarantine should not last more than thirty (30) days.

#### MILK PRICING

Since the beginning of 1974, dairy farmers have gone through a wide price variation. Therefore, we support the efforts of the task force named by the dairy industry to come up with a more responsive and stable way of pricing milk.

The Minnesota-Wisconsin series seems to be outdated and perhaps we need something new, such as an economic formula.

#### MILK HAULING

We urge the Michigan Public Service Commission to review its position which requires MPSC regulation of certain milk hauling operations in the State. Since that position means that some farm-to-market milk hauling is regulated while other farm-to-market milk hauling is not, the result is an inequitable situation both for dairy farmers and milk haulers.

We firmly believe that the intent of the current law was to exempt from regulation the hauling of milk from farm to market, since all other agricultural commodities are exempt in this fashion. Thus, we believe the MPSC's interpretation of that law to require regulations in some instances is contrary to what clearly was intended to be a general farm-to-market exemption for milk transportation.

We also pledge our support to any effort designed to remedy this current inequitable situation through legislative means, should that step prove necessary.

#### PROCESSED MILK TEMPERATURE

The school milk program is important to Michigan dairy producers and the nutrition of Michigan's youth. High quality milk must be kept refrigerated. Processed milk should be moved directly from cooler to cooler and not be allowed to sit. The current processed milk temperature requirement of 45 degrees Fahrenheit should be strictly enforced for the benefit of the consumer.

We ask County Farm Bureaus to work with their County Health Departments and school boards to enforce the temperature requirements of processed milk in school milk programs.

#### FUNDING OF GRADING AND INSPECTION SERVICES

Currently, Michigan faces budgeting problems; however, specific services are vital to health and welfare of Michigan citizens.

Inspection of agricultural commodities, both on the farm and at processing facilities, is necessary and vital to assure consumers a constant supply of high quality products. The Inspection Service also stabilizes and expedites the movement of product to the consumer.

Currently, the cost of inspection is charged in part to the owner of the facility inspected with the balance of the cost from other state or federal funds. Due to the fact that this valuable service is primarily for the consumer's benefit, we urge that state-federal funding be continued.

#### WHITE WHEAT FUTURE CONTRACT DELIVERY

Soft white wheat is the major class of wheat produced in Michigan. It is the only class of wheat for which there are no provisions for delivering against a future contract.

We urge the Chicago Board of Trade to develop provisions for actual physical delivery of soft white wheat against the Chicago Board of Trade Wheat Futures contract. Such delivery points should be the same as for soft red wheat -- namely Toledo and/or Chicago.

#### PRICE LATER AGREEMENTS

Farmers should be in a position to control their own grain marketing through on-the-farm storage and/or local cooperative storage. However, because of inadequate storage facilities, price later agreements have become a tool to move grain at harvest time. This practice has spread to several states. While we are not in favor of price later agreements, we recognize the need for their use until adequate storage facilities are available.

Producers delivering grain to elevators may enter into price later agreements. Such agreements allow the producer to obtain expected post-season price increases and enable elevators to move grain rapidly that would otherwise plug storage facilities. However, price later agreements do not constitute a warehouse receipt and, therefore, offer no protection against producer loss.

We support legislation to provide adequate protection to producers who deliver grain under price later agreements. As minimum requirements, each grain dealer should be licensed and bonded and be required to:

- a. Have the grain on hand; or
- b. Have shipped the grain to another elevator approved by the Director of Agriculture on a price later agreement; or
- c. Have the grain substantially hedged; and
- d. Put in escrow 30 percent of the market value of the grain; and
- e. Have an irrevocable letter of credit for 30 percent of the value of the grain.

Such legislation should not place undue regulations on farmer handling of grains.

#### BONDING OF BUYERS

Fruit and vegetable producers have little assurance of payment for produce other than the past reputation of a buyer. Many producers sell a large quantity of produce to one buyer. If that buyer defaults in making payment, the producer faces economic ruin. We support legislation to require fruit and vegetable buyers to post adequate performance bond for the financial protection of producers on their marketing operations.

#### FENCE LAW

The current Fence Law was adopted in 1846 with only minor revisions since that time. Larger and highly specialized farm operations have changed the need for line fences between farms in many counties. We will support amendments to the Fence Law requiring that owners of livestock be responsible for the cost of fences separating livestock from adjacent farms where livestock are not kept.

If non-livestock owner or his successors subsequently returns livestock to his side of the fence, he then would be liable for his equal share of the value of the fence as determined by the fence viewers.

Any property being sold should have the line fence division agreement if it exists included on the abstract or deed.

#### SAGINAW PORT IMPROVEMENT

The St. Lawrence Seaway was a dream of imaginative men nearly 100 years ago, and its accomplishment has turned the shores of the Great Lakes into the fourth coast of the U.S. It brings to Michigan an opportunity for export trade direct to foreign customers. Michigan has become the second largest exporter of manufactured goods. It is a major shipper of agricultural produce, and yet less than ten percent of our exports are shipped via the Seaway. Much of this is due to the need of Michigan's 23 ports, especially the Saginaw Port, for improvement. The Saginaw River is not deep enough for oceangoing vessels.

We are pleased that our vigorous support for this project has helped bring about the final approval for the dredging of the Saginaw Bay as a first step. We will continue to vigorously support the need for federal funding of the project and the deepening of the Saginaw River channels to accommodate oceangoing ships.

## Labor

#### SEASONAL LABOR HOUSING

We recommend that all migrant labor camps be inspected by trained employees of the State Health Department, so that all camps will be licensed according to the same interpretation of the rules and regulations as provided by P.A. 289.

We commend the Michigan Legislature and the Governor of the State of Michigan for recognizing that there are special problems with respect to housing for seasonal farm workers. The passage of P.A. 197, PA of 1970, has provided much needed assistance to farmers who provide housing for seasonal workers.

We commend the State Health Department for the efficient manner in which it has administered this grant program.

We urge continued funding of this Act until all seasonal labor camps can be brought to the standard of the State Health Department.

At the present time, P.A. 289 places the full responsibility of maintaining a migrant labor camp upon the employer. We urge that P.A. 289 be amended to require the occupants of a farm labor camp to assume the responsibility for the misuse of a housing unit during their occupancy.

Obsolete, unusable, and abandoned farm labor housing should be destroyed.

We recommend that regulations be adopted which would require workers to leave a camp within a reasonable time (one week) after the work on the farm is completed.

We recommend that the provisions of P.A. 289 be adopted as the safety standard for farm labor housing by MI-OSHA.

#### EMPLOYMENT OF YOUTHS IN AGRICULTURE

We believe that school age children should be encouraged to continue their education. However during school vacation, youths should be allowed to work at productive and gainful employment. Work develops responsibility, awareness of opportunity and positive attitudes toward society. Idleness harbors the seeds of delinquent behavior.

The recent change in federal child labor laws which denies children under 12 years of age the right to accompany their parents on the daily work routine creates a problem for farmers, hardship for the parents, and is a disservice to the child in that they are not allowed to associate with their parents or develop work patterns for later years. We urge Farm Bureau to work for a practical solution to this problem.

We oppose any further restrictions upon the employment of youth in agriculture.

The programs administered by the Agricultural Extension Service and vocational agriculture teachers for young workers have demonstrated that workers 14 and 15 years of age can be trained successfully in the safe operation of tractors and farm machinery. We recommend continuation of these training programs.

We oppose any attempt to bring agriculture under the Michigan Juvenile Employment Act.

#### MINIMUM WAGE (STATE)

Minimum wages should not be increased during a time of high unemployment. Increasing wages discourages those employers who have work available from hiring employees.

Increasing minimum wage rates will, no doubt, hasten mechanization. Mechanization often reduces employment opportunities for unskilled farm workers.

Minimum wage provisions must be flexible to fit the variable situations found in agricultural employment. Piece rates as a method of payment are essential to provide opportunities for family groups, youths during school vacations, retirees, and workers who have handicaps which may prevent them from obtaining other employment, and at the same time provide proficient workers much higher earning opportunities than hourly rates provide. We believe the present Michigan piece rate system is fair and equitable and should be kept in its present form and further we urge the U.S. Department of Labor to recognize the value of a piece rate system for agriculture.

The federal minimum wage law does not require overtime pay for agricultural workers; therefore, to keep Michigan agriculture competitive, no overtime for agriculture should be required in the "Michigan Minimum Wage Law."

At no time should the State Minimum Wage rates exceed the Federal Minimum Wage in order to prevent Michigan farmers from being put at an uncompetitive wage disadvantage.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Unemployment insurance is a Social Insurance Program to compensate employees for their loss of earnings at times of involuntary unemployment.

An unemployment insurance program which would include agricultural workers should be nationwide in scope.

There should be paid from the employment security administration account to each participating state an amount equal to the excess of the unemployment compensation paid under the state unemployment compensation law during the calendar year and attributable to agricultural employment.

Michigan farmers must compete in U.S. and world

markets. Therefore, we would oppose a state program to include agricultural workers under the Michigan Unemployment Insurance Program if other states were not compelled by federal legislation to adopt similar unemployment insurance programs covering agricultural workers.

Administration of unemployment insurance programs should be subject to continuous review and scrutiny to prevent abuses, particularly the payment of benefits to those who can and should obtain employment.

**MI-OSHA**

We commend the members of the Michigan legislature for recognizing the unique problems of agriculture by providing an advisory committee of which at least half of the members shall be persons who devote a major portion of their time to agricultural operations. The Occupational Safety Standards Commission shall consult with the advisory committee before a safety standard is made applicable to agricultural operations.

We oppose any provision of MI-OSHA that would be more stringent or restrictive than the present federal Williams - Steiger Occupational Safety and Health Act. While we recognize that the employer has a responsibility to his employees and must meet the safety standards, we believe that the employee also has a responsibility and should be subject to penalty for failure to observe the safety standards.

Violations discovered at the first inspection of the operations of a farm should not ordinarily be subject to penalty. A summary of the violations should be supplied the employer with an opportunity for the employer to correct the situation within a reasonable period of time. It is imperative that judgment be exercised, particularly in those instances where capital expenditures are required to eliminate violations.

We recommend the establishment of a Safety Advisory Committee to MI-OSHA at the county level for the purpose of developing safety and operating guidelines as applied to agricultural machinery and equipment.

**EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAMS**

Admitting that there are still some crops which have not yielded to mechanization, until mechanization can be adapted to all crops, there will be a need for hand labor if production of these, non-mechanized, crops are to be continued.

We urge that legislation be enacted to make the temporary importation of unskilled laborers for crop harvest and other field work a legal method to provide for the employment of foreign workers to supplement available farm labor in order to maintain full production of crops.

Farm employers do not have access to the scientific technology necessary to determine the validity of passports, work permits, or other evidence often presented as proof of legal entry. Therefore, agricultural employers should not be held liable or responsible for the burden of proof of the legal status of their employees.

We deplore the harassment of migrant workers by government agencies which without warning demand immediate proof of age and citizenship of many migrants who are in fact legal citizens.

**WORKER'S COMPENSATION**

It is recognized that worker's compensation is necessary in today's society.

However, agricultural employers are concerned about the misuse and abuses which have crept into the administration and benefit schedules of the worker's compensation program. We strongly urge that steps be taken to reduce those practices which increase the cost of providing worker's compensation.

Providing worker's compensation imposes a financial burden upon farm employers who must meet competition from producers in other states where such coverage is not required.

The nature and makeup of the work environment and the types of employees employed in agriculture present a special problem. Farmers employ many workers who are unemployable in industry.

The predominance of part-time help on farms, the geographical dispersion and the fact that most seasonal farm workers work for many different employers during the course of a year present difficulties in reporting, rating, medical care, rehabilitation and auditing.

Short term employments which generate low, total yearly payrolls, under the present system, require excessive minimum premiums to provide coverage.

We recommend that the present minimum premium be replaced with a uniform low, reasonable, constant fee, sufficient to cover the cost of issuing the yearly policy plus the rate times the payroll as a means of determining the total cost of providing worker's compensation.

We believe benefits should be related to the wages of the employee on the job where the injury occurred.

We suggest that a separate state annual average weekly wage for agricultural employment be established as a basis for benefit payments to agricultural employees.

Minimum benefit payments for short term, low paid employees, if not related to the earnings of the job where and when the injury occurred, will become an enrichment program, contrary to the theory of worker's compensation which is earning replacement and will cause severe hardship for employers of part-time employees.

In addition we recommend that no person shall be considered an employee of an agricultural employer if the person is a spouse, child, or other member of the employer's family who is dependent upon the agricultural employer for more than half of his support.

We commend Farm Bureau Insurance Group for

providing the leadership to reduce premiums by reclassification and division of payroll for agricultural employers and urge Farm Bureau to continue to develop ways and means to further reduce premium costs.

**Law**

**RESPECT FOR LAW**

If we are to preserve the concept that ours is a government of laws, not of men, we must insist on adherence to laws and respect for properly constituted authorities. We support our local police and will work to keep them independent and on a local basis. We do not condone the flaunting of laws in the search for solutions to social or economic problems.

Lawlessness of many types is prevalent in the U.S. Some court decisions provide greater protection to the accused than to society. Some judges and parole boards allow criminals to be turned loose to prey on society, thus making the task of law enforcement more difficult.

We believe that punishment is a deterrent to crime. We favor reinstatement of capital punishment for the crime of first degree murder.

We favor a more positive emphasis on educational rehabilitation of inmates confined to penal institutions that will afford them a better opportunity to assume a constructive role in society and assist in preventing their future confinement.

We propose more strict enforcement of laws protecting private and public property, both rural and urban, from losses due to riots, vandalism, and looting and urge prosecution of offenders. Early action to quell such activities is essential.

We urge citizens to carry out their responsibility to help law enforcement officers by offering pertinent information and assistance. Such citizens should be given protection by law.

We also urge support and expressions of confidence to our law enforcement officers and urge that they be given protection from liability when performing their duties.

We urge passage of state and federal legislation to provide that any person who, while out on bail waiting trial in a felony case, is arrested as a suspect in another felony case shall have his bail revoked and be returned to custody.

We believe the penalty for taking a hostage should be the same as for kidnapping.

Many believe the alarming increase in crime and violence can be linked to excessive exposure given by the news media to such acts. We urge those responsible for handling of reporting and presentation of entertainment which involves crime and violence to exercise restraint and good judgment.

**JUVENILE CRIME**

Currently, if a minor living at home destroys or vandalizes property of another, the parents of that minor can be held liable for damages. The maximum that can be recovered is limited to \$1500.

We ask that the dollar maximum be eliminated so that full recovery can be obtained if the damage exceeds the current maximum.

**CASINO GAMBLING**

While legalized casino gambling may raise revenue for the state, we do not believe this is a stable, dependable or proper source of revenue.

We oppose the legalization of casino gambling in Michigan.

**NARCOTICS AND HARMFUL DRUGS**

The rapidly growing use of narcotics and harmful drugs must be stopped. We encourage massive, direct, and realistic education efforts to inform youth, parents, and others concerning the harmful effects of drug abuse. We oppose legalization of marijuana.

Courts should continue to strengthen penalties imposed on drug pushers.

Rehabilitation centers and drug information programs are now available to drug users in most parts of Michigan. Drug users should be encouraged to use these programs.

We support enforcement of laws to tighten the importation, manufacture, and distribution of narcotics and harmful drugs.

**MEDICAL TRAINING**

Many communities are faced with a shortage of physicians to provide needed medical services. Rural communities are especially affected by the shortage of physicians. Ample financial support must be given to training programs at our teaching hospitals to encourage Michigan medical students to take their internship and residencies in Michigan.

We commend the Michigan Health Council for its efforts to place medical physicians into service in our state.

We encourage the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine to develop a Physician's Assistant Program to provide more readily available medical service.

**MEDICAL MALPRACTICE**

We are alarmed with the increase in malpractice suits being filed against doctors, hospitals and the medical profession. Malpractice insurance rates have risen rapidly. It is estimated that in the Detroit area, the cost of malpractice insurance increased a hospital room charge by \$4 a day. It is estimated that this will increase to over \$6 in 1976. These are paid by patients needing the service either directly or in the form of health insurance premiums.

We believe the use of malpractice suits has reached irresponsible proportions in terms of frequency and size of

judgements. We believe the legal profession has aided in the development of this serious situation. We believe a reasonable statute of limitation should be developed. Today there is none relating to medical malpractice.

Michigan Farm Bureau will work with the Michigan State Medical Society, Michigan State Bar Association and the Michigan Health Council to study ways to reduce the number of malpractice suits and provide for reasonableness of settlements.

**COMMERCIAL CHEMICAL PRODUCTION AND STORAGE**

The increasing use of chemicals in agriculture and other sectors of the economy requires that all precautions necessary to prevent inadvertent mixing be taken. We recommend that appropriate legislative or regulatory action be taken to require separate facilities for the commercial production and storage of chemicals.

**UNIVERSAL PRODUCT CODE**

Shoppers should be allowed to see the price of products they purchase. This should be done in a manner which allows this knowledge at the time of selection through distinctive shelf marking or price markings on containers. We believe this should be done in addition to the Universal Product Code.

**WELFARE REFORM**

We support welfare for those who need it, recognizing there are people who cannot sustain life without assistance.

Welfare costs have spiraled dramatically and have become the largest expenditure of state government. A large portion of this increase is due to abuses, fraud, and mismanagement.

We believe that the granting of welfare to strikers is not in keeping with the basic philosophy of any welfare program. We further suggest that work projects be set up to permit the welfare recipients to earn at least a part of the aid. Such projects might be used to combat pollution and conserve our natural resources. All members of society should be encouraged to sustain their self-respect and self-esteem by being allowed to earn as much of their livelihood as possible.

Comprehensive work and training programs can be useful in aiding people to find jobs. County work programs can also be useful as there is much public work that needs to be done that perhaps cannot be achieved in any other way. Welfare administration should continually be evaluated to be sure that only those in need receive aid.

We urge our Legislature to take immediate action to pass legislation causing welfare reform that will eliminate abuses, prevent fraud and correct mismanagement, thus saving precious tax dollars.

**POLITICAL REFORM**

Michigan's new so-called political reform law may create as many problems as it is intended to solve. We do not believe that the general public was properly informed on this comprehensive and sweeping legislation.

The legislation is so complicated and confusing that it is almost impossible to understand its ramifications.

It affects thousands of elected and appointed officials, paid and unpaid, at township, city, village and county levels, including school boards and court employees as well as state office holders.

In its present form, we believe that participation in the political process by the average citizen will be discouraged and will result in fewer responsible and capable citizens serving in local government. This could mean even more powerful special interest groups.

We do not believe that this legislation should go into effect until citizens are fully informed of its effect. We also believe that the constitutional questions should be studied to determine whether individual civil rights are being trampled. Further, consideration should be given to putting the issue on the ballot for final determination by the electors.

In the final analysis, no reform law will guarantee clean, competent government. That can only be accomplished by individual voters becoming informed and paying attention to all levels of their government.

**Farm Bureau**

**MEMBERSHIP GOAL**

As a result of dedicated work on the part of hundreds of Farm Bureau members, membership in Michigan Farm Bureau has increased for eight consecutive years. Growth in membership is fundamental to the strength and well-being of our organization. Even though the responsibility for membership growth lies primarily with County Farm Bureaus, we encourage Farm Bureau leadership at all levels to keep the importance of membership work on a first priority basis.

We approve the 1976 membership goal of one-member increase for each County Farm Bureau, as well as a one-member increase for Michigan Farm Bureau.

**FARM BUREAU**

Our Farm Bureau is a farm organization. It must be an aggressive organization geared to serving commercial farmers with bold and imaginative programs. The building and maintaining of a bold and aggressive farm organization depends heavily on attracting the best in farmer leadership. This leadership must be active at all levels of the organization, from community groups through state officers. The organization must maintain the best type of employees to carry out the wishes of the members.

The primary purpose of Farm Bureau should be to serve the needs of active, producing farmers. However, in serving these needs, we will undoubtedly develop policies and

establish many programs and services which will attract some non-farm people to our organization.

We should welcome the support of non-farm people who wish to join our farm organization and support the policies which are set forth by our farmer-members.

The authority and responsibility for determining who shall be a member and the classification of membership should remain with the county Farm Bureau boards.

The right to vote in Farm Bureau should continue to be limited to regular members. We further endorse the policy of determining the number of voting delegates to the state annual meeting based on Regular member count, and urge this policy be extended to the American Farm Bureau Federation.

#### MEMBER RESPONSIBILITY

Our organization is one to be proud of. As members, it is our responsibility to uphold and promote a positive attitude toward the programs and policies we adopt.

Farm Bureau is a democratic organization with every member having the right to participate in making recommendations and decisions. This opportunity to participate is available to members by attending Community Group Meetings, County Annual Meetings, and the State Annual Meeting. We are pleased that our members take this responsibility seriously.

We point out that this right to participate carries with it the responsibility to support the decisions of the majority. This requires a sense of organization discipline which can only be self-imposed by the member.

We encourage our members to discuss, disagree, and recommend changes in the policy when these actions are appropriate. **WE ALSO REQUEST THAT MEMBERS GIVE ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT TO ALL MATTERS OF FARM BUREAU POLICY AFTER THEY HAVE BEEN PROPERLY APPROVED.**

#### BICENTENNIAL

In 1976 a Bicentennial will be held commemorating the 200th birthday of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, and every Farm Bureau member has an opportunity to contribute to this celebration. This celebration will show the rest of the nation and other countries of the world that we are proud to be Americans. There is no better or more visible way of showing this pride than by flying our nation's flag at our homes as symbol of that pride. We urge all Farm Bureau members to fly the flag daily and join in every way possible to make this bicentennial celebration a success showing our pride, patriotism and love of our great country.

#### POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

The year 1976 is a Bicentennial Anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. Our representative form of government has been a major factor in our nation's progress over the last 200 years. The Bicentennial provides all citizens an opportunity to ensure a solid future for the nation by renewing their interest and involvement in political affairs.

The Bicentennial year will be an important election year. Voters will nominate and elect public officials to represent them in a wide range of local, state and national offices.

Good citizenship means more than voting, oratory, and displaying patriotic symbols. It encourages being informed on issues, willingness to defend and to explain our system of government, and courage to act within our political system. The apathy developing in our country enforces the truism that, "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

Good laws begin where good lawmakers are elected. We urge all members to actively endorse and support political candidates of their choice or consider seeking public office. For example, the position of precinct delegate is the most basic office within the political system.

Farm Bureau at all levels has conducted many activities to inform and equip members to become politically active, including Legislative Seminars; Meet the Candidate Meetings; Young Peoples' Citizenship Seminars; Policy Development Conferences; and Heritage Tours to name a few. We urge that such programs be continued with a goal of effective political involvement in 1976.

#### FARM BUREAU YOUNG FARMER PROGRAM

The Young Farmer Program is a proven method of surfacing and developing effective leaders. There are currently nine young farmers serving as county Presidents, 94 as members of county Boards of Directors, and 89 young farmers on county Policy Development Committees. Effective leadership development programs will continue to grow in importance as the demand for skilled leaders in our organization grows.

Young farmers are eager for meaningful involvement in the vital issues confronting agriculture. We must seek to satisfy that desire through involvement of qualified young farmers in all Farm Bureau activities.

A Young Farmer Program can only be successful if given the strong and active support of county leaders. This support can best be shown by taking an active interest in the appointing and guiding of a Young Farmer Committee which is advisory and responsible to the County Farm Bureau Board. Steps should be taken to provide young farmers easy access to participation in ALL Farm Bureau programs.

#### FARM BUREAU WOMEN

Farm Bureau women have developed and conducted effective "action-type" projects that are of concern to farmers. We encourage their continued efforts, especially in such activities as legislation, political education, public relations, consumer understanding, leadership development, safety and health, and local affairs. We also encourage county Farm Bureau boards of directors to work

closely with Farm Bureau women in developing the participation of more women in the total Farm Bureau program, thereby building a strong Farm Bureau. We believe that every effort should be put forth to institute programs that interest and involve young farm women.

#### HEALTH & SAFETY

Because of our concern for the welfare of our families and employees, we encourage Farm Bureau Women to conduct action projects regarding safety and health. We urge their continued cooperation with the Michigan Agricultural Services Association to inform and assist members to meet the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act. We believe the efforts of Farm Bureau Women in preparing farm families to meet emergency situations through first aid training, farm first aid kits on every farm, their goals of safety on the farm, in the home, and on the highways, as well as preventive health care, with special emphasis on cancer detection, deserve the full support of all members.

We commend Farm Bureau Women for the fact that many Farm Bureau Women leaders are now serving on various state, regional and local commissions and committees regarding health and safety, and we urge continued participation in this regard.

#### LEADERSHIP TRAINING

The success of every united Farm Bureau effort depends upon the dedication and effectiveness of its volunteer leadership. Our organization has a responsibility to provide its members with the training needed to assume leadership roles, information to broaden their understanding of the Farm Bureau Family, and opportunities to realize their leadership potential.

No other organization offers such broad opportunities for the leadership development of its members as Farm Bureau does, and every effort should be made to maintain and expand this intangible, but vitally important, membership benefit.

We are pleased that the Michigan Farm Bureau has started an aggressive program in leadership training and recommend that such a program be a continual program at all levels of Farm Bureau with special emphasis on County Farm Bureau Boards.

#### LOCAL AFFAIRS

Farm Bureau is widely recognized for its strong State and National Affairs programs. It can and should enjoy the same image in Local Affairs at the county and community levels.

Strong, effective Local Affairs programs build County Farm Bureaus. Members are proud to be associated with an organization that takes a strong stand on local issues and follows through with effective action on problems which affect them and their local communities.

We commend the Michigan Farm Bureau Board of Directors for implementing an expanded Local Affairs program with a full-time staff member in charge of the program.

We urge all county Farm Bureaus to take advantage of this program and to become active in the affairs of their county and community.

#### WE COMMEND OUR UNSELFISH SERVICE

Many of our fellow farmers are serving agriculture and our State as members of boards, commissions, committees, and advisory groups on which agricultural representation is important to all of us.

Often this service is rendered without any reimbursement for time and expenses involved.

We commend these people and recognize them for their unselfish service to agriculture.

We especially commend our dedicated County Farm Bureau leaders and dedicated staff members for their efforts, many times beyond the call of duty. Their assistance and guidance has helped make the Michigan Farm Bureau the effective voice of farmers.

#### ORIENTATION OF EMPLOYEES AND AGENTS

The employed representatives of the Michigan Farm Bureau and all of its affiliated companies represent Farm Bureau in general when contacting members around the state and the public at large.

Uninformed or misinformed employees or agents may contribute to a poor or weak image of Farm Bureau, either in answers given to questions or statements made to other people when the information involves companies other than their own. A lack of information shows a weak interest on their part toward Farm Bureau when inquiries are made.

We recognize that efforts are being made to inform all employees about the program of Farm Bureau and all affiliates through a regular liaison program. In addition, new employee orientation programs are being held regularly to create an understanding of the objectives and philosophies of our Farm Bureau family. These efforts are important. We request that they continue to receive priority attention.

#### MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION

The activities of the Michigan Agricultural Services Association have been extremely beneficial to farmers and will increase in value in the future. The services provided by MASA in the labor information and legislative arena have played a vital role in the economic well-being of all Michigan farmers.

We believe that the labor education program should be expanded to include district meetings at frequent intervals as may be deemed necessary.

We strongly urge the continuance of MASA's activities and recommend that the board of directors assure that it is adequately financed and staffed at the same efficient level it is currently operating.

#### SERVICE TO MEMBERS

Valuable economic services are a prerequisite to continued membership growth. We recommend that the Michigan Farm Bureau and its affiliate companies continue to develop additional economic services for members only that will benefit the organization and its members.

We commend Farm Bureau Services and Farmers Petroleum Cooperative for developing and financing the \$5 member certificates issued again with every 1976 membership. We urge every member to take advantage of this certificate and redeem it at his FBS-FPC outlet.

We commend the Michigan Farm Bureau Board for launching a comprehensive study of Group Purchasing Programs.

We commend Michigan Farm Bureau for developing for 1976:

1. An Expanded Accidental Death and Dismemberment policy.
2. A Farm Bureau discount program with Mackay Industrial Sales.
3. A member discount program with Hertz Rent-A-Car.
4. A reopening of the Group Member Life Insurance program January through March of 1976.

#### SPECIAL STUDIES

The primary responsibility of Michigan Farm Bureau staff is service to members. Many activities, including research of various descriptions, fall under the heading of service to members. Several requests for special studies and research have been made. These include:

1. Transportation Study - The delegates at last year's annual meeting reaffirmed a 1974 resolution requesting that a transportation study be conducted by MFB and FBS to study the total transportation, physical handling, and delivery system for field crops. There is a continuing need for a comprehensive study of this nature and description.

2. Michigan Grape Industry - The Michigan wine and grape industry is plagued by declining demand for their product. This problem is compounded by increasing competition from other domestic and foreign wines. A study of the wine and grape industry and the laws and regulations governing the industry is needed.

We recommend to the Board of Directors of Michigan Farm Bureau that they authorize these studies as the need and resources permit.

#### MARKETING PROGRESS

We continue to support MACMA's involvement in marketing raw products for the betterment of the producer. MACMA should explore ways to improve dealings with processors, achieving earlier dates for processor agreements. MACMA should also continue to explore and develop new ways of marketing as many fruit and vegetable products as possible.

We further commend MACMA for aggressively seeking and obtaining accreditation as the marketing agent for several commodities under the Michigan Marketing and Bargaining Act, P.A. 344. We are gratified that the provisions of the Act proved a practical means of arriving at fair market prices.

We also urge MACMA members to continue to improve the financial position of their marketing association by investing in additional shares of MACMA capital stock.

#### FARM BUREAU MARKETING PROGRAMS

Agricultural marketing is of major concern to farmers. We recognize the need to improve our present marketing methods if we are to receive a more equitable income. Farm Bureau - county, state and national - must assist and support the development and early operational phase of new marketing programs so that they can be financially sound. These marketing programs should be given our highest priority. We should continue to expand marketing activities in commodity areas when requested by members and where programs are economically feasible.

Members producing commodities for which Farm Bureau affiliates have marketing programs should become informed of these producer-owned - and - operated marketing services and participate in these programs. Members must be willing to commit the commodities they produce through contracts with their marketing organizations so that our affiliate marketing organizations can work to sell members' products through full supply contracts.

#### BYLAWS AMENDMENT II

Resolved that the following amendment to the bylaws of this corporation affecting associate membership be adopted to take effect immediately:

Article IV, Section 3 of the bylaws of this corporation shall be amended to read as follows:

"Associate Membership: Other persons interested in agriculture may become associate members by making application and if accepted by the county Board of Directors, upon execution of a membership agreement, will be entitled to the rights of membership, excepting the right to vote."

#### MEMBER-TO-MEMBER MARKETING

The sale of Michigan fresh and frozen fruits, Florida citrus, HiDensity Orange juice, and other products has pioneered a new member-to-member marketing concept. These programs have received good support from Farm Bureau members throughout the state and nation.

We appreciate the MACMA efforts to expand the direct sale of top quality products to Farm Bureau members through the cooperation of its newest division, Michigan Certified Farm Markets.

We urge the sales program of Michigan products to Farm Bureau members in other states be expanded.

Member-to-Member marketing holds a great future



potential as a market for our products and as a service to our members, but we must never forget that high quality control is vital to success.

We do not support legislation to provide government funds or assistance for direct marketing services in duplication of services already offered by private organizations.

**COMMODITY DIVISION APPROACH**

The Commodity Division Approach (CDA) is one way Farm Bureau members can address commodity issues with one united voice.

American Farm Bureau has initiated a two-phase structure to institute the CDA concept. Under Phase I, commodity advisory committees were established. Michigan is proud to have appointed representatives on eight of these important committees.

Phase II of CDA calls for commodity divisions to be activated. The Michigan Farm Bureau Board of Directors has adopted the second phase for soybeans. Eighteen County Farm Bureaus in the major soybean-producing areas of Michigan have established county soybean divisions, with action committees at the state and county levels. The primary purposes of a commodity division are to provide for special staff assistance for programs such as special newsletters, commodity tours and meetings. They are organized within the Farm Bureau structure and do not conduct marketing - bargaining functions. The commodity divisions are financed by an assessment of division members in addition to their regular Farm Bureau dues.

We believe the CDA is an effective organizational method to serve the specialized needs of members. The CDA approach should be extended to other commodities where a need to serve the specialized interest of members is not fulfilled. We recommend studies be made to investigate the feasibility of commodity divisions in the coming year, to be reported at the next annual meeting.

**LOCAL COMMODITY PROMOTION**

County Farm Bureaus can do an excellent job of commodity promotion on a local level. This activity results in more membership involvement as well as promotion of a given commodity. We urge County Farm Bureaus to carry out local commodity promotion activities and that Michigan Farm Bureau staff assist with those activities.

**GRAIN AND BEAN MARKETING**

We commend the Michigan Elevator Exchange Division of Farm Bureau Services for maintaining aggressive leadership in the state in grain and bean marketing. We especially note their effective efforts in the development of a container terminal at Saginaw, their continued success in foreign sales of Michigan navy beans, and their own leased rail cars to make up trains to move grain. Increased use of the 65-100 car trains has enabled them to better keep pace with today's farm harvest.

The new MEE "hot line" which permits any farmer to call this number and receive up-to-the-minute market reports is a valuable service to farmers and should be made a toll free number.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR AGRICULTURE**

We are pleased that Michigan Farm Bureau has been a leader in bringing the story of agriculture to our nonfarm population. The understanding and support of urban people on issues which affect our industry is vitally important. We believe that this understanding and support, and a growing appreciation for an efficient, productive agriculture, has increased because of an aggressive, effective information on both the state and county levels of our organization.

We are proud that Farm Bureau has a reputation as a reliable, credible news source and the fact that our organization is recognized as the spokesman for agriculture in our state. The "Agricultural Backgrounders" held jointly by the Information and Public Relations Division and county Farm Bureau leaders and their local news media were especially effective in establishing a working relationship with members of the press on the local level.

We salute county Farm Bureaus for recognizing members of the news media who help relate the agricultural story. We are pleased that the Agricultural Communicator of the Year Program was initiated to recognize, at the county and state levels, persons who perform outstanding service in creating agricultural understanding.

Daily and weekly information regarding agriculture and Farm Bureau, through radio programming, a weekly editorial column, and news releases have continued to receive widespread acceptance. We are proud that television stations turn to Farm Bureau when they desire information on agriculture. We are pleased that our leaders and members have appeared on news programs, in documentaries, and as guests on other types of television shows.

The most effective public relations for agriculture, however, is done by farmers themselves. We are proud of the Farm Bureau Women Speakers' Bureau project. We congratulate many counties for carrying on activities such as Rural-Urban meetings, farm visits, working with schools, mall displays and county fair booths.

Over 240 Farm Bureau members participated in the Michigan State Fair project. By volunteering their time and effort, these members were able to meet with consumers and tell about agriculture on a one-to-one basis. Farm Bureau members statewide appreciate the job done by the persons who carried on the state fair project.

We encourage Farm Bureau at the state, county and local levels to continue to stress a positive program of improving the image and public understanding of agriculture and ask all members to avail themselves of all opportunities to promote agriculture.

**COMMUNITY GROUPS**

Our predecessors, the architects of the Michigan Farm Bureau, built the Community Group program as a structure to maintain the organization's grass roots effectiveness. For many years, it was recognized as the "backbone" of the organization, providing Farm Bureau with a two-way communications system between the members and county and state leaders and staff. Community Groups were a main source of policy recommendations and were vital contributors to policy execution. They offered an opportunity for leadership development of our members for active involvement in the organization and in their communities.

We believe that the strength of the organization still lies at the grass roots level and that the Community Group system is the best means of determining members' interests and needs. Recent changes in economy and in attitudes toward home and family living provide a healthy climate for Community Group growth.

We strongly recommend that the Board of Directors initiate programs to revitalize the Community Group program, with the goal of increasing the number of groups and increasing member involvement in the program.

**FARM BUREAU COMMUNICATIONS**

We are pleased that Information Committees in many county Farm Bureaus have greatly increased their activities in providing information to the public. Most have also recognized the need for improved communication to members.

We recommend that Michigan Farm Bureau and county Farm Bureaus continue to emphasize effective communications. An efficient and timely information delivery system must be maintained. The use of the most modern equipment should be considered.

We request that proposed resolutions developed by the MFB Policy Development Committee be in the hands of the County Farm Bureaus at least five days prior to the annual meeting so that delegates may confer with members regarding proposed resolutions of particular interest to their local membership.

**COUNTY NEWSLETTER SERVICE**

We believe that well-informed members are a prerequisite for an effective County Farm Bureau. Regular communications between county Boards of Directors and members are vital in coordinating efforts of any project or program. Regular communications make the member families feel more a part of their organization. The information transmitted creates interest, stimulates involvement, and results in action.

We commend the Michigan Farm Bureau for making a County Farm Bureau Newsletter Service available. The nine County Farm Bureaus participating in the pilot program are finding the service most useful.

We urge all County Farm Bureaus to communicate regularly with their members through this system or other locally or regionally developed program.

**HEALTH CARE**

Rising health-care costs and lack of service in rural areas continue to plague Michigan farmers. At the same time a National Health Care Plan appears imminent.

These three factors will have a significant effect on the lives of Michigan farmers, therefore, we urge Michigan Farm Bureau to study alternative methods of health care delivery. Our farm organization should take a position of leadership in assuring adequate and affordable rural health care.

**PERSONAL PROPERTY THEFT**

Theft of personal property is spiraling to a staggering level. Law enforcement agencies cannot curb this problem alone. Public cooperation is needed.

"Operation Identification", a project through which a person engraves an identification mark on personal property, has proven a deterrent to theft and aids in the identification of stolen property.

Likewise, Farm Bureau has a reward program. It awards \$200 to a person who supplies information which leads to the arrest and conviction of a person responsible for theft or destruction of property belonging to a member participating in the reward program. Several payments have already been made.

We urge all Farm Bureau members to participate in the reward program, and mark personal property in a manner similar to "Operation Identification".

**COORDINATION OF EFFORTS**

Michigan Farm Bureau and affiliate companies share a common goal -- to serve farmers. We continually strive to have all affiliate company patrons members of Michigan Farm Bureau, and to have all Michigan Farm Bureau members patronize their affiliate companies. We must continue to do this.

In the meantime, we have many Farm Bureau members who are excellent potential customers or policyholders for affiliates. We also have affiliate patrons and policyholders who are excellent prospects for Michigan Farm Bureau membership.

We urge County Farm Bureau Membership Committees and Local Affiliate Company personnel to work closely together in sharing prospect lists.

**AFFILIATE COMPANY AGREEMENTS**

Agreements signed between county Farm Bureaus and Farm Bureau affiliate companies have been used effectively to clearly define the responsibilities of the parties involved. It becomes necessary to review these agreements periodically.

We commend the County Farm Bureau Insurance Office Service Agreement Committee for their in-depth study and

urge all county Farm Bureaus to review the agreement thoroughly.

It is of utmost importance that every county Farm Bureau Board review their affiliate company agreements annually. This will create a better understanding of the duties of both parties and lessen the chance of misunderstanding.

**ESTATE PLANNING**

It is estimated that more than 60 percent of the population has not even taken the basic step of preparing a will for the transfer of their property at death. State and federal laws are such that a large percentage of the estate can be devoured by taxes without proper planning. We recommend that Michigan Farm Bureau continue its program of information to the members on estate planning problems and point out the many techniques of transferring property to heirs at the least possible tax obligation. It is becoming increasingly difficult to transfer farms from one generation to another.

**STATUS OF PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS**

The policies adopted at the four previous annual meetings are hereby reaffirmed except insofar as they have been modified or supplemented by later policies, including those adopted at this annual meeting. All other policies shall be deemed to have lapsed except insofar as the Board of Directors may specifically find that such a prior policy provides the only basis for action on a current problem.

**Annual Meeting Action**



President Elton Smith and Vice President Dean Pridgeon enjoyed pleasant company at the Governor's Luncheon.



The delegates at work.



Excellent news media coverage throughout the 1975 annual meeting reached a peak during Gov. William Milliken's visit to the convention.

# Hundreds attend FBS annual

A capacity crowd gathered in the Grand Rapids Civic Auditorium December 9 to hear Farm Bureau Services Executive Vice President Donald R. Armstrong report "near record sales" for the Cooperative during fiscal '74-'75.

The net sales volume was \$228.5 million, just behind the all-time record breaking high in '73-'74.

In his annual message, Farm Bureau Services President Elton R. Smith cited the need for strong Cooperative communication, to head off political attacks on the Capper-Volstead Act. Capper-Volstead is the half-century-old legislation that allows cooperatives to organize, and exempts them from anti-trust laws. Smith also talked about the important role that cooperatives play in helping preserve family farming, and in providing healthy competition in the marketplace.

Harry Herbruck, a poultry farmer from Ionia County, was elected to the Farm Bureau Service Board of Directors. Herbruck operates a 210,000 bird fully-automated caged layer poultry farm near Saranac. He also serves on the Farm Bureau Poultry Advisory Committee, and he is President of Michigan Allied Poultry Industries. Besides Herbruck, the 13-member Board now consists of: Gerald Geiger, Huron County; Lawrence Metzger, Sanilac County; Elton Smith, Kent County; Kenneth Bull, Muskegon County; Walter Frahm, Saginaw County; Dean Pridgeon, Branch County; Art Bailey, Kalamazoo County; Andrew Jackson, Livingston County; Richard Wieland, Antrim County; Loren Black, Grand Traverse County; Loren Gettel, Huron County; and

Frank Crandall, Calhoun County. The new Board of Directors will later hold a reorganization meeting to determine, among other things, who will serve as President.

Some highlights of Armstrong's Operations Report:

-Dollar sales in fertilizer rose 38 percent while tonnage declined 9 percent, reflecting the inflationary impact of price control expiration. Farm Bureau Services continues to pick up an increasing share of the fertilizer market.

-In spite of the PBB contamination tragedy, feed tonnage (114,000 tons) sales kept pace with last year's volume. Feed dollar sales were down slightly because of lower feed grain and protein prices.

-Michigan Elevator Exchange Division set new records in sales dollar volume and net margin. Bushels of grain handled was about the same as last year's record-setting 29.7 million bushels.

-New egg markets are being opened through Egg Marketing Division with the introduction of new portion-controlled egg products designed for mass feeding.

-Retail dollar sales reached a record high through the Retail Division, but net margins declined because of a pricing crisis created by product shortages at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Armstrong also noted that cooperative service to farmers is on the increase, with expanded product lines and more extensive field services through Farm Bureau Services branch locations and other cooperative outlets throughout Michigan.

# First "Feeder of the Year" named

Calhoun County dairy farmer Allan Shepard took top honors in Farm Bureau Services' first annual "Michigan Feeder of the Year" competition. He was presented the top award by the Cooperative's Executive Vice President Donald R. Armstrong during Michigan Farm Bureau's annual meeting kickoff luncheon December 10 in Grand Rapids.

Feed Department Manager Donald Shepard said the award, which may become an annual event, is given for "agricultural feeding excellence, expert farm management and outstanding agricultural leadership." Shepard received an engraved silver platter and \$1,000.

In order to receive the top feeder recognition, Shepard had to be first named by his local Farm Bureau Community Group and sponsored by the Farm Bureau feed dealer, Battle Creek Farm Bureau. The next step was to be selected by his County Farm Bureau as the top feeder in the county. Then he had to be chosen as number one in his Farm Bureau District (District No. II). There were five counties represented in District II. The County winners were presented plaques at their County Annual Meetings. The ten District

winner received plaques and a \$100 cash award at the annual meeting of Farm Bureau Services on December 9.

The Shepards belong to the Country Cousins Farm Bureau Community Group of Calhoun County. Aside from his Farm Bureau association, Shepard is also associated with the Michigan Milk Producers Association, Michigan Animal Breeder's Cooperative, Dairy Herd Improvement Association, Agricultural Soil Conservation Service, and the Calhoun County Holstein Board. The Michigan Feeder of the Year has a milking herd of 50 cows, which average 18,967 pounds of milk and 745 pounds of butterfat per cow per year. He grows 239 acres of alfalfa, corn, wheat and oats. He feeds Farm Bureau 38 percent Milk Maker, which he buys from Battle Creek Farm Bureau.

Runnerup in the Feeder of the Year competition was swine farmer Albert Porritt of Alto, in Farm Bureau District IV. Porritt markets over 1,800 hogs per year, has 165 breeding sows which average 9.5 pigs to the litter. He farms 500 acres of ground. He is supplied with feeds by Caledonia Farmers Elevator.

# FPC annual a success

For the 11th continuous year, Farmers Petroleum Cooperative, Inc. ended the fiscal year with increased sales (\$34.7 million) and record earnings before taxes (\$848,000). Record liquid fuel volume of 63.8 million gallons was distributed to farmer patrons during fiscal '74-'75, but government regulation caused a reduction in net margin for the cooperative. Executive Vice President Donald R. Armstrong reported the situation to a capacity crowd in the Grand Rapids Civic Auditorium during Farmers Petroleum's annual meeting December 9.

Retiring President Carl Heisler, who has served as the Cooperative's President for 12 years, talked about the tremendous growth of Farmers Petroleum Cooperative in that period. He cited expanded service, including on-farm service; new products, including custom diesel fuel, improved motor oils and batteries. Heisler also spoke on the importance of cooperative petroleum supply under adverse international energy circumstances. Heisler announced his retirement from the Presidency, and from the Board of Directors, for health reasons. He was presented a plaque for outstanding service.

Elected to the new Board of Directors was Neil Harris, a cash crop farmer from Saginaw County. Harris is also President of the Chesaning Farmers Co-Op,

Inc. Board of Directors. He joins Farmers Petroleum Board members Wesley Prillwitz, Berrien County; Arthur Bailey, Kalamazoo County; Kenneth Bull, Muskegon County; Dean Pridgeon, Branch County; Elton Smith, Kent County; Alwin Marion, Washtenaw County; Richard Wieland, Antrim County; and Bill Brewer, Clare County. The Board is to meet later at a reorganization session, to elect the President and other officers.

Armstrong, in his Operations Report, talked about the pressing need for oil cooperatives to "get basic" in petroleum supply, because of the restrictive energy climate. Toward this end, he announced that Farmers Petroleum has gone back into the oil exploration business, entering into a farm-out arrangement with a major oil company to drill for new sources of crude oil in the Michigan and Illinois basins. Armstrong also noted Farmers Petroleum's involvement in a cooperative-owned international oil exploration venture.

Government allocation regulations made it necessary for the Cooperative to sell its crude oil interests in Oklahoma, reported Armstrong. The gain made from the sale gives the Cooperative increased capability for exploration in Michigan and Illinois.

Government pricing regulations, combined with

easing of petroleum demand over all sectors of the economy created turmoil in retail pricing. In order for the cooperative to remain competitive, gross margins had to be reduced at both the wholesale and retail levels, leaving no margin for patronage refunds. At one point in the pricing crisis, said Armstrong, Farmers Petroleum Farm Supply Division actually distributed fuel to cooperative dealers at below wholesale cost.

However, said Armstrong, in spite of the inhibiting effect of government petroleum policies, the cooperative has been able to secure enough fuel for Michigan farmers, due in part to cooperative efforts at getting recognition for agriculture's important role in the economy.

Armstrong talked about the gains made in service to farmers. Service and sales revenues through cooperative dealers reached record highs, many facilities were upgraded, and much replacement equipment was purchased.

One of the keys to success in petroleum supply and service still appears to be an increased emphasis on crude oil activities, in light of government overregulation. "When cooperatives become fully integrated from wellhead to pump," said Armstrong, "we can begin to successfully counteract the threats to agricultural fuel supply from big oil companies and big government."

## Supply



By Greg Sheffield

## Report

**FERTILIZERS** - Farmers seem to have adopted a wait and see attitude concerning fertilizer prices, but this may not be the thing to do this year. Increases in the price of anhydrous ammonia and ammonia solutions have already been announced on an industry-wide basis. This has been mostly due to the price increases of the natural gas that goes into making anhydrous, as well as increased costs of material and labor. In addition, there's strong evidence that dry fertilizer materials will also go up starting with the New Year, 1976.

Farm Bureau Services has arranged to have adequate supplies of fertilizer, but best prices will be obtained by ordering your needs and shipments arranged to arrive during the winter months. This will mean you should have a talk with your Farm Bureau dealer as soon as possible and plan for your fertilizer shipments. The demands on transportation during the months of April and May will simply be too great to get fertilizer to all farmers at once if orders don't come in early enough.

**PESTICIDES** - Pesticides are now being received and going to Farm Bureau dealers. It follows that your dealer will thus have his best selection of pesticides now. Again planning of your pesticide requirements will be well worth

the time. It will make your work easier and results surer later on. Then too you'll have a better idea of your input costs. While you have the time this winter try making an appointment with your dealer.

**HARDWARE** - Hardware supplies are now readily available from Farm Bureau dealers. Most of all of your needs for next spring should be obtainable at the best price levels starting now. The only chance for low inventories seem to be in the steel products area because of probable steel price increases brought about by a national increase in the demand for metal products. Then too, the boost in natural gas prices will be felt in the manufacturer of steel.

Farm Bureau's line of Water Softeners have proven very popular with farmer patrons. Ask your local dealer for a demonstration. Look for a new, innovative line of portable hog and calf buildings to be introduced this winter and spring. These are real time, labor and money savers. You'll appreciate the money-making, clever concepts built into these portable houses.

Most Farm Bureau co-ops also have interior paints in a wide variety of decorator colors. Hopefully this winter you'll be able to get some of the indoor chores done using these quality, economical wall paints.

**FEED** - Feed volume continues good to strong in almost all

livestock feeding areas. Farm Bureau Services' patrons can look forward to an excellent program in which they can contract feeds at prices that will consider both increases and decreases in ingredient markets. In the past Farm Bureau patrons have appreciated the benefits of similar Farm Bureau programs in stabilizing farmer costs and planning. Farmers, keep your eyes open for dealer meetings that will be held across the state by Farm Bureau dealers explaining their contracting programs.

Supplies of most all feed ingredients are adequate and futures in soybeans and feed grains generally tend to be soft. Molasses, however, is strengthening at this writing. **FARMERS PETROLEUM COOPERATIVE, INC.** - Liquid fuel supply remains adequate for our needs. The mild fall makes the home heating fuel supply look good for the entire winter.

Passenger snow tire supply has been good except in the HR78X15 sizes. Production was late and these tires are just now being shipped. Some pickup truck sizes are short.

Rear tractor and combine tires in sizes cured in 85" presses (18.4 x 26, 18.4 x 28, 18.4 x 38, also all 20.8 and 23.1 sizes) are in short supply and will remain so until at least mid 1976.

Battery shipments are slow because of normal seasonal rush.

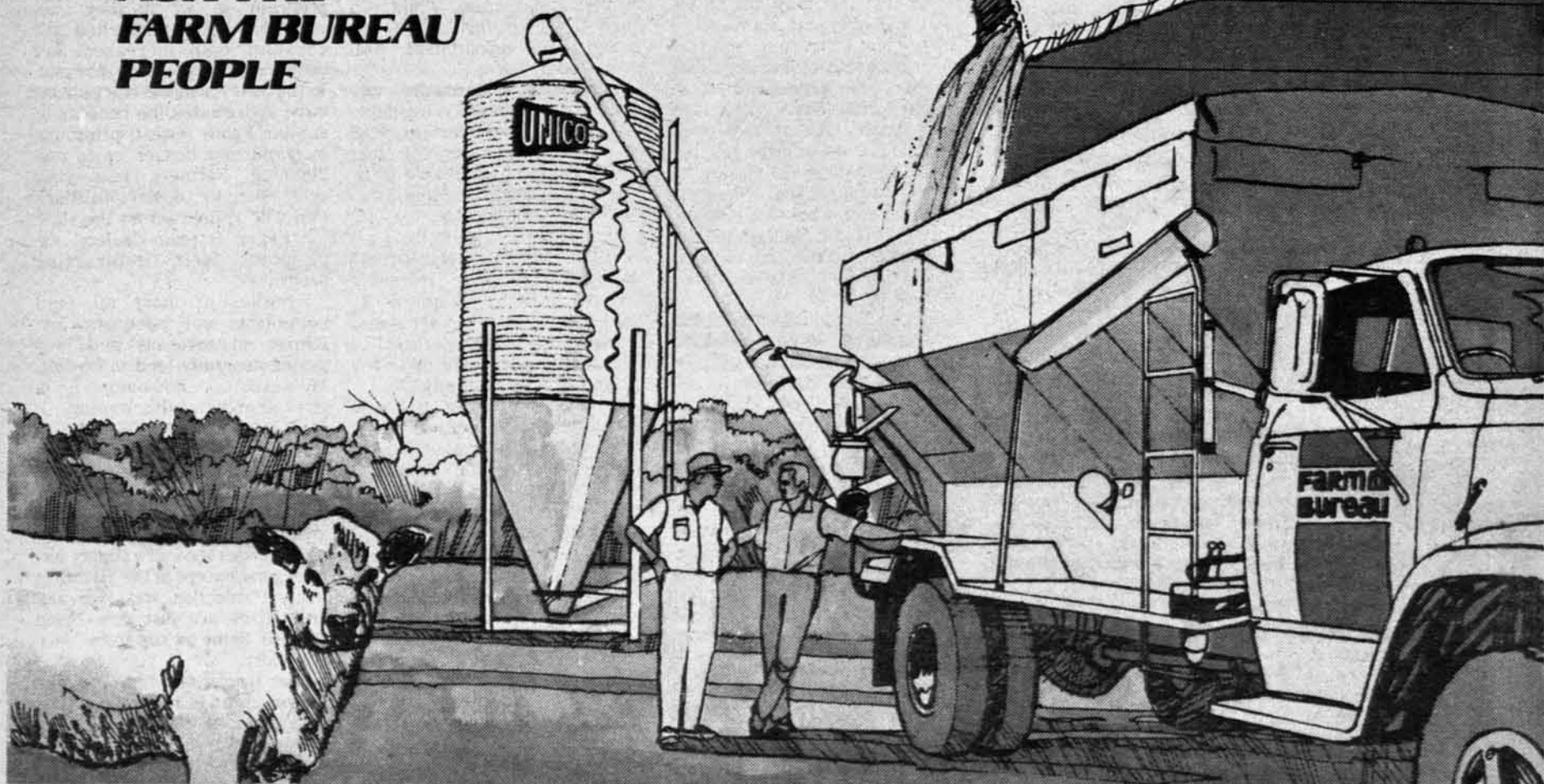
# WHO'S got a SPECIAL FEED Program FOR michigan?

At Farm Bureau Services we offer a total feed service able to assist Michigan farmers in determining proper and profitable feeding programs, as well as solving individual problems.

The Farm Bureau feed team, backed by a staff veterinarian and nutritionist, provides you with the most up-to-date feed information. In cooperation with other farm co-ops, Farm Bureau Services operates 10 research farms where new feeds, feeding techniques and health practices are tested. Recently we installed a Scidata mini-computer, to assist our feed nutritionist in determining the most effective feed formulations for desired production goals. In addition to these services, Farm Bureau offers a wide variety of excellent feeds, including Liquid Protein Supplement (LPS) which has been widely accepted as a versatile liquid supplement for all types of feeding operations.

Talk to your Farm Bureau feedman now. He'll work up a feed program to fit your particular needs. It's service you can depend on . . . from the Farm Bureau people.

## ASK THE FARM BUREAU PEOPLE





Presidents of counties winning two stars or more were acknowledged at the MFB annual banquet during the December annual meeting.

## Award winning counties feted in Grand Rapids

A highlight of the 1975 annual banquet held during MFB's annual meeting in Grand Rapids was the presentation of star awards to counties with top programs in their membership categories.

For the second year in a row Chippewa County under the direction of President John Kronmeyer was the top award county with seven stars. Chippewa's top programs were in membership, community groups, young farmers, commodity, women, information and policy development.

The state's only four-star winner was Sanilac County with Kenneth Wadsworth, president. Sanilac's stars were for membership, young farmers, women and commodities.

Three star counties were Mason, Daryl Peterson president; Branch, Michael Pridgeon president; and Montcalm, Chris Rasmussen, president. Mason's stars were for membership, community groups and women. Branch's top programs were membership, information and policy development. Montcalm was recognized for membership, women and commodities.

Winning two stars were Saginaw, Harold Engel president; Newaygo, Myron Kokx, Jr. president; Hillsdale, Eugene Baker president; Ot-tawa, John Timmer president; Mecosta, Dave Robison president; Ionia, Sanford Yeomans president; Antrim, John Peebles president and

Tuscola, LeRoy Schluckebier president.

One star winners for reaching membership goal were Alcona, Allegan, Arenac, Barry, Bay, Benzie, Berrien, Cass, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Clare, Clinton, Copper Country, Emmet and Gladwin.

Also Gratiot, Hiawathaland, Huron, Iosco, Iron Range, Isabella, Kalkaska, Kent, Lapeer, Lenawee, Livingston, Mac-Luce, Macomb, Manistee, Menominee, Midland, Missaukee and Monroe.

Also Muskegon, N.W. Michigan, Oceana, Ogemaw, Osceola, Otsego, Presque Isle, St. Clair, St. Joseph, Shiawassee, Van Buren, Washtenaw, Wayne and Wexford.

## FFA essay read at annual banquet

Winner of the Farm Bureau sponsored essay contest for FFA members was Shellie Fisk of Sand Lake. Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ross Fisk, Shellie and her mother will be going to St. Louis to attend the AFBF annual meeting as guests of Farm Bureau.

Second place winner in the essay contest is Greg Pehrson, a student at Marshall High School, Marshall. Greg will receive \$100.

The third place essay was submitted by Rhoda Wight of Whittemore. She will receive \$50.

Below is Shellie Fisk's 1st place essay entry.



### BUILDING HORIZONS ON OUR HERITAGE

The arrival of the Pilgrims marked the birth of the American family farm. These people came here to form a new life. They found a country rich in land and forests to be cleared. They were ambitious and they hoped their children would have a better life than they did.

From the time of the molboard plow and the cotton gin, we have progressed rapidly. The days of the small farms and hand labor were in the past. Now we have many modern machines in the place of the hard and time-consuming hand labor. Do not assume that farming is easy now, it is far from that. It would be easier if we only had to feed our own families. But we must forge ahead and continue to progress in order to continue the job our forefathers started by feeding the rest of the world. In order to do this, we need many of the qualities our forefathers had.

In the midst of all this progress, the family farm still thrives with everyone still working together. I live on a dairy farm. I feel I have learned thrift, responsibility, and most of all, pride in doing my work and being a part of American agriculture today. I wish all young people could grow up with the farm background that I share with my five brothers and sisters.

What is a farmer? He is not just a man who wears dirty bibbed overalls and a torn flannel shirt. A farmer is many different things. He is a businessman who does both the management and the labor; and he is a gambler who gambles on the weather, diseases, and insects. He is a purchasing agent who tries to buy and sell when the prices are best; and he is an expert in efficiency who tries to cut costs and increase profit. He is also an investor, putting in money that gives little in return. This man is an environmentalist and a conservationist, using the resources for the best and longest production. Most of all, the farmer is an optimist because he knows tomorrow must hold something better for him and his family. This is the American farmer.

To be a successful farmer in the future, you will need a good education and much experience. To acquire this education, society has provided us with many institutions of high caliber to prepare us for a farming future. Many farmers in the past had only experience to rely on.

The progress we have made is due to many intelligent people. The people and scientists who have helped to develop better crops, feeds, and livestock are very important. Thank you farmers, scientists and agri-businessmen!

Our heritage is something to be proud of and so are the farmers and agri-businessmen who founded that heritage. The image of the farmer will continue to change. He will become more of a businessman, and farming will be more mechanized. With more mechanized farming will come greater problems. However, because of the specialized education they will have greater abilities with which to overcome those problems.

The past was great because that is what the people made it. Our future can be great also, if we strive toward that goal. This will require a concerted effort by both the American farmer and his countrymen. How about it America?

### During Young Farmer banquet

## Top Young Farmer named

A 29-year-old dairy and beef farmer from Kent County is Michigan Farm Bureau's "distinguished young farmer" for 1975. Michael R. Bowman, 8797 Morse Lake Road, Alto, was honored during the Young Farmer's banquet at annual meeting Dec. 10. The award presentation to Bowman was a highlight of the day's activities for young farmers.

Bowman, a dairy science short course graduate from Michigan State University, and his wife, Candy, operate a 630-acre farm. They will receive an all-expense paid trip to the American Farm Bureau Federation annual

meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, in January, where Bowman will compete with other state distinguished young farmer award winners for national honors.

Two young farmers tied for second place in the annual contest. They were Coe F. Emens II, livestock and crop farmer from Mason, Ingham County, and Thomas R. Semans, dairy farmer from Ovid, Shiawassee County. Placing third was Robert H. Cline, dairy farmer from Sherwood in Branch County.

The distinguished young farmer award is designed to

recognize young members for outstanding achievement in the business of farming.



Top Young Farm couple, Mike and Candy Bowman.

# Campaign Managers challenged

County campaign managers for the 1976 membership year were encouraged to get the job done early by Branch County President Mike Pridgeon during the Campaign managers Banquet at MFB annual meeting. Gathering in the Pantlind Hotel, the membership chairmen also saw the 1975 dedicated dozen awards presented and the President's Trophy awarded.

Pridgeon showed enthusiasm

as he explained how, in terms of money farmers are receiving for their products, a \$35 1976 Farm Bureau membership is a better buy than a \$25 membership was in 1970 when dues were last raised.

He noted that important legislation affecting farmers requires that farm people together through an effective organization.

The dedicated dozen award is given to the first three counties that reach membership goal in their membership category. The 1975 winners were Clinton, Saginaw, Ottawa, Oceana, N.W. Michigan, Branch, Osceola, Cheboygan, Arenac, Chippewa, Mackinaw-Luce and Benzie.

The President's Trophy is given to the goal county in each membership category that has

the largest per cent increase in regular members. Winners of this coveted award were Copper Country, Presque Isle, Oceana and Allegan Counties.

With the new membership campaign underway spots on the list of dedicated dozen and President's trophy winners are open again waiting for top county membership chairmen and their workers to fill them.



Branch County President, Mike Pridgeon.



Communicator of the Year Howard Heath (right) is presented Golden Mike Award by John Laurie.

**Howard Heath**

**"Communicator of Year"**

Three members of the news media were honored during the kick-off luncheon of the Michigan Farm Bureau annual meeting in Grand Rapids December 10. The newsmen were picked from a field of 40 nominations by county Farm Bureau units throughout the state.

Recipient of the "Agricultural Communicator of the Year" was Howard Heath, founder and co-partner of the Michigan Farm Radio Network. His "Golden Mike" award recognized him for his "year-round efforts to build bridges of understanding, through communications, between farm and non-farm people." Heath has been farm director of radio station WPAG, Ann Arbor, for the past 29 years. The Network keeps farm and non-farm people informed, through their local radio stations, on agricultural issues, events and

markets. Heath was nominated by the Washtenaw and Wayne County Farm Bureaus.

Robert Hostetler, editor of the Fremont Times Indicator was presented with the "Bronze Quill" award, and Karl Guenther, farm director for WKZO and WKZO-TV, received the "Bronze Mike" award. Both were honored for "outstanding services in promoting the understanding and appreciation of Michigan agriculture." Hostetler was nominated by the Newaygo County Farm Bureau and Guenther by the Van Buren, Ottawa and Kalamazoo units.

Recognition of news media will be an annual program for MFB. News people honored by county Farm Bureaus at their October annual meetings become eligible for the state awards presented at the MFB annual in December.

By **FBIG**

**Increased dividend scale announced**

Farm Bureau Members and other Michigan residents, received a Christmas present from Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company of Michigan. An increased life dividend scale was applied to participating life and participating annuity policies beginning January 1, 1976.

The increased dividend scale will also be applied to new policies issued after January 1. The dividend scale increase was authorized by the Farm Bureau Life Board of Directors because of favorable mortality experience and expense control.

Life policy dividends during 1976 will total some \$2,290,000. The dividend scale increase accounts for about \$300,000 of total dividends.

A few representative examples of dividend rates per thousand dollars of insurance coverage are shown below for issue age 35.

ENDOWMENT AT 95	PREVIOUS SCALE	CURRENT SCALE (Effective 1-1-76)
20 Year Accumulation	\$183.15	* \$260.89
Accumulation at Age 65	482.55	* 689.69
RETIREMENT INCOME AT 65 (Non-qualified)		
20 Year Accumulation	\$269.58	* \$372.53
Accumulation at Age 65	737.69	* 1089.46
WHOLE LIFE - PARTICIPATING		
20 YEAR ACCUMULATION	\$180.99	* \$201.49
Accumulation at Age 65	461.21	* 543.85

\* Dividends are neither estimates nor guarantees but are based on the Company's current scale.

Having your money work more efficiently for your future is especially important today. With the new value perspective on participating life and participating annuity policies at Farm Bureau Life, this would be a good time to discuss existing policies and future life and annuity plans with your Farm Bureau Insurance agent.

**Time to renew membership**

January is the time to re-evaluate your investment in Farm Bureau and think about renewing your membership.

Your membership in the Farm Bureau entitles you to many services and insurances all centralized in one place for your convenience. Among them are farming and marketing aids, accidental death and dismemberment, member life, auto and workmen's compensation insurances, marketing services and Blue Cross and Blue Shield group benefits.

Remeber, it is only through your membership in Farm Bureau that all this can remain available to you.

If you are not a Farm Bureau member, call your local Farm Bureau secretary to see what the Farm Bureau can do for you. Or if you're looking for health care protection, membership in the Farm Bureau means you can get excellent Blue Cross and Blue Shield coverage at group rates.

Don't give up all your benefits, renew your membership and pay your dues by January 31.

**For soybeans Checkoff reaffirmed**

by Dr. Paul E. Kindinger, Secretary Michigan Soybean Producers A division of Michigan Farm Bureau

Michigan Farm Bureau voting delegates again reaffirmed a resolution at the 56th Annual Meeting supporting a checkoff referendum for soybeans. Following his directive and the guidelines established by P.A. 232, the Agricultural Commodities Marketing Act of 1965, Michigan Soybean Producers have launched a petition drive to obtain signatures of bonafide soybean producers who support a referendum for a soybean checkoff proposal.

Upon receipt of the petitions, the Director of Agriculture will appoint a committee of producers which will be responsible for drafting a final referendum proposal. Public hearings on the referendum proposal are then held to receive opinions from all growers and processors. After completion of public hearings, the referendum, with any final changes, may then be voted on.

If the referendum is passed in Michigan, any grower selling soybeans would be assessed a particular amount per bushel when his crop was delivered to point of first sale. The funds collected would then be divided, with some monies going to research and some to promotion both at home and abroad. Any allocation of funds would be decided by a committee appointed by the Governor made up primarily of soybean producers.

Any soybean grower can sign a petition. If you have not been contacted already and would like to express your support for such a referendum, then contact either your Farm Bureau Regional Representative, your County Farm Bureau President or the Market Development Division of Michigan Farm Bureau in Lansing for further information or a petition form. We need your support on this important matter! Every signature counts!



**OFFICE CALLS**

**Question**

How do I fulfill the \$200.00 deductible amount I am responsible for under the Master Medical program?

**Answer**

Expenses incurred for eligible services provided for all members of the family may be applied toward the \$200.00 deductible. The deductible amount can be fulfilled within a twelve month benefit period which begins on the date the first service was provided and ends twelve months later. No one person in the family may contribute more than \$100.00 toward the deductible.

++ The above explanation does not apply to the Master Medical 65 plan.

**Blue Cross Blue Shield a member benefit**

One of your benefits as a Michigan Farm Bureau member is belonging to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan. You and your family enjoy the security of some of the most useful and necessary health care benefits at group rates.

Your benefits include 365 days of hospital care, maternity and nursery care and full cost of hospital outpatient care. Surgery and related expenses are all covered. X-ray services are covered without co-payment.

In addition to these worthwhile services, the Farm Bureau opted, last year, to include Master Medical in your coverage. So, for the last year, you have been enjoying paid doctor home and office calls, prescription drugs, blood - after the first two pints, visiting nurse service at home, ground and air ambulance service, prosthetic appliances and private duty nursing and psychiatric care. These services are all available to you with a small deductible and co-payment.

If you are retired, you are enjoying Blue Cross and Blue Shield Complementary coverage in addition to your Medicare, plus the features of Master Medical 65.

If you know someone who hasn't taken advantage of group coverage in Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan, won't you tell them about it. Tell them to contact their local Farm Bureau secretary for further details.

**For power transmissions**

**Discount offered to Farm Bureau members**

A new service to member program through Mackay Industrial Sales of Grand Rapids had been introduced. Mackay Industrial Sales Company is a locally owned distributor of power transmission and rubber products. The agreement with Mackay contains the following provisions: (1) Mackay will sell its products to a member of Farm Bureau at the industrial users' price, and for any single order which exceeds \$100.00, the Farm Bureau members shall receive a 5 percent discount from the industrial users' price. (2) Mackay will also provide the Farm Bureau members with free

warehouse storage of the product the member purchases from it and will provide free engineering and technical assistance in developing a certain machine to accomplish a specific purpose for the member. (3) Farm Bureau has agreed that when an order is placed in person its member must present his current Farm Bureau membership card to Mackay in order to qualify for this products - purchasing program. When an order is placed by telephone or by mail, the Farm Bureau member must therein state the color of his membership card and his county number.



Mrs. Ray Anderson, president of the Manistee County Farm Bureau, receives a certificate of appreciation from MFB President Elton Smith. The certificate was in memory of the many services her husband had given agriculture and Farm Bureau prior to his death early this fall.

# Townships:

Perhaps a discussion on the importance of township government may seem silly to some. But, in an era when many changes are being proposed, quite a few things which look silly become parts of a program that someone is advocating. What may appear to be silly to one person makes good sense to another.

The Community Farm Bureau Group Advisory Committee has requested that this topic be discussed. Their action is based upon the fact that many people have a "I could care less attitude" about their township government. Also, proposals for changes have been made. Township governments are often criticized for certain inadequacies, inefficiencies, or injustices existing within their programs. If such do exist, it is our duty as citizens to consider what action should be taken to correct the faults. We should not close our eyes to them. But the methods to be used in correcting the faults are often based on widely different philosophies of government.

We may reason that if township government has faults, then it should be replaced with some other form of government. Or we may say that if the faults exist they should be corrected by action from within - action by the people themselves. No one should hesitate to attempt to change any phase of his government system if it can be shown that it is necessary and to the best interests of the majority of the people.

Michigan townships date from 1787, the year of the Northwest Ordinance when townships were introduced as a unit of land survey measuring six miles square. The township became a form of government in 1827. Since the boundaries of townships were not originally established on political considerations, some agree that it is not surprising that today many townships do not fulfill the needs of modern government.

Townships basically perform two general functions: they conduct the election of state, county, and township officials, and they assess property for county, townships and school district purposes. For most townships, other governmental responsibilities are relatively simple, reflecting the limited demands of the residents. However, for townships located near urban areas, the functions are more extensive. As an urban area spreads, the population, along with residential and commercial development, spills out of the cities into adjacent townships. With population growth, demands arise for urban services such as trash and garbage removal, police and fire protection, water supply, sewerage disposal, and road and street construction and maintenance.

There are two types of townships in Michigan: one organized under the general laws of the state and the other under the Charter Township Act of 1947. Township problems resulting from urbanization contributed to the enactment of the new charter form, which may be adopted by any township with a population of at least 2,000 people. The Charter Township Act enables townships to provide for a number of urban services.

Some have expressed the view that Michigan local governments appear to have two conscious faults. First, there is a redundancy of governmental units, causing a need for consolidation. Second, the form and structure of many local governments are inadequate for meeting the current and future needs of the public efficiently and effectively. To correct these two faults, it has been suggested that the least which should be done is to liberalize constitutional and statutory provisions so that local governments may more easily adopt to changing conditions.

However, since the invested interests at the local governmental level would resist change, it is advocated that positive inducements to change be offered. These inducements could be provided by the government through its system of grants and shared taxes. In effect, the government could make changes in the form and structure of local government, and resistance to change unattractive.

This is not a new concept. Raymond Moby in a Reader's Digest article in December 1949, dealing with the Columbia Valley Authority, advocated a plan for centralizing government under a district system of Federal Authority. The move failed to pass Congress, but the board purposes were made clear. Local forms of government would disappear.

Farm Bureau members frequently expresses the desire to maintain a strong, independent, and responsible local government. But are they willing to make the sacrifices which are necessary to make local government work?

Upon first thought, it would appear that this questions has an obvious answer, but stop right here and ask yourselves some questions.

Do you put forth the time and effort to make a careful analysis of candidates and other measures appearing on the township ballot?

Are you willing to give of your time and effort to intelligently cast your ballot or to take positions of responsibility in township government?

Another question you might well ask is this: If you are

## Are they viable?



# DISCUSSION TOPIC

by **KEN WILES**

Manager Member Relations

willing to assume the necessary responsibilities to make your township government work, do you actually do it?

It must be remembered that our form of government - democracy - is not a gift from Heaven. It is something that must be earned first, as we are willing to make sacrifices in order to have an automobile, a home, or even our family. So, too, must we be willing to make sacrifices of time and effort in order to have local government and to maintain it.

Without a doubt, if one were to interview all the Michigan Farm Bureau members, the vast majority would say they want to maintain township government. This might lead one to believe that people are solidly behind township government and are willing to support efforts to retain local control.

However, one must question this belief when we consider that: A generation ago holding a public office was considered an honor and an office holder held the respect of his community. At every election there were several candidates for almost every public office, and on election day almost every qualified voter cast his ballot. Election day was looked upon as one of the really big days of the year.

Consider the apparent lack of interest in such an office of responsibility today. People frequently have to be urged to accept certain public offices in local elections and even to accept small responsibilities in the affairs of their local townships. One might well stop and ask, "Do we want township government?"

Somebody once said, "You never miss the water until the well runs dry." How true this is! It would be interesting to know how vocal the opposition would become if those who never attend their township annual meeting were to be told that they were to be deprived of the privilege of attending. It would also be interesting to know how many can tell when their township annual meeting (a day established by law for non-chartered township) is held each year. In view of this information we might readily consider the situation to be a serious one and

immediately ask ourselves, "Do we want township government?"

We might well stop and ask ourselves why is it that the same small group of people carry the responsibility that goes with township government? Whether it be in matters of local government, the church or even our own farm organization, the great masses of people are willing to stand back and "let George do it."

Why is it that frequently people criticize the operations of their local township, yet they are never heard of or even seen at the annual meeting. Very likely it is these same individuals who, according to a recent report from the Secretary of State, don't know what township they live in when applying to register when renewing their drivers license.

We are very apt to say that we want local government; that we want to retain township government; that we would accept nothing else; while at the same time there are volumes of evidence to the contrary.

It must be remembered that attitudes are far stronger than words. If local government is going to continue, we must be actively willing to do more than just say we want it.

The township is the grass roots of our government. We should be cautious about undermining its power. If evils or weaknesses exist in township government, let us change them by our own critical action as a democratic citizenry. Let us use care in picking our public officials, and if injustice is being done, let us correct it by local action.

The movements of modern times have given us plenty of ground for being suspicious. The air has been filled with the flying shrapnel of attacks on the truly democratic way of life in the past few years. It may look like a small matter. But the method has been to drive one wedge into local control at a time, to let the people get accustomed to that one and then drive another. Eventually local government could be a thing of the past.

Is township government important? You must decide the answer to that question.



Paul Lang, of Gladwin County pays Farm Bureau dues for the sixtieth consecutive year. Lang was a member in Illinois for thirty four years before moving to Michigan where he has been a member for twenty six years.

During those sixty years he has been active in Farm Bureau, having been a community group member for all these sixty years, a membership worker for thirty plus years, chairman of the community group committee for five years, and a member of the county board twelve years.

Accepting his check for dues is Mrs. Ella Vallender, secretary of Gladwin and Clare counties.

## Topic Summary

The discussion of "Water" in November caused many to realize that the water is a resource we, particularly in Michigan, often take for granted. Several groups, familiar with the project, suggested that waste water should be recycled as is being done in Muskegon. A tabulation of the answers to the questions follow. Conclusions given are only a few of the many received.

1. Amendments to the Water Quality Act sets the goal of zero water pollution by 1985. Do you think this goal is impractical and unattainable? Yes 67 percent No 28 percent Undecided 59 percent

2. In your opinion, is the right to use water a property right? Yes 58 percent No 21 percent Undecided 21 percent

3. In your opinion, should any lands designed for wilderness be subject to local zoning ordinances? Yes 48 percent No 34 percent Undecided 18 percent

4. Should the disposal of wastewater from any city, county, village, or township be transferred to another without the consent of the affected units of government? Yes 4 percent No 93 percent Undecided 3 percent

5. Conclusions: Good common sense on laws governing water will have to be used; water is a precious resource; different regulations are needed for different situations; keep control in local governments; learn to use water conservation; owners should have right to use water with limitations; we will need diapers on frogs to get zero water pollution.

## Farm Bureau annual

(Continued from Page 1)

that our industry is treated equitably," Smith said.

MFB's president listed inflation as one of the major challenges of the future. "My fear about inflation comes not only because of what it does to the farmer, but the danger it presents to the form of government in this country. How long can people continue to pay higher and higher prices for things which they buy? How long can they stand to see the value of their dollars eroded away? At what point do the citizens of this country become susceptible to being led down the path toward a totalitarian form of government which promises to control inflation for them?" Smith asked.

"So, what can be done? We must recognize that in our society, the power lies in the people. Our forefathers recognized this when they started the Constitution with the words, 'We the people. . . We must believe that the power lies in us and we must act accordingly.'" Smith urged farmers to shoulder their responsibilities as citizens by speaking out on issues, working on behalf of issues and being active in the political process.

Smith's address kicked off MFB's 56th annual meeting.

## Marten Garn passes away

Long-time Michigan Farm Bureau leader Marten Garn of Eaton County died Dec. 10. Garn, during a long association with MFB, had served in many leadership positions with the organization.

His experience in Farm Bureau ranged from county president to president of Farm Bureau Insurance Group and Farm Bureau Services during the 1950's.

Garn was a successful farmer and a top hog producer.

## PBB (Continued from Page 1)

Battle Creek during 1973 and perhaps early 1974 where they were mixed into various animal feeds.

It was not until late April of 1974 that the presence of PBB was identified in animal feed. Thereafter, the Michigan Department of Agriculture quarantined several herds which ultimately were destroyed and buried on an isolated tract of State-owned land in Kalkaska County. Approximately 450 farmers' claims are pending at this time. Armstrong indicated that the process of evaluating and attempting to settle these claims would begin just as soon as the final details of the settlement apparatus have been worked out.

## Discussion Topic Report Sheet

### DISCUSSION TOPIC REPORT SHEET

The Discussion Topic and Report Sheet for the discussion topic on the opposite page is furnished for use of community group members who may wish to review it prior to their group meetings. If used by a Community Group, in lieu of report sheet furnished the Discussion Leader, please forward answers with minutes to Information and Public Relations Division, Michigan Farm Bureau, P.O. Box 960, Lansing, Michigan 48904 on or before February 1, 1975.

Community Farm Bureau \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate the number of people taking part in this discussion. \_\_\_\_\_

### TOPIC: IMPORTANCE OF TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT

1. With modern transportation and communication facilities available, should the township government in predominantly rural counties be combined? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

2. How could township government be financed by other than property taxes? \_\_\_\_\_

3. In your opinion, should the townships in Michigan be abolished, and their functions assumed by county government? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

4. In your opinion, have township governments lost their responsiveness to the wishes of the voters? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

5. Conclusions: \_\_\_\_\_

# FARM BUREAU MARKET PLACE

SPECIAL RATE TO FARM BUREAU MEMBERS: One free 25 word ad per month per membership, additional words, 10 cents each. Figures such as 12 or \$12.50 count as one word NON-MEMBER advertisers: 15 cents per word one edition, two or more editions, 10 cents per word. Copy deadline: 13th of Month. Mail classified ads to: Michigan Farm News, P. O. Box 960, Lansing, Mi. 48904 Publisher reserves right to reject any advertising copy submitted.

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### FARM EQUIPMENT

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### MISCELLANEOUS

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