

**Member only program**

# Group purchase plan ok'ed

The group purchasing program in Michigan as a service to members only. The Michigan Farm Bureau board of directors, charged by voting delegates last June to give the program "top priority consideration," voted February 12 to accept recommendations for adoption of the program. The program will start with tires, batteries and accessories, with other items on an order basis only.

The group purchasing program is the result of a state study, requested by voting delegates at the 1973 Michigan Farm Bureau annual meeting, to assure the continued growth and viability of the organization. Members of the State Study Committee, in their search for economic services which would attract and maintain membership, were impressed with the members only benefits of the Safemark group purchase program and the growth other state Farm Bureaus

had experienced since their initiation of the program.

Nationwide, the Safemark Program, involving group purchase of tires, batteries, twine and disk blades, is currently in 39 other state Farm Bureaus. The program, open to members only, must be approved by the county Farm Bureau board, which locates a local dealer to distribute the product in the community.

Following the special delegate session in June, 1975, where voting delegates adopted the State Study Committee's recommendation, the MFB board of directors appointed a Research and Development Committee to conduct an in-depth examination of the group purchase program. Members of the committee were: Larry DeVuyst, Ithaca, District 8 director; Bill Spike, Owosso, District 5 director; Jim Sayre, Belleville, director-at-large, with Gene Greenawalt, Coordinator of

County Offices, serving as staff assistant.

In carrying out its charges, this committee surveyed county Farm Bureaus regarding potential support of a group purchase program, with a result of 91 percent for the program. They met with personnel from the American Farm Bureau Federation Service Company, which handles the Safemark program. The committee also met with representatives of Farmers Petroleum Cooperative to explore the possibility of a comparable members-only service. They visited the North Carolina and Kentucky Farm Bureaus to study their experiences at the state and county levels, and interviewed local dealers involved in the program.

The Safemark Program in North Carolina resulted from a state study, such as Michigan's, to surface an economic service to accompany a dues increase. Their membership in 1971 was 62,854 and has grown to 100,470.

In a report to the Young Farmers Conference in Lansing, February 18, Larry DeVuyst said: "The key to the success of this program -- as in any other program -- rests with the county Farm Bureaus. Their total commitment to the program, their ability to establish dealers who will be equally committed to the success of the program and share the same goals as the county Farm Bureau -- economic benefits to members and membership growth -- is vitally necessary.

"This program will be initiated only in county Farm Bureaus that agree with the philosophy that real money-in-the-pocket economic services will attract and maintain members, who will give the program the total commitment it needs to be a success," DeVuyst told the Young Farmers.

A board-appointed committee is working out the necessary details to implement the program and county Farm Bureaus will be kept informed as plans progress.

## March 16 is Soybean Day

Michigan Farm Bureau Soybean Division has announced its 4th annual Soybean Day meeting.

The meeting will be held Tuesday, March 16 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Longs Banquet Center, just off I-96 at the Cedar Street exit in Lansing.

The past year has seen a great deal of concern for the soybean producer of Michigan. The competition from Brazilian soybeans, palm oil, and Puvian fishmeal, plus all of the government and union intervention in our export programs.

The following guest speakers will be on the program:

Dr. Sylvan H. Wiltwer, Director of The Agricultural

Experiment Station and Assistant Dean of Agriculture and Professor of Horticulture, Michigan State University.

Dr. Dale Harpstead, Chairman of the Crop and Soil Science and Professor of Crops and Soil Science, Michigan State University.

Dr. Dale E. Butz, Executive Director of the Illinois Farm Bureau's Commodity Division. He formerly served as Director of F.S. Services, Inc.

Mr. Arnold B. Skromme, Sr., Division Engineer, Value Engineering, John Deer Harvester Works, Moline, Illinois.

Dr. Richard H. Leep, County Extension Agricultural Agent in Gratiot County and one of the foremost in applied bean

research in Michigan.

Robert Moellendick, Sales Manager, Plant Food Division, Fertilizer, Chemicals, and Seed Farm Bureau Services Farm Supply Division.

Don N. Kunz, Manager of the Grain Division of the Michigan Elevator Exchange.

The day-long program will be filled with information vital to your roll as a producer of soybeans in Michigan, so plan to attend and encourage your neighbor to come with you.

For more information on this event contact: Tom Reed, Marketing Specialist, Market Development Division, Michigan Farm Bureau. Phone 485-8121 ext. 221.



Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz came to Lansing at MFB's invitation, to keynote a "Special Membership Rally" held January 30. Over 600 county leaders and membership workers showed up despite stormy weather and bad road conditions. The state's press gave extensive coverage to the meeting with the firey cabinet member providing them with plenty to quote as he defended free market agriculture and the modern American farmer. (See page 8 for more pictures)

# House Ag. Committee tables H.B. 4921

Michigan's House Agriculture Committee voted to table House Bill 4921, the farm labor bill, at its Feb. 5 meeting in the Capitol. The vote to table was unanimous among the eight committee members present and effectively kills the bill for this session of the legislature.

Farm Bureau members will recall that the House Agriculture Committee held hearings on H.B. 4921 at five locations around the state this past fall. Each hearing was well attended by concerned

MFB members.

Scores of MFB members gave testimony opposing the bill, which if enacted would require farm employers to pay time-and-a-half after 46 hours and lower the age covered by the minimum wage provisions to 16. The bill would also require farmers to pay the minimum wage to piece-rate workers if their piece rate productivity fell below the minimum wage.

In reviewing the testimony heard during the five hearings the committee members

agreed that almost all testimony on H.B. 4921 was opposed to it. The legislators noted that not only farmers, but farm workers objected to the proposed law.

Rep. Stanley Powell (R-Ionia) indicated that these were the best attended hearings he has seen. "Almost everything said in testimony was opposed to this bill," Powell said.

After general agreement among the committee members that there was little support for the bill, Rep. Donald Van

Singel (R-Grant) moved to table the bill and Rep. Donald Albosta (D-St. Charles) supported the motion. The vote was eight to zero to table the bill.

Although the defeat of this bill in committee can be considered a major victory for farmers, Michigan Agricultural Services Association Operations Manager, M. J. Buschlin cautioned that similar legislation is likely to show up again next year. "Farmers will need to be ready again to speak out for what they believe in," said Buschlin.

**PRESIDENTS' COLUMN**



# Membership-NOW!

The charge this month goes out to county presidents and boards, campaign managers and membership workers to call on those unpaid renewals, visit those prospects and reach goal.

We are running behind the pace of last year's drive but I am confident that we can catch up. Directors, women's committees and young farmer committees should put membership on the front burner for now.

What difference would it really make if the organization ends up the year with membership a little short of last year's total?

In fact, it means a lot of difference. An organization can be effective in accomplishing its goal only if it is moving forward, as represented by growth. When an organization experiences membership growth, its influence and respect are strengthened in the eyes of the public, the legislature, and members themselves.

If there ever was a time when this farm organization can least afford to lose its influence and respect, it is today.

Labor leaders are trying to tell us who we can sell our products to. Bureaucrats are attempting to use the fruits of our labor as diplomatic ammunition in something called "Agri-power." Consumers nation-wide constantly refer to "our" (Meaning their) wheat as if they held an ownership share in every bushel of wheat harvested.

The list of issues affecting the modern farmer goes on and on. You know them. They include property taxes, farmland preservation, estate taxes, farm labor, workers compensation, OSHA, EPA, the cost-price squeeze, etc.

Farmers alone cannot successfully deal with all these problems and that is why, over the years, they have joined their neighbors in county Farm Bureaus and county Farm Bureaus have joined together in state Farm Bureaus and state Farm Bureaus have joined together in a national federation.

A thousand farm voices in a county CAN be heard, tens of thousands of farm voices in a state CAN be heard, and millions of farm voices in a nation CAN be heard. Membership strength is essential to continuing an effective, influential Farm Bureau.

	STATE STATUS 2-19-76 NOW	2-18-75 1 YEAR AGO
GOAL:	61,586	61,098
New:	2,600	3,127
Renewals:	55,594	56,542
TOTAL:	58,194	59,669
% of Goal:	94.49%	97.66%
Needed for Goal:	3,392	1,429

**DEDICATED DOZEN CLUB**

1-300		301-800	
1. Kalkaska	1.		
2. Iron Range	2.		
3. Benzie	3.		
801-1300		1301-Over	
1.		1. Clinton	
2.		2. Bay	
3.		3.	

## DONNA Ten feet tall

Remember back -- not so many years ago -- when farmers had an "image" firmly implanted in the minds of the many people who categorize those involved in a particular industry or profession? Cartoonists and artists reinforced the image by consistently portraying the farmer as a bib-overalled character who wore a straw hat and a red kerchief around his neck, chewed on a piece of straw, spoke on monosyllables, and came to town once a week, carrying with him the aroma of the barnyard and spending money given to him by the government for not producing. This picture was developed early in the minds of urban children; calling someone a farmer was a common playground insult, frequently strengthened with the adjective, "dumb."

In recent years, farmers have worked hard to erase that image -- not with any fifth Avenue advertising campaign -- but through sincere, effective communications with non-farm people. They've taken the story of agriculture into the schools and brought the school children to the farm. They've turned urban shopping malls into fascinating "show and tell" food fact information centers. They've used every form of modern communication to tell the world of their fantastic productivity and person-to-person conversation to create a better understanding and appreciation for their industry.

Thanks to their efforts, they've

turned storybook pictures into the "real thing" that can be actually seen and touched by city children. And reminded urban adults of the origination point of their food supply, beyond the supermarket shelves.

Those of us involved in, or closely related to, the agricultural industry assume that the old farmer-image has faded entirely. Just quietly observing the shoppers at Saginaw's Fashion Square Mall recently, as they viewed the Huron-Tuscola-Bay-Saginaw-Sanilac Farm Bureau agricultural displays, proved such public information efforts are still needed. That the sharp, articulate agricultural spokesmen did not fit the farmer-image many of the city shoppers had before this enlightening encounter was evident by the expressions on their faces.

As effective as the various displays were, it was the nearly 500 area farmers involved in this activity who had the real impact. Whether it's a mall promotion such as this one in Saginaw, a Speakers' Bureau team at a Rotary Club or in the schools, or a legislative tour to the nation's capitol -- the one common factor that brings such positive results is the obvious pride of farmers in their profession.

When they say with conviction: "I'm proud to be a farmer," they grow ten feet tall -- not only in the eyes of their listeners -- but their own as well. Therein lies the secret to their success as agricultural communicators.

**MICHIGAN FARM NEWS**

The Michigan FARM NEWS is published monthly, on the first day, by the Michigan Farm Bureau Information Division, Publication and Editorial Offices at 7373 West Saginaw Highway, Lansing, Michigan 48904. Post Office Box 960. Telephone, Lansing 485-8121. Extension 228. Subscription price, 65 cents per year.

Established January 13, 1923. Second-class postage paid at Lansing, Mi. and at additional mailing offices.

**EDITORIAL:** Editor: Jim Phillips; Associate Editor: Donna Wilber; Staff Photographer: Marcia Ditchie.

**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.

**DIRECTORS:** District 1, Arthur Bailey, Schoolcraft; District 2, Dean Pridgeon, Montgomery, R-1; District 3, Andrew Jackson, Howell, R-1; District 4, Elton R. Smith, Caledonia, R-1; District 5, William Spike, Owosso, R-3; District 6, Jack Laurie, Cass City, R-3; District 7, Robert Rider, Hart, R-1; District 8, Larry DeVuyst, Ithaca, R-4; District 9, Donald Nugent, Frankfort, R-1; District 10, Richard Wieland, Ellsworth, R-1; District 11, Franklin Schwiderson, Dafter.

**DIRECTORS AT LARGE:** Walter Frahm, Frankenmuth; James L. Sayre, Belleville; Lowell Eisenmann, Blissfield.

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

**POSTMASTER:** In using form 3579, mail to: Michigan Farm News, 7373 West Saginaw Highway, Lansing, Michigan 48904.



## Today--It Pays

Don't Forget -- Renew Your Farm Bureau Membership

### MOVING?

Planning to move? Let us know 8 weeks in advance so you won't miss a single issue of the Michigan Farm News. Attach old label and print new address in space provided. Mail to: Michigan Farm News, P.O. Box 960, Lansing, Michigan 48904.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 County of Membership \_\_\_\_\_



### Farm Bureau scholarship offered

Farm Bureau Women are announcing this year's competition for the Marge Karker-Farm Bureau Scholarship.

The scholarship of \$400 is available to students attending Michigan State University. They must be from a Farm Bureau family, must show financial need, and must be majoring in agriculturally related courses or in medicine.

The State Women's Committee is encouraging each county to do all possible to publicize this scholarship so Farm Bureau members will know about it and encourage young people to apply for it.

Application forms are available from the Women's Department, Michigan Farm Bureau, P.O. Box 960, Lansing, Mich. 48904.

## According to MSU study

# PBBs in soil are no health threat

There is no threat to animal or human health from those PBBs, a series of fire retardant chemicals, that have entered some Michigan soils, according to preliminary research information collected by two Michigan State University crop and soil scientists.

Dr. James M. Tiedje and Dr.

Lee W. Jacobs have been investigating PBB contaminated soils to determine how long the pollutant will remain in the environment and to find out if the chemicals could possibly be transferred from soils into foods and water, and thus pose a health hazard.

In their studies, significant

## Elton Smith will head Farmers Petroleum

Kent County dairy farmer Elton R. Smith was elected president of Farmers Petroleum Cooperative at the annual reorganizational meeting of the company's board of directors January 27.

At the same meeting Dean Pridgeon, Branch County pork producer, was re-elected as vice president and Wesley Prillwitz, Berrien County fruit farmer, was newly elected as the third member of the executive committee.

Smith has served as president of Michigan Farm Bureau, the state's largest general farm organization, since 1964.

He is a partner in a 700 acre, 425 head dairy farm near Caledonia. A prominent Guernsey breeder, his herd ranks consistently near the top of the state's dairy lists.

Smith serves as Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz' personal representative on the Federal Farm Credit Board and was appointed to the national Technical Advisory Committee on Fruits and Vegetables for Trade Negotiations in 1975. He also serves on the board of directors of the American Farm

Bureau Federation, the nation's largest farm organization, and as president of Farm Bureau Services, a major supplier of farm supplies and an affiliate of Michigan Farm Bureau.

Pridgeon is a lifetime farmer, born and raised in Branch County. He farms 1500 acres near Montgomery and raises 4,000 head of hogs and 1,000 acres of corn annually.

He is vice president of Michigan Farm Bureau and in 1974 was appointed by Governor Milliken to serve on the state Natural Resources Commission.

Prillwitz is vice president of Berrien Farm Bureau Oil Company and is a past county Farm Bureau president. He currently is president of the Eau Claire Fruit Exchange.

Newly appointed to the board of Farmers Petroleum Cooperative were Neil Harris of Chesaning and Larry Devvuyst of Ithaca. Both are active farmers.

Farmers Petroleum Cooperative is a major supplier of petroleum products in Michigan and is affiliated with the Michigan Farm Bureau.

amounts of PBBs were not taken up by test grasses and root crops or removed from soils by leaching; the two major means by which soil contaminants can enter animal and human food chains.

"We have found that PBBs are like other halogenated hydrocarbon compounds, such as DDT and PCBs, in that they don't rapidly break down in the environment," says Tiedje.

"They have taken up residence in Michigan where soils have been polluted by spreading contaminated manures or disposing of contaminated milk or animal carcasses," he says. "This problem however appears to have no long-term health implications for livestock and humans who have had no previous exposure to the PBB compounds."

"Test grasses and root crops did not take up detectable amounts of PBBs until contamination levels were boosted to 100 and 1,000 times greater than levels known to occur on contaminated Michigan farm soils," Jacobs says. "This is in spite of the fact that we conducted the test in a manner that would normally encourage the uptake of soil pollutants."

Leaching is a similar story. In tests with four representative Michigan soils, the scientists

couldn't get significant leaching of the contaminant until PBB pollution was boosted to the 1,000-fold over average level, and water passing through the soil reached an amount 20 times the yearly average Michigan rainfall.

"Based on preliminary studies, we believe that PBBs will stay in contaminated Michigan soils for years or tens-of-years rather than weeks or months," Tiedje says. "They will disappear very slowly, however, due to soil

microorganisms that break them down into simpler chemical compounds."

The only possible problem that might arise would be the rare circumstance where contaminated soils suffer severe erosion and the chemicals then find their way into water systems, the scientists note.

Jacobs and Tiedje plan to investigate the fate of PBBs in the environment further and to determine better the extent of contaminated soils in Michigan.

## Oil refinery purchased

Donald R. Armstrong, Executive Vice President of Farmers Petroleum Cooperative, Inc., has announced the purchase of a refinery located in East Chicago, Indiana.

The operating refinery, formerly owned by Atlantic Richfield, has been purchased by C F Petroleum, Inc. "This newly formed corporation is made up of nine regional Farm Supply Cooperatives," stated Mr. Armstrong "and Farmers Petroleum Cooperative is one of those nine." C F Petroleum, Inc. will be managed by the same management team that operates CF Industries, Inc., which is involved in fertilizer ingredient procurement for 19 regional cooperatives.

The refinery has a daily capacity of 126,000 barrels of crude oil. Elton R. Smith, President of Farmers Petroleum Cooperative, Inc., states "this is a milestone for the Cooperative and is a major step toward the company objective of becoming basic in its operations." While fuels manufactured by its new refinery are expected to arrive shortly after the purchase effective date of April 1, 1976, Farmers Petroleum will still maintain its supply relationship with their current suppliers.

Farmers Petroleum Cooperative, Inc. is a Michigan Farm Bureau affiliate and a major supplier of farm petroleum supplies in Michigan.

## Member Life "no physical" period ends March 31

The unusual "no physical" sign up period for Farm Bureau Member Life Insurance ends March 31. No physical is required, no health questions are asked of all Farm Bureau Members, ages 18 to 71, signing up for this farm family life insurance policy.

Farm Bureau Member Life, Membership's newest benefit, was developed at the direction of Farm Bureau's Board of Directors. And in true Farm Bureau working together philosophy, the insurance policy is participating. That means Farm Bureau Member Life policyholders will share in any benefits which might result from favorable program experience.

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.

Current Farm Bureau Members can take advantage of the 90-day enrollment period ending March 31, 1976. After that time, new Farm Bureau Member 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.

About 48¢ 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 owning a Farm Bureau Member Life policy).

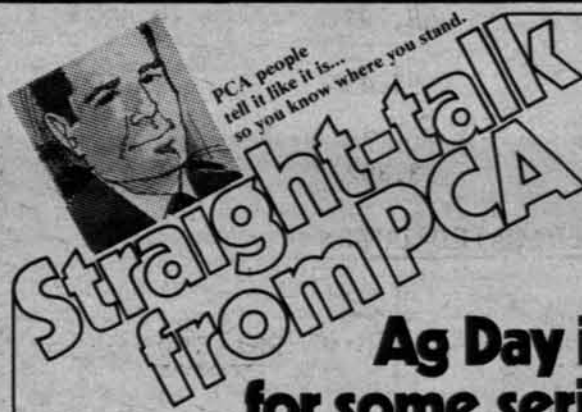
3. Men and women qualifying for Farm Bureau Member Life Insurance and serving their country in the armed forces are protected while in military service.

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.

Join the nearly 6,000 Farm Bureau Members currently enrolled in this special Member benefit. Call your County Secretary or your local Farm Bureau Insurance Agent.



## Ag Day is a time for some serious thought about agriculture in America.

Agriculture Day...always the Monday closest to the first day of spring...honors a mighty important industry: *Agriculture*.  
 Feeding and clothing the nation and the world. Creating jobs in manufacturing, processing and distributing farm supplies and products. Small wonder agriculture is such a *vital factor* in the strength of the American economy.  PCAs have been part of agriculture since 1933...farmers and ranchers meeting their *own* credit needs, *cooperatively*. PCA people are proud to see agriculture get the recognition it deserves.



Production Credit Associations  
of Michigan



We're spreading the word...

**Farming is everybody's bread & butter**

# CAPITOL REPORT

## The state budget

Robert E. Smith



The second session of the 78th Michigan Legislature is now in progress. Governor Milliken's State of the State address was reported in the February issue of the Michigan Farm News. Governor Milliken has now presented the Legislature with his budget for the 1976-77 year. It is obvious that Michigan is in for a very difficult fiscal year with costs of government rising more rapidly than revenues. This in spite of the fact that next year's revenues are expected to be up 14 percent. Present year revenues fell short by over \$152 M below estimates resulting from a decline from the personal and corporate income tax and federal aid.

It is estimated that the 1976-77 total state budget will be in excess of \$6.9 billion! A little less than half of this amount, \$3.275 billion, is the General Fund-General Purpose budget and is the portion of the total budget that the Legislature can control. Compare this with 1964 when the total state budget was \$1.4 billion.

The two highest budget items are K-12 education and social services or welfare. In 1975, the General Fund budget for K-12 education was \$700+ million, and when other earmarked funds were added to this amount, the total was \$1,365 billion. For 1976-77, it is expected that the appropriated amount will be less than last year at \$691 million, but when other earmarked funds are added, the total for K-12

education will be \$1.421 billion, higher than last year.

Social Services or welfare is the largest expenditure. In 1975, the General Fund budget was \$940 million. When other funds were added, the total was \$1.813 billion. For 1976-77, the appropriation is expected to be \$1.18 billion which together with other funds will total \$2.14 billion! Well over half of the total state budget goes for these two programs.

The budgets for other departments of government are rather minor when compared to these two items. For example, it is said that the Department of Natural Resources, as large as it is, could be totally eliminated from the state budget and the amount of money that would be saved would only pay the cost of state government for one day.

The Department of Agriculture's budget for 1975 was \$12.7 million. For 1976-77, it will be nearly \$13.2 million. Of this amount, \$135,000 will be for "restricted use" of pesticide enforcement. This expenditure is required to carry out the mandatory federal pesticide control program. (H.B. 5310 will permit state administration of the federal law). \$83,100 is recommended for world trade programs. Another \$50,000 is in the budget to help eradicate the gypsy moth which is creating havoc in many areas of the state. The fruit and vegetable inspection carried on by the Department of Agriculture for

farmers, processors, handlers was eliminated but has been reinstated. However, instead of the state paying two-thirds of the cost and farmers and/or processors one-third, the split will be 50-50.

One item in the budget that could be highly controversial is the recommendation to "consolidate present user taxes restricted for special transportation uses into a total transportation fund. Specifically, this involves replacing the Motor Vehicle Highway Fund with a single Michigan Transportation Fund." Many organizations, including Farm Bureau, have steadfastly over the years opposed diversion of funds from the Motor Vehicle Highway Fund for any other purpose other than highways and county roads. The fact is that while costs of maintaining roads are spiraling, gas tax revenues for these purposes have declined due to the energy crisis. It remains to be seen what the specific proposal will be, especially whether present funds will be maintained for highway purposes or whether they become part of the "special transportation fund" and are in effect diverted to other forms of transportation such as rapid transit, aeronautics, waterways, railroads, etc.

One area of concern to agriculture and farmers in the budget process is whether the Cooperative Extension Service will receive sufficient funds to maintain at least present services. The Cooperative Extension Service has already cut some 53 positions which has meant that in many areas, 4-H agents, and agricultural specialists of one kind or another, have been lost to the detriment of the local agriculture. The Governor's budget recommendation has increased the Extension budget but not sufficiently to be able to restore the lost positions. Another problem facing Extension is a substantial cut that is being recommended in the federal budget for extension programs. The Agricultural Experiment Station has received an overall increase in the Governor's budget; however, it remains to be seen whether it will be sufficient to continue the level of essential agricultural research presently going on at Michigan State University.

In order to present a balanced budget, the Governor made it clear that certain steps would have to be taken including: extension of the current fiscal year from June 30 to September 30, 1976 (this can cause problems and is controversial); a loan from the Veteran's Trust Fund and a loan from the Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Fund. It is also contingent on the use of bonding authority for capital outlay and to take advantage of certain available federal matching funds.

### SINGLE BUSINESS TAX ACT OF 1975

The new Single Business Tax (S.B. T) went into effect January 1, 1976. It has received considerable publicity which in turn has created some confusion.

The tax is imposed on all

business activities in Michigan including personal services. It applies to all types of businesses from the largest corporation down to doctors, lawyers, stores on main street, realtors, farmers, etc., etc. There was an unsuccessful attempt to exempt agriculture from the legislation. However, through the various exemptions and other provisions, most farmers and other small businesses will be totally exempt.

It is considered to be a totally equitable tax as it treats every type of business and individual equally. It is also designed to provide a more stable revenue source, and an economic incentive for businesses to expand. With the passage of the Act, several other business taxes were repealed or amended.

The major provisions of the Act that would be of the greatest interest to farmers at this time are: farmers will file their S.B. T tax return using the same deadlines as for their federal and state income tax returns. This means that most farmer's returns will not due until March 1, 1977. A Farm Bureau supported amendment was added to the bill to exempt "farmers and fishermen" from filing quarterly returns. It is the same exemption that is in the federal income tax law. No other business has this exception.

The tax base will be fairly easy to compute as all information can be taken from the federal income tax form. The tax base is calculated by adding the following: (1) the net taxable income received from the business; (2) labor payroll, including all fringe benefits (F.I.C.A., Work Comp., pensions, health insurance, unemployment insurance, etc., etc.); (3) all depreciation in two forms - the depreciation for equipment and buildings, etc., acquired prior to January 1, 1976, and the depreciation for the equipment and buildings etc., acquired after January 1, 1976; (4) all interest expense; (5) capital gains, if any.

The following can be deducted from the above total: (1) 28 percent of depreciation on buildings or machinery, etc., acquired prior to January 1, 1976 (this becomes 50 percent the second year, and 60 percent thereafter). (2) 100 percent of depreciable capital outlay investment such as machinery, buildings, etc. (3) \$34,000 (increases to \$36,000 in 1977) small business exemption. This is reduced by \$2 for each \$1 over \$34,000 business income being eliminated at \$51,000 (\$54,000 beginning in 1977). This exemption can be increased \$10,000 for each partner in a partnership (includes each shareholder in subchapter S corporations) who is a full-time employee earning at least \$10,000 and owning at least 10 per cent of the business. Maximum additional exemption under this provision is \$40,000.

The following example may be useful. The figures are taken from Michigan State University Telford averages for 1974 for a "medium tree fruit" farm.

The business income was \$16,113. The labor cost was

\$23,596. Depreciation was \$8,676. Interest expense was \$2,918. These figures total \$51,303. Deducted from this amount is 28 percent of depreciation on assets acquired prior to January 1, 1976 which equals \$2,429; cost of capital purchases, \$15,757. These figures total \$19,186. Subtracted from \$51,303 equals a tax base before exemption of \$33,117.

The additional deduction of the small business exemption of \$34,000 means the farmer in this particular example would have no tax. A similar method can be used for other farm situations. The above farm had \$82,700 of gross receipts. In those cases where the tax base is large enough to be taxable, the rate is 2.35 per cent.

Other important farm supported provisions include:

1. Income averaging (current year and previous four years). This is especially important to farmers.

2. Exempt farmers from filing quarterly returns.

3. A portion of the S.B. T can be deducted from the state income tax. If business income is less than \$20,000, 20 per cent can be deducted; \$20,000 to \$40,000, 15 percent; over \$40,000, 10 percent. The tax is also a deductible item for federal income tax purposes.

4. Reduction of the adjusted tax base by the percentage that wages exceed 65 percent of the total tax base.

5. All businesses not using the special labor deduction can reduce the tax base to a minimum of 50 percent of gross receipts.

6. There are other additions and subtractions to the tax base; however, they are inconsequential for most small businesses.

Later in the year when the rules and regulations are final and all forms are available, Farm Bureau will provide complete information on the S.B. T as it affects farmers.

A companion bill passed at the same time which will be especially helpful to farmers by cutting the property tax. This was accomplished by increasing the present property tax rebate based on 3½ percent of household income from \$500 to \$1200. This property tax relief is effective for the 1976 tax year.

Farm Bureau was involved at every level during the consideration of this legislation including representation on a special legislative advisory committee; sending special letters to a cross-section of farmers throughout the state to determine the effect of the legislation; successfully supporting several amendments to lessen the impact; testifying at the public hearing and committee meetings; informing members in 5 issues of the Michigan Farm News and through the Minuteman Letter; supporting legislation to increase the property tax rebate from \$500 to \$1200. While it was not possible to totally exempt agriculture, farmers as a whole will receive far more property tax relief from the Act than tax liability.

**NOW  
AVAILABLE**



### MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU'S BICENTENNIAL PUBLICATION!

- Proud to Be an American?
- Proud to Be a Farmer?
- Proud to Be a Farm Bureau Member?

Then you'll want "200 Years of American Agriculture" with beautiful color photos as a Bicentennial keepsake.

Includes the 1975 County Award Winners, too!

On sale following the MFB Annual Banquet Thursday evening December 11 in Grand Rapids and all day Friday, December 12.

Only \$1.50 each. Or order by mail (add 50¢ for postage and handling).

**LIMITED EDITION! DON'T MISS YOUR COPY!**

Send to: Information and Public Relations Division  
Michigan Farm Bureau  
P.O. Box 960 Lansing, Michigan 48904

copies of "200 Years of American Agriculture" to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks payable to Michigan Farm Bureau

# NATIONAL NOTES

Albert A. Almy



## Estates, imports and railroads

### FEDERAL ESTATE TAX

Last month this column was devoted entirely to the subject of federal estate tax reform. Details of H.R. 1793, which Farm Bureau supports, were outlined. The February 1 issue of Michigan Farm News will provide a refresher for the details of H.R. 1793.

Farm Bureau has now learned of federal estate tax law revisions proposed by President Ford. The details were released following his State-of-the-Union Message on January 19. The President's proposal can be summarized as increasing the length of time allowed for payment of estate taxes rather than overall reform as provided by H.R. 1793.

Under the President's proposal, the personal and marital deductions would remain unchanged from levels set in 1941 and 1948 respectively. Also, the IRS appraisal of property at market values would be continued.

The major change would come in revising provisions of the current federal estate tax law which require the estate tax to be paid within 9 months after death unless permission is received from IRS to pay the tax in 10 annual installments with interest at the prevailing prime rate.

The President has proposed that payment of estate taxes be deferred for 5 years following death. After this deferred time

period expires, the taxes would be payable in equal installments over the next 20 years at 4 percent interest. This extended repayment period would apply to estate taxes levied on the first \$300,000 value of the estate. Taxes attributable to that portion of the estate value in excess of \$300,000 would be payable within 9 months or 10 years if permitted by the IRS.

The \$300,000 estate value subject to the extended tax payment schedule would be reduced one dollar for every dollar the estate value exceeds \$300,000. For example, if the estate value were \$350,000, only the taxes attributable to the first \$250,000 would be eligible for the 20-year payment schedule.

Farm Bureau strongly believes there is a need for more substantial reform in the federal estate tax law and, therefore, continues to support H.R. 1793.

### ASPARAGUS IMPORTS

In recent years, the Michigan acreage planted to asparagus has increased substantially. At the same time, the volume of fresh and processed asparagus imported into the U.S. has also increased substantially.

In mid-1975, the U.S. International Trade Commission was petitioned to conduct an investigation of asparagus imports to determine whether the imports

are causing injury to the industry in this country. Michigan Farm Bureau and the Asparagus Growers Division of the Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association (MACMA) supported the investigation. MACMA testified before the Commission and documented problems encountered by the domestic asparagus industry because of the imports.

On January 12, the Commission released its report and findings to President Ford. Of the six Commissioners, three determined the imports are causing injury to the domestic industry and recommended that restrictions be placed on imports of fresh asparagus from Mexico. The other three Commissioners determined that imports are not causing injury to the domestic industry.

In the event of such a deadlock among the Commissioners, the Trade Reform Act allows the President to accept the views of either side as the final determination. In this case, he must act within 60 days (March 12) if the imports are to be restricted.

MFB has supplied information on this issue to Michigan Congressmen representing areas where asparagus is grown and requested that they urge President Ford to accept the view of those Commissioners who found that imports are injuring the domestic industry. Senator Robert Griffin (R-Traverse City), Congressman Ed Hutchinson (R-St. Joseph) and Congressman Guy VanderJagt (R-Luter) have contacted the President in support of the MFB and MACMA position.

### RAILROADS

On February 5, the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act was signed into law. This act is important to the future of rail service in rural Michigan affected by reorganization plans during recent months.

The act accomplishes several specific rail regulatory reforms supported by Farm Bureau and mandates a series of studies that could result in further reforms. Among the reforms provided are greater flexibility for railroads to adjust their rates without time consuming proceedings before the ICC, statutory deadlines for ICC rate-making proceedings which can be exceeded only on notice to Congress and creation of a railroad rehabilitation and improvement fund. The fund has an initial funding authorization of \$600 million. It is not known at this time whether some form of user tax will be enacted to continue the rail fund or whether monies will come from the general treasury.

Of particular significance to Michigan is rail assistance to light density rail lines serving rural areas. Currently, an estimated 1100 miles of light density rail lines in Michigan are scheduled for abandonment unless federal and state matching subsidies are provided to continue operations. The new law authorizes \$360 million over a five-year period for the federal share of rail freight assistance. The federal share of continuing

freight service on rail lines, otherwise scheduled for abandonment, will be 100 percent the first year, 90 percent the second year, 80 percent the third year, and 70 percent the fourth and fifth year. Under provisions of the Regional Railroad Reorganization Act passed 1973, the federal share was 70 percent for 2 years only. The new provisions will allow an additional 3 years for users of light density lines that will eventually be abandoned to take whatever actions might be necessary to preserve rail service or make plans for alternate transportation.

### CHEESE IMPORTS

During 1975, petitions were filed by Farm Bureau and other farm groups requesting that the U.S. Treasury Department conduct an investigation to determine whether cheese imported into the U.S. from Sweden, Austria and Switzerland are being subsidized by the governments of those nations.

The Trade Reform Act requires the Treasury Department to conduct an investigation as requested by such petitions and announce its findings within 6

months. The act also requires the Treasury Department to make a final decision within 12 months of whether countervailing duties will be levied against imports being subsidized into the U.S. The duties are intended to allow U.S. producers to compete on equal terms with foreign producers for the specific markets involved.

Earlier this year, the Treasury Department announced in the Federal Register that its investigation of cheese imports from Sweden revealed subsidies are being paid by the government of Sweden. A final decision on levying countervailing duties must now be made before June 18, 1976.

In the case of Swiss and Austrian cheese imports, the Treasury Department last year determined and announced that subsidies were being paid. However, earlier this year, the Department issued its final decision by announcing that countervailing duties would not be levied against these imports. This action was taken because the Department believes that adequate steps have been taken by Switzerland and Austria to substantially reduce or eliminate the adverse effects of the imports upon the U.S. market.

### COMPARISON OF PRESENT FEDERAL ESTATE TAX LAW AND H.R. 1793

(Assume wife inherits 100 percent of estate as a surviving joint tenant.)

PRESENT LAW		H.R. 1793
\$350,000	Estate Value	\$350,000
-175,000	Less Marital Deduction	-275,000 *
175,000		75,000
- 60,000	Less Personal Deduction	-200,000 **
\$115,000	Taxable Estate	-0-
	\$25,200— Estate Tax—	0

\* Add \$100,000 to present deduction of 50 percent of gross estate value  
 \*\* Increased to \$200,000 instead of present \$60,000

## Auto insurance rates up

Despite hopes that 1976 auto rate increases could be held to about 10 percent, many insurance companies are already shifting their targets to a range of 13 to 20 percent.

The Wall Street Journal predicts that 1976 will be an "unusually expensive one" for auto insurance buyers, and that 1977 will be just as tough.

Some insurers are pushing the use of higher deductibles and shortening time periods covered by policies to allow for more frequent rate increases.

State Farm Insurance, the nation's largest auto insurer, expects its auto rates to increase about 13 percent this year, while Allstate sees its 1976 rates going up about 20 percent. Of course, like the rest of the industry, Farm Bureau Insurance Group foresees auto rate increases this year.

What's causing all this? Obviously, inflation is a key factor. Here's what the A.M. Best

Company, a private company that monitors the industry, has to say:

"No matter how auto insurance is viewed, the news is bad. The companies have been swamped by inflation and for the most part they have met with indifference or resistance in their attempts to have rates keep pace with their problems. The state insurance departments in recent months have shown signs of relenting, but only in a few cases are the insurers able to obtain rate relief approaching a level consistent with current underwriting experience."

The industry's underwriting losses on private passenger coverage totalled \$1.9 billion in 1975, making it a dismal year. This is particularly disturbing to the insurance industry, because auto insurance represents the largest single classification in the property and liability insurance industry.

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

# DEBENTURES

### INTEREST ON DEBENTURES 5-10-15 year maturity

8%	5 Year Maturity	\$100.00 Minimum Purchase
		(F.B.S. only)
8 1/2%	10 Year Maturity	\$100.00 Minimum Purchase
9%	15 Year Maturity	\$100.00 Minimum Purchase
8 3/4%	10 Year Maturity	\$1,000.00 Minimum Purchase
9 1/2%	15 Year Maturity	\$5,000.00 Minimum Purchase

Interest paid annually on September 1st. The purchaser to be offered the option to receive their interest in quarterly payments on September 1st, December 1st, March 1st, and June 1st. Interest would start the date of purchase.

This is neither an offer to sell nor a solicitation to buy these securities. The offering is made only by the prospectus.

Clip and mail this coupon to:  
 Mr. C. A. Morrill  
 Farm Bureau Services, Inc.  
 Farmers Petroleum Cooperative, Inc.  
 P. O. Box 960  
 Lansing, Michigan 48904

I would like a copy of the prospectus and a call by a registered sales agent.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Road \_\_\_\_\_ RFD No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Where Your Farm Comes First  
**Farm Bureau**  
 FARM BUREAU SERVICES, INC.  
 FARMERS PETROLEUM

# Around the state with Farm Bureau



State Senator Gary Corbin (D-Clio) chats with district 5 Farm Bureau Director Bill Spike (right) at a Farm Bureau sponsored Legislative Seminar. Organized each year by MFB's public affairs division, the seminars bring together Farm Bureau members and their state legislators in an atmosphere of open discussion on the issues of the day. Farm Bureau members from all parts of the state may attend one of the seminars held in February and March.



Harold Engel, Saginaw County Farm Bureau past president discusses the history of the County Farm Bureau at a recent member meeting. The evening was devoted to recognition of past county leaders, reviewing bicentennial activities and ways members could get involved in them.



Shoppers at Saginaw's Fashion Square Mall were treated to an interesting mall display sponsored by Farm Bureau Women's Committees from Bay, Huron, Saginaw, Sanilac and Tuscola Counties. One of the largest displays in the state, it featured commodities, field equipment, and traditional crafts such as butter churning, spinning cotton, and quilting.



Hillsdale County Farm Bureau member Bob Dean (seated right) chairs a meeting of the counties "Citizens for Zoning" committee. The non-partisan group of farmers and city people was formed to support the counties current zoning ordinance which is under fire by a group totally opposed to zoning of any kind. Farm Bureau members throughout the state are getting involved in such "local affairs," as they learn they can have influence on local issues.



Young Farmers from all parts of Michigan attended the Young Farmers Leadership Conference in February to gain a greater understanding of the purpose of Farm Bureau and the important role they can play in the organization. In one of the training sessions Farm Bureau Market Development Director Dr. Paul Kindinger explained some of the complexities of the commodity futures markets.



Stars of a new slide-tape presentation being developed by MFB's Information and Public Relations division for the Women's Speakers Bureau are two nine-year-olds, Ted Cook and Paul Grachek from Lansing. The youngsters will portray city boys who make a trip to a modern farm and learn what farming is really like. They are shown recording the sound track of the presentation in Farm Bureaus sound studio.

# Michigan Marketing Outlook

## CHERRY MARKETING ORDER

Real tart cherry growers and handlers in eight states, including Michigan, will vote March 1-10 on whether to continue the federal marketing order. The marketing order provides for the establishment of a reserve pool of cherries during years of excessive production. Reserve (frozen) cherries are returned to marketing channels during low production years or periods of lessened availability. This helps stabilize supplies, thus, attempting to prevent shortages and gluts on the market.

Cherry growers in Michigan who were engaged in the production of cherries for market in canned, frozen, or other processed form during the period from May 1, 1975 through January 31, 1976 are eligible to vote. Handlers who during the same period, canned, froze, or otherwise converted cherries produced in the production area into a processed product, are also eligible to vote.

Ballots and voting instructions should be mailed to all known cherry growers and handlers meeting the above requirements by March 1, 1976. If you meet the eligibility requirements but do not receive a ballot, contact one of the following individuals:

George B. Dever, Jr.  
AMS - U.S.D.A.  
2530 South Building  
Washington, D. C. 20250

William J. Maclean  
District Horticultural Agent  
Federal Building  
Hart, MI. 49420

Glen C. Antle  
District Marketing Agent  
107 County Court House  
St. Joseph, MI. 49085

George A. McManus, Jr.  
County Extension Director  
420 Boardman Ave.  
Traverse City, MI. 49684  
Dr. Paul E. Kindinger, Director  
Market Development Division

## WHEAT

The dry weather in the western wheat states of Oklahoma, Kansas, Texas, and fringes of other states stretching into Iowa have been in the news a great deal in the past 10 days.

The loss estimates range from 175,000,000 to 200 million bushels. There is no doubt that there is a great deal of damage and probably substantial losses, especially if they don't receive any rain in the next couple of weeks.

As I am sure most of you already know, each year our crops are lost several times before they actually are in the bin through one disaster or another. I am not trying to make light of the situation we are now facing; but I am trying to remind you that the only thing we are really sure of at this point is that our wheat market has been very active and much improved this past week. At this writing, we have climbed

60c above the year's low.

If you are still holding most of your wheat, I would suggest you watch the markets very closely for a time to sell a large part of this year's crop.

Keep in mind that the price can go down as easily as up and one good rain in the drought area of the plains could change the price picture overnight.

Tom Reed, Marketing Specialist  
Market Development Division

## BEEF

According to preliminary figures, imports in 1975 came to 1 billion 209 million pounds of beef. That's 29 million pounds more than had been scheduled and 27 million above the level which should have triggered formal import quotas if the excess had been apparent earlier.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recorded a record high commercial cattle and calf slaughter during 1975 of 46.1 million head, up 16 percent from 1974.

These facts may be interpreted to mean several things but most analysts agree that they do point to better times ahead for the cattle industry. The State Department is in the process of negotiating 1976 import levels in talks with major meat exporting nations. USDA is urging the State Department to design the 1976 program with stronger safeguards against over-shipment. This coupled with the fact that cow slaughter is declining and is expected to be

well below 10 million head in the next 12 months should turn the industry back around to a more stable and predictable meat supply based on cattle numbers in our feed lots. There are three major points to watch in the cattle industry that will tend to dictate our prices.

Our cattle feeders must not play the waiting game and should keep their feed lots current, selling when the cattle are finished.

Our meat imports must be kept to a reasonable level to assure that we are not flooded with all of our neighbors problems in one year.

Our cow slaughter will have to slow up and this will only happen when the nations ranchers are convinced there is a profit in sight for their operations.

If these things happen and I predict that they will, we will see a much improved industry with profit potential for all segments in the next 24 months.

Tom Reed, Marketing Specialist  
Market Development Division

## DAIRY

Total milk production for 1975 was 115,485 million pounds. This is slightly lower than 1974 production. However, it must be noted then production in each of the last four months of 1975 exceeded production in the same months of 1974. At the same time the number of milk cows in 1975 dropped 0.6 percent from the annual average of milk cows on

farms in 1974. Average production per cow in 1975 was 10,354 pounds, an increase of 54 pounds from 1974.

Milk prices in January 1976, dropped about 10 cents per hundred weight. This could be the beginning of what some experts predict to be a more than normal seasonal downward trend in milk prices.

Some things for dairy farmers to watch in 1976 are the milk-feed price ratio, slaughter cow prices, crop estimates, consumption trends, and stocks of butter, cheese, and nonfat dry milk.

Bernie Bishop  
Market Development Division

## POULTRY

The cash egg market recovered slightly toward the end of January, but has slipped downward in February. Future prices indicate egg prices will continue to soften for the next three or four months.

Additional selling activity is resulting from more attractive retail prices. However, the volume is not enough to offset the increased production which is resulting in wholesale inventories which are now at 513,300 cases as compared to 498,000 cases a year ago.

Feed costs in the coming months will be influenced by the weather in the west and south-west.

Bernie Bishop  
Market Development Division  
Michigan Farm Bureau

## Important dates for: Michigan Farm Bureau Members

You can join  
Blue Cross & Blue Shield  
up to

**Monday**  
**Mar. 15**

Your coverage  
will be effective  
beginning

**Thursday**  
**May 20**

Membership in Michigan Farm Bureau offers you very valuable benefits in the form of Blue Cross and Blue Shield Group Coverage. Coverage which provides the best possible health care protection for you and your dependents at reasonable group rates.

If you are already enrolled in the Farm Bureau's Blue Cross and Blue Shield Group Plan, now is the time to make any changes in your coverage. If you don't belong, and you are eligible, now is the time to join — before the enrollment period ends.



**Belonging is a good thing to do**

# Special membership rally



MFB President Elton Smith looks on as Secretary Butz handles questions from the press.



News media coverage of the special membership meeting was outstanding.



County Presidents at the membership rally received some special Hawaiian courtesies. AFBF annual meeting will be held in Hawaii next year.

## Heritage of 76 Tours

July 24 - August 1, 1976  
 August 14-22, 1976  
 September 11-18, 1976  
 (Depart and return from Detroit)

### TOUR ITINERARY

Saturday - Fly American Airlines non-stop from Detroit to Boston.

Sunday - Tour of Boston, Bunkerhill, Frigate Constitution, Lexington and Concord.

Monday - Tour to Plymouth, Plymouth Rock, library of John Q. Adams and birthplace of John Hancock.

Tuesday - Fly to Philadelphia to visit the restored buildings and sights of America's birthplace of liberty and freedom. Tour Valley Forge enroute to Arlington, Virginia.

Wednesday - Sightseeing to include government buildings with stop at the Whitehouse and Mt. Vernon.

Thursday - Entire day at leisure for you to visit Smithsonian Institute, Library of Congress, etc.

Friday - Special buses to Williamsburg, Va. Tickets provided for visit to attractions.

Saturday - Devoted to visiting new Busch Gardens outside Williamsburg.

Friday - No plans for morning. Depart in afternoon for Washington, D.C. and flight to Detroit.

### COST OF TOUR

\$440.24 per person from Detroit.

Cost includes air transportation as outlined based on minimum group 10 rates in effect November 15, 1975, possibly subject to slight change; all transfers; sightseeing; baggage handling for one suitcase per person for entire trip; tips to sightseeing drivers; hotels based on two people sharing twin bedded room. Single room higher. Not included is meals, items of a personal nature such as room service, telephone calls, laundry, etc.

### RESERVATION REQUEST

Please enter my reservation for the 1976 Michigan Farm Bureau Bicentennial Tour. Enclosed is my check made out to Hoosier Travel Service, Inc., in the amount of \$75.00 deposit for each reservation. I understand I will be billed for the balance of the tour according to the schedule contained in this.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Zip code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_



Over 600 enthusiastic membership workers packed the Lansing Hilton to hear the Secretary of Agriculture.



Farm Bureau members enjoyed the Butz sense of humor.



# HAWAII '77

## A.F.B.F. CONVENTION PLANS FOR MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU MEMBERS

Have a Hawaiian Holiday! The 58th Annual American Farm Bureau Federation Convention will be held in Honolulu, Hawaii in January 1977. In conjunction with this, Michigan Farm Bureau has put together an Hawaii Convention tour for Michigan Farm Bureau members. To be eligible to go on the tour, you need only be a 1976 Michigan Farm Bureau member. **DUE TO THE LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE. RESERVATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED ON A FIRST COME FIRST SERVED BASIS.** Applications invalid without accompanying deposit. Reservations may not be made by telephone.

### MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU A.F.B.F. CONVENTION HAWAII CHARTER PROGRAM

OPTION NO. 1, Jan. 6-Jan. 14, 1977

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 6**

United Airlines chartered stretch - 8 holding 223 passengers will leave from Grand Rapids and another from Detroit this morning to Honolulu, Hawaii arriving in mid-afternoon, Hawaii time. Transfer to either Waikiki Village Hotel or Reef Tower Hotel. Hotels are within a block of each other and located approximately one block from the beach.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 7**

A breakfast for the entire group for a briefing on optional tours available during the stay in Hawaii. In afternoon the entire group will tour the city of Honolulu to include Mt. Tantalus and Punchbowl, the National Cemetery of the Pacific.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 8**

Available for personal plans or optional tours.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 9**

Shuttle bus service available to the convention center for vesper services this evening.

**MONDAY, JANUARY 10**

Shuttle bus service available to the convention center for General Session meetings in the morning, to conference hotels in the afternoon and to the International Center for the talent program this evening.

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 11**

Shuttle buses available to the General Session at Honolulu International Center this morning and again this evening for Recognition and Awards Program. Business session is to be held at Sheraton Waikiki Hotel approximately one block from your hotels. Balance of time for personal plans or optional tours.

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12**

Entire day for personal plans and-or optional tours.

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 13**

All baggage returning to the states must undergo agricultural inspection; consequently, arrangements have been made for inspectors to check the baggage at the hotel before it is transferred to the airport. In mid-afternoon transfer to the Honolulu Airport for the departure flight home.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 14**

Arrive Grand Rapids or Detroit.

### COST OF TOUR

**From Grand Rapids - \$509.77**

**From Detroit \$514.31**

(Including Air and Ground)

**AIR TRANSPORTATION** is based on all seats of each airplane being utilized and each person paying a pro-rata share of the aircraft cost which is \$306.77 from Grand Rapids or \$311.31 from Detroit per person. Should less than 223 persons use the charter, government regulations require that the cost be re-ported with each person paying an equal share of the total cost. Charters are only available to Farm Bureau members, spouses, children and-or parents living within the same household, and having been a member for at least six months prior to departure of the charter.

**GROUND PACKAGE** consists of 7 nights occupancy of hotel room based on two people sharing twin rooms (single rooms higher), transfers, Lei greeting, baggage handling of not more than two pieces per person, welcome breakfast, city sightseeing tour and cost of shuttle bus to convention center. Two categories of rooms are available at each hotel and will be assigned on a first come - first serve basis. Ground package cost \$203.00 per person.

(All costs based on rates quoted as of January 1, 1976 and may be increased slightly before departure. Any such increases will be reflected in your final billing.)

### POST CONVENTION OUTER ISLAND TOUR - Three Islands of Kauai, Maui and Hawaii

**OPTION NO 2, JAN. 6 - JAN. 21, 1977**

Tour participants of the Outer Island Tour will depart from home airports on Thursday, January 6, for flights into Chicago, connecting with Hawaii flights. Upon arrival, transfer to your convention hotel for program same as that of charter group.

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 13**

Fly from Honolulu to Lihue, Island of Kauai. This afternoon there will be a sightseeing trip of the Lihue area to include boat trip on the Wailua River to the Fern Grotto.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 14**

In morning a beautiful trip to the Waiamea Canyon, the "Grand Canyon of the Pacific" continuing on to Poipu Beach to view the Spouting Horn. Afternoon at leisure.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 15**

Fly to the Island of Maui. On arrival visit a typical Hawaiian farm.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 16**

In morning a trip up the slopes of Mt. Haleakala for a gorgeous view of the Island of Maui and the surrounding Pacific Ocean. Balance of the day at leisure.

**MONDAY, JANUARY 17**

Morning flight to Kona on the Big Island of Hawaii. Balance of day free for individual plans.

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 18**

Visit the Parker Ranch, the largest ranch in the United States. There will be a briefing at their theater and then a program by employees of the ranch.

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19**

Travel from the Kona area to Hilo, going past coffee trees and seeing the many lava flows some still smoking in the Hawaii National Park. A chance to visit a macadamia nut farm and see the fabulous Hawaii orchids.

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 20**

Today the group will be flown from Hilo to Honolulu to connect with the flight home.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 21**

Arrive, Chicago and transfer to the flight to your home airport.

**COST OF TOUR IS AS FOLLOWS:**

Lansing .....	\$653.79 per person
Grand Rapids .....	\$650.68 per person
Saginaw .....	\$660.02 per person
Muskegon .....	\$649.12 per person
Detroit .....	\$661.06 per person
Flint .....	\$660.02 per person
South Bend .....	\$643.42 per person
Chicago .....	\$616.73 per person

Cost of tour includes transfers, baggage handling, sightseeing as listed, hotels based on two people sharing twin bedded room, inter-island air transportation. Add to above cost of Honolulu Ground Package as shown for hotel chosen in listing for charter tour package.

**HOW TO MAKE A RESERVATION**

Each reservation must be accompanied by a deposit of \$100.00 per person in order to hold space.

Final payment due 60 days prior to departure.

**CANCELLATION POLICY**

Full refund to be made for cancellations received 60 days prior to departure. \$25.00 per person charge for cancellations made between 45 and 60 days prior to departure. \$50.00 per person charge made for cancellations received 30 to 45 days before departure. Cancellations received less than 30 days prior to departure full air share not refundable unless seat is resold, in which case there would be a \$50.00 per person cancellation fee.

Early reservations are essential since this is the high winter season in Hawaii and hotel rooms are at a premium. All unsold hotel spaces are automatically released 40 days prior to departure.

**RESERVATION REQUEST**

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY OF MEMBERSHIP \_\_\_\_\_

DATE JOINED FARM BUREAU \_\_\_\_\_

I (WE) Desire Option Tour No. 1 \_\_\_\_\_, Option Tour No. 2 \_\_\_\_\_

I (WE) desire to depart from Grand Rapids \_\_\_\_\_, Flint \_\_\_\_\_, Saginaw \_\_\_\_\_,  
 Detroit \_\_\_\_\_, Muskegon \_\_\_\_\_, Lansing \_\_\_\_\_, Chicago \_\_\_\_\_.

Extension tours to either the Orient (Japan, Formosa and Hong Kong) and Down Under (Australia, New Zealand and Fiji) are being planned. Please check below if you are interested in either of these tours.

Orient \_\_\_\_\_ Down Under \_\_\_\_\_

Mail request with deposit check to:

**MR. KENNETH P. WILES**  
 Michigan Farm Bureau  
 P.O. Box 960  
 Lansing, Michigan 48904

# Supply

# Report



By Greg Sheffield

**GENERAL** - All Farm Bureau dealers are devoting their time now to preparing for what looks like the greatest spring rush to planting in many years. Farmers looking to a downturn of prices on supplies appear to be holding off on ordering their needs early. Consequently there will be some disappointment on deliveries, since all supplies can not be delivered at once. At present, good inventories of all supplies are available through Farm Bureau dealers. Farmers who take their supplies early will not put themselves in competition with the numerous other farmers who have delayed orders this year. Prices on most items have come down from what they were last year. It is doubtful that prices will go down further once the great expected demand before planting comes in.

**FERTILIZER** - Farmer's orders to dealers, and in turn to

Farm Bureau Services, are lagging behind last year. Some of this has been due to cold and snowy weather. With the large planting intentions for corn and other grains, and the lack of early order taking, a seasonal shortage due to transportation is anticipated. Farmers should consider putting in their needs in the next 30 days while supplies are readily available, and at prices lower than last year, in order to assure themselves product when needed. Locally fertilizers could be bid up in price at the last minute, not because of real shortages, but because of lack of means to serve so many farmers at once. Farmers who did not put on enough fertilizer because of the high prices of fertilizers last year should consider additional usage this year because of price, and to improve their yields. Soil testing is suggested, if you expect to get

the best result from your land.

**FEEDS** - Meetings are continuing on through February sponsored by Farm Bureau Services. These feed meetings cover many feeding aspects of dairying and swine. They offer farmers a unique opportunity to purchase Farm Bureau feeds with the cooperation of their dealer. Feeds and animal health products will be booked for 60 days from the time of the meeting at guaranteed prices. If prices go up, farmers don't pay more; if prices decline, farmers get the benefit of the decline. Feeds are in good supply and Farm Bureau Services is selling feeds at a rapid pace. Animal health products are also in excellent supply and reasonably priced.

Rumensin, a new feed additive from Elanco, is available from Farm Bureau Services' dealers mixed in Farm Bureau beef feeds. It is said to increase feed

efficiency by 15 percent.

**CHEMICALS** - Just about all chemicals are in adequate supply, except Bladex 80W and certain corn rootworm materials. There will be a production gap in the manufacturer of Thimet 15G. This will put pressure on Furadan with a possible backlash into spot shortages at planting time. Deliveries of chemicals are orderly. Farm Bureau Services' dealers will be in their best supply position, overall, for the last three years.

**SEEDS** - Although Farm Bureau Services has sold all of its original production contract of the new Weevlchek alfalfa, an additional supply has been obtained through another member of Farmers Forge Research. This excellent yielding, wilt resistant variety is again available on a first come, first served basis.

Farmers have shown great interest in Vernal alfalfa too, with a tightening supply that may be temporary, and a pronounced jump in price. All Canadian clover seeds have tightened up considerably in supply. The once plentiful early offerings are used up, and the remaining supply is being held by western growers for advanced prices. Pasture grasses remain plentiful and are favorably priced. At this time there are no supply problems anticipated for oats, soybeans or hybrid corn seeds. However, there are a few varieties and kernel sizes of seed corn that have been sold out.

**HARDWARE** - Lodge buildings, the new portable building concept for raising livestock, have achieved much interest from farmers and can be obtained through Farm Bureau dealers. The convenience and profit making potentials of these unique buildings have strong appeal to Michigan livestock farmers. If you raise dairy calves or swine, you should be aware of the advantages of this new system. Farm Bureau dealers will be leaving this month to visit our manufacturing facilities in Goshen, Indiana, and attend a seminar on the lodge building concept.

The Farm Bureau building centers are experiencing a large increase in inquiries. Farmers planning spring buildings should get their estimates as soon as possible. There has been great increase in building supplies interest from the expansion of all types of buildings for livestock, machinery, and storage. Twine is now selling at greatly reduced prices.

Buy twine now for harvest later on, as some increases are already evident although Farm Bureau dealers are holding the line with very low prices. It's doubtful that twine prices will get

any lower and a smart buyer can take advantage of the current sharp dip in cost.

Best selections of home gardening equipment such as rototillers and lawn mowers are available now. If the same interest in home gardening is experienced this year as last, supplies will again be cleaned out at the dealer level.

**FARM TRACTOR TIRES** - There's a big strike of rubber workers anticipated due to the expiration of their contract this April. The industry nationwide is bracing themselves for this strike right at the time that tires are in the biggest demand for spring. We are advising our dealers to build their inventories of tires. Now would be the best time for farmers to order large tractor tires. These tractor tires have been hard to come by in many sizes and the present availability should not be allowed to slip by.

**TIRES, BATTERIES AND ACCESSORIES** - Truck tires, passenger tires, and other tires, as well as batteries and accessories such as filters, are all being booked by Farmers Petroleum dealers in special programs for farmers before spring. Not only will prices be better, but buying at this time can avoid possible delays and problems later. Again, the spring rush is expected to cause some problems later. Again, the spring rush is expected to cause some problems of work congestion during the spring.

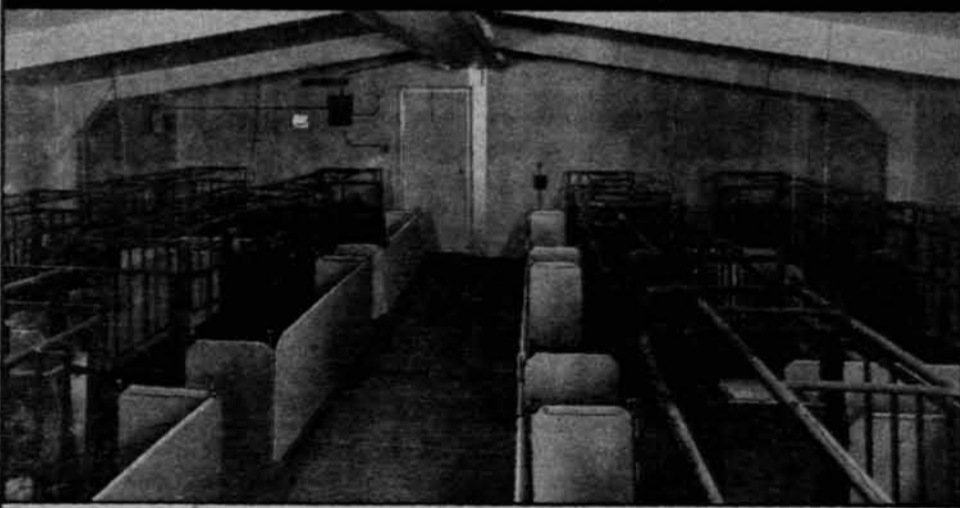
**LIQUID FUEL** - Liquid fuel supplies are more than adequate and it looks like a simple matter of keeping farm storage tanks supplied.

**ON-THE-FARM TIRE SERVICE** - Many Farmers Petroleum dealers are now set up to give you on-the-farm tire service. Dealers can come out and check all your tire needs as well as all your oil, grease, and fuel projections for spring. In this way you will be able to enjoy uninterrupted work during the busy planting season. So, ask about this service and sign up early.

**REFINERY PURCHASED** - Farmers Petroleum Cooperative and eight other regional cooperatives, have joined in the purchase of a refinery. With this purchase farmers now have access to their own refinery facilities outside of Chicago. The purchase, from Atlantic Richfield Oil Company, has a daily capacity of 126,000 barrels per day. While fuels manufactured by its new refinery are expected to arrive shortly after the purchase effective date of April 1, 1976, Farmers Petroleum will still maintain its supply relationship with their current suppliers.

# THE SOW LODGE

by Universal.



Sows and pigs need special protection from damp, cold, and drafty conditions. And they get that protection from the new SOW LODGE portable farrowing building by Universal. The SOW LODGE provides them with a comfortable, totally-controlled environment that can mean more comfortable sows, thriftier pigs and more pigs weaned per litter.

The SOW LODGE is ready to go to work as soon as it's delivered. Farrowing stalls, waterers, feeders, ventilation and heaters are all installed. There's even a manure pit built into the unit. All you do is hook it up to electricity and water and it's ready for your sows. And the SOW LODGE is engineered for exceptional strength and many long years of service. Ask us about the SOW LODGE and other portable LODGES for finishing hogs, pigs, and calves.

**Tender loving care system** for farrowing sows & pigs



CONTACT YOUR LOCAL FARM BUREAU BUILDING CENTER

## Blue Cross/Blue Shield re-opening

Attention, Farm Bureau members! March 1-15 are special dates for you to think about. This is the time for the annual Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan reopening.

If you already have Blue Cross and Blue Shield coverage, you can renew your coverage for next year. This is also the time you may add your 19-25 year olds who are still dependent on you for support. And most important, if you become married or had a child during the year and didn't add them to your contract within the allowed 30 day period, you may add them to your contract at this time.

Call or see your local Farm Bureau secretary to take care of any of these details.

If you do not have Blue Cross and Blue Shield coverage, why not consider joining at this time? It is the best health care protection available to you and you can get it at group rates because you are a Farm Bureau member.

For further details on the coverage available to you, see or call your Farm Bureau secretary.

# HOW DO YOU get Farm Bureau KNOW- HOW?

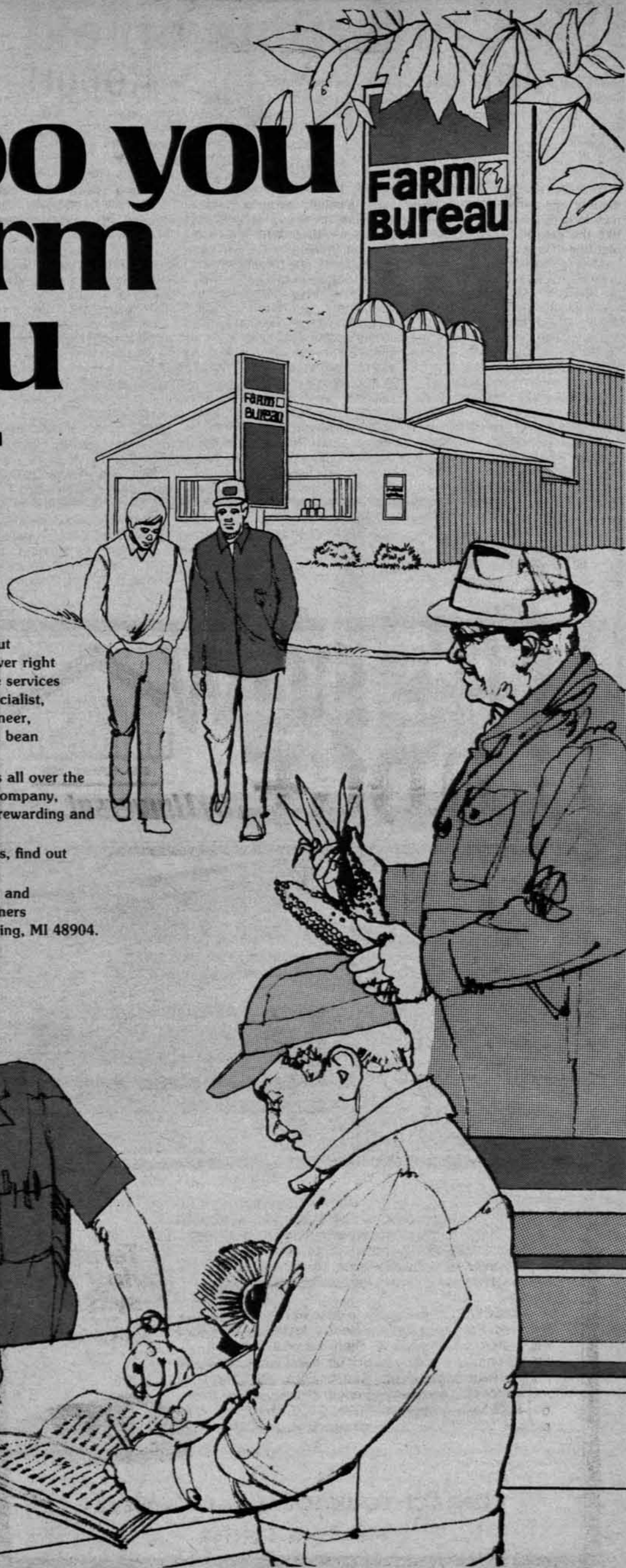
Ask your Farm Bureau Services dealer a question about today's farming methods . . . he'll either have the answer right away, or he'll find out for you fast. He can draw on the services of such specialized Farm Bureau experts as a seed specialist, agronomist, veterinarian, nutritionist, agricultural engineer, farm fuel specialist, chemicals specialist and grain and bean marketing specialists.

He is also backed by seven cooperative research farms all over the country, an international cooperative-owned fertilizer company, and shipping experts . . . all working to develop more rewarding and easier farming methods for you.

As modern agriculture finds better ways of doing things, find out about them from us, the Farm Bureau people.

For an informative brochure on Farm Bureau Services and Farmers Petroleum, write: Farm Bureau Services/Farmers Petroleum Marketing Services Division, Box 960, Lansing, MI 48904.

**ASK THE  
FARM BUREAU  
PEOPLE**



# Blue Cross/Blue Shield looks to cut costs

We have reached the point where cost is of equal consideration with the quality of health care, John C. McCabe, president of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan, said today.

In a dinner speech before the Oakland County Medical Society at the Kingsley Inn in Bloomfield Hills, McCabe said:

"Blue Cross-Blue Shield has embarked on a series of steps — many unprecedented, many unpopular — that attempt to deal with the growing problem of costs, in a way that will involve patients, physicians, hospitals and insurance organizations."

He said that although Blue Cross-Blue Shield has been involved in cost containment activities since the 1940's, new pressures now are being exerted. These come, he said, from journalists, academicians and researchers; labor organizations; major purchasers of health insurance; politicians,

and the general public.

"In the past," McCabe said, "when making decisions about patient care, hospitals and physicians have quite properly put the emphasis on providing the best care possible. Unfortunately, this has led to ironic results, in that the greater the response to rising public demand for services, the greater the cost problem has become."

"With costs now claiming an equal priority in public policy and individual concern, costs must be given equal priority by the providers of care — as difficult and unpleasant as it may seem."

"In other words, we must learn to say, 'No,' more often, more firmly, and more convincingly."

In this first of a series of speeches by Blue Cross-Blue Shield executives before county medical societies throughout Michigan, McCabe asked the physicians such questions as:

"As more expensive techniques

are developed, why do they tend to become routine, add-on, or screening procedures — rather than substitutes for other procedures? Why aren't we more selective?"

"Why has the ready availability of low-cost clinical lab services resulted not in savings to the patient but unusual increases in utilization?"

"Are we cost conscious about hospital stays, speeding up the process wherever possible, and making maximum use of ambulatory diagnostic services?"

"Is the inaccessibility of physicians the main reason for the misuse and abuse of expensive hospital emergency rooms? Are we forcing patients to use them for non-emergencies?"

"How often are tests repeated when prior results are already available?"

"Why is there such a significant increase in am-

bulatory surgery? Are we overly 'blemish' and 'gimmick' conscious?"

"On malpractice: Could physician exposure be reduced by better patient relationships? By more informed consent?"

McCabe said that the time has arrived when everyone must play a role in health care costs containment.

In addition to physicians and hospitals — who must continue to work actively on their own against cost escalation through the reduction of overbedding, maximum efficiency and occupancy and the avoidance of duplication, unnecessary competition, and "empire building" — he said the public also must do more to control costs.

"They can," he explained, "take better care of themselves, moderate demands for ever-broader coverage, ask for generic prescription drugs, pay more attention to their physicians, and go home from the hospital when it's suggested that they do so."

McCabe detailed some of the cost containment steps taken recently by the five-million-member health care plan.

On November 19, the 48-member, publicly-dominated Blue Cross-Blue Shield Board of Directors placed one-year cost caps on hospitals and physicians. The board placed a cost increase limit of 10 percent on hospital inpatient reimbursement in 1976, using 1975 as the base. The board froze physicians' fees, except for those who had not increased fees since Federal controls were lifted in April of 1974.

Other Blue Cross-Blue Shield cost review procedures, many of them dating back to the 1940's, are being applied more stringently.

Last week, Blue Cross-Blue Shield Senior Vice President and General Counsel Joseph A. Murphy, Jr., sent to the Michigan Insurance Bureau a lengthy

report, with a 15-page cover letter, on some of the measures taken to contain costs.

In the letter, Murphy said that in another effort to avoid unnecessary hospitalization, all participating hospitals were notified that they must implement and maintain a system of concurrent review for all Blue Cross-Blue Shield patients. Concurrent review means that each patient's hospital stay is examined on a planned basis during the stay to assure the need for hospital care.

"In another cost containment move," Murphy explained, "we have made mandatory for all groups our coordination of benefits program, which is designed to eliminate duplicate payment for health care when an individual has more than one kind of health care protection or insurance."

Donald F. Ephlin, administrative assistant to the president of the United Auto Workers and a member of the board's Executive Committee, added:

"In all these programs, the compromises mean that the sacrifices are tough, but at least they're being shared by everyone. During 1976, we plan to increase our efforts toward finding a more equitable, long-term solution to the health care cost problem."

Robert E. Braden, administrative director of the Michigan Farm Bureau and chairman of the board's Consumer Relations Committee, said:

"For years, Blue Cross and Blue Shield have been the only private health insurance carrier doing anything about costs. Now everyone realizes that the dramatic inflation in health care costs cannot continue, and that we all must share in the responsibility for solving this problem."

## Spring

# Sale

reap the benefits  
of fully conditioned  
soft water during this  
special sale event

save money now  
on OUR BEST

## CO-OP

Automatic Water Conditioner

Model UC-XXX, 210,000  
Weekly Grain Capacity

Get a FREE 12-month supply  
of laundry detergent when you  
purchase a Co-op automatic  
water conditioner.

deluxe  
**HARVEST  
GOLD**  
cabinet at  
NO EXTRA  
COST!

BRING IN A SAMPLE  
OF YOUR TAP WATER  
FOR OUR TEST AND  
YOU'LL RECEIVE A  
FREE GIFT  
ABSOLUTELY NO  
OBLIGATION.

Order From  
Your Reliable  
Farm Bureau Supplier

Where Your Farm Comes First  
**Farm  
Bureau**  
FARM BUREAU SERVICES, INC.

## Q and A

**QUESTION:** What is the township Board of Review and how can they help me if I feel my taxes are too high?

**ANSWER:** The Boards of Review normally meet on specific dates and times during the first two weeks in March. The duties and responsibilities of the Board of Review are to review the work of the assessor for completeness; accuracy, uniformity; and check for errors, injustices or other iniquities in the assessing process.

An often expressed comment at many Boards of Review by taxpayers goes something like the following: "I want to talk to you about my taxes." As can be seen from the foregoing description, the duties and responsibilities of the Board of Review are specifically to review the assessment and not taxes in total.

This is a seemingly technical but very important point. Taxes are composed of two factors: 1. Assessment, and 2. Millage Rate. The Board of Review has no control whatsoever over the taxes an individual pays but can only address themselves to accurate assessing of the property in question.

In most townships, a Board of Review is comprised of three taxpaying residents who are not township officials or employees. The members of the Board of Review are appointed by the township board for two-year terms.

Taxpayers who are concerned about their total taxes should include in their visits not only to the Board of Review but various other local meetings such as the Township Annual Meeting, which by law is scheduled for early April; School Board Meetings; County Commission Meetings and other units of government which operate from funds derived from property taxes.

Involvement is the responsibility and opportunity of all citizens under our form of government. Involvement in local government during this bicentennial year is most important to maintain our system of government.

# Michigan State Farmer's Week is March 22-26

The nation's oldest, continuous farm oriented observance -- Michigan State University's Farmers' Week -- will be held March 22-26.

This year's theme, "Spirit with a Purpose," emphasizes MSU Cooperative Extension's leadership role in agriculture and family living. "Extension specialists have been assisting Michigan residents through educational programs since Farmers' Week began 61 years ago," says Dr. Gordon Guyer, MSU Extension director.

"We are especially pleased we can renew our strong and close relationship with rural and urban families during the week's activities, while providing the opportunity to bring clientele up to date on our latest research developments," he adds.

The more than 165 educational sessions featuring over 295 speakers, scores of MSU departmental displays and the virtual fair of commercial exhibits worth more than \$1 million, are intended for farmers and nonfarmers alike.

Monday's program comprises dairy industry educational programs and dairy breeds association meetings. During a noon luncheon at Kellogg Center, Michigan's top dairy producers will be honored.

Tuesday's format consists of animal husbandry, poultry science, agricultural economics, beekeeping and human nutrition programs. A highlight of the day's activities will be selecting Michigan's 1976 Honey Queen.

Outstanding poultrymen will be honored at an evening banquet at Kellogg Center.

Wednesday begins the three-day "MSU Natural Resources Days" during which a wide range of Michigan's environmental issues will be covered through educational sessions. Subjects will range from energy conservation to endangered species.

During the President's Luncheon Wednesday noon at Kellogg Center, the College of

Agriculture and Natural Resources Distinguished Service Awards will be given to three outstanding Michigan residents.

A new addition to Farmers' Week also occurs on Wednesday - a special program for small acreage and part-time farmers. This day-long session is in direct response to requests over the past two years.

Topics include livestock care, cropping, machinery selection and gardening. The concurrent

sessions will be in Wells Hall, Anthony Hall and Agricultural Engineering.

A Thursday highlight will be Michigan Gov. William Milliken's comments during the annual Governor's Breakfast at Kellogg Center. The day's sessions continue MSU Natural Resources programs featuring former Oregon governor Thomas McCall and Michigan House of Representatives Speaker Bobby Crim, during an evening banquet

in the Brody complex.

The Michigan FFA Convention banquet will be in Shaw Hall that night, while the state's top farm managers will be honored during the State Farm Management banquet at Kellogg Center.

Friday activities include the Michigan State Rabbit Breeders Association Exhibition, continuation of MSU Natural Resources sessions, and a variety of public and private association meetings.



## Back to the basics for better total profits

### Healthmobile coming

Local county Farm Bureaus will be sponsoring a unique new program of preventive medicine using computers, advanced medical instrumentation, and a self-contained mobile clinic. According to Robert Shepard, manager of member services, the HEALTHMOBILE is geared toward testing participants for numerous health problems and incipient diseases. Participation in the program is strictly voluntary for our members and their dependents.

After the HEALTHMOBILE is brought to a convenient parking lot, each participant will be given fifty tests in about one hour. Upon entering the computerized clinic, a medical questionnaire is reviewed with the receptionist nurse. Then each participant is tested at various stations on such instruments as an audiometer, electrocardiograph, spirometer, orthorater and tonometer. Four computers back up the HEALTHMOBILE to analyze test results.

Safeguards have been taken to insure that the results are kept confidential. The family physician will receive the detailed findings after a pathologist reviews the thirty-nine blood and urine tests, a cardiologist reads each electrocardiogram and an internist reviews the entire computer-generated health profile.

"Automated medical check-ups done on a group basis are very inexpensive compared to individual testing. Preventive medicine programs of this type can eliminate long hospitalization at a later date and catch numerous diseases that can be treated at an early stage at the family physician's office.



Full Fertilization will mean larger per-acre yields and higher total profits. But last year many farmers had to forget the basics because of fertilizer shortages. This year your Farm Bureau dealers urge you to get back to the basics.

Full Fertilization with one of the many custom Farm Bureau blends is a very good



way to get back to basics. Your Farm Bureau dealer can plan a full fertilization program based on a soil test to

best maximize your per-acre yield.



Hurry-Up starter Fertilizer will get your crops growing early this spring. These starter fertilizers are a special formulation of N-P-K, plus micro nutrients to insure young healthier plants. Be sure to include Hurry-Up Starter fertilizers in your Full Fertilization program.

Where Your Farm Comes First

# Farm Bureau

FARM BUREAU SERVICES, INC



Send for Farm Bureau's complete Metric Conversion Chart and Slide Rule. This chart will be very helpful on the farm for measuring. Fill in this coupon and mail to:

Farm Bureau Services  
P.O. Box 960  
Lansing, Michigan 48904  
Attention: John Sexson

Don't Delay...  
Get your Free Metric Scale!

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Town \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# Can farmers survive?

This discussion topic attempts the impossible. Some six months ago, the Discussion Topic Committee selected the topic "Can Farmers Survive." Since that time I've nearly worn my crystal ball out trying to envision the future. The following, with the help of the Economic Research Service, is an attempt to look ahead to what the future holds for agriculture.

## NEW PROBLEMS

History tells how the American farmer survived and prospered, using methods he did not foresee, to overcome obstacles he could not anticipate. He transformed a wilderness into an agricultural plant of unparalleled efficiency. But, his problems today seem no less formidable than those of 1776.

They are different problems, of course; pollution of the environment, threatened shortages of energy and raw materials, a growing world population pressing on food supplies, the pace of technological change. In addition, we are warned of new ice ages to come, or of encroaching deserts. And there is the under-lying fear of nuclear holocaust.

Undoubtedly, our view of the future also is influenced by present circumstances, some of them no doubt transitory. Although we have vastly greater information resources to draw on, the future will yield its secret no more willingly than in the past.

## FEAR OF FAILURE

But fear of failure should not deter us. Forecasting is a necessary part of the business of living. Our plans and the things we do to realize them assume that the consequences of our efforts are predictable, even while acknowledging that our foresight is less reliable than our hindsight. A bad guess is a part of the game.

Let's begin on the side of the optimists. Scientists tell us that the world probably is some 4 billion years old, that human beings have been on the earth for perhaps 5 million years, and that agriculture began about 10,000 years ago. So, it seems reasonable to project that during the next 200 years, hardly an eyeblink in the context of time, the world will neither freeze nor fry nor choke nor starve nor blow itself up.

## A NEW AGE

Let's make the further assumption that the human race is essentially reasonable and is likely to stop an adverse trend somewhere short of ultimate disaster.

What technological breakthroughs might occur in agriculture during the years ahead? Here we surmise that some of the presently hoped-for advances will in fact occur. Here are some great things which just might happen:

- Upgrading the protein content of the cereal grains and other crops.
- Hybridizing of additional crops.
- Biological rather than chemical control of harmful insects and diseases.
- Successful long-range weather prediction and modification.
- The use of satellites for worldwide crop reporting.
- Extension of the principle of nitrogen fixation to new groups of plants, thus cutting down the need for commercial fertilizer.
- Conquest of the fuel problem, probably by the use of nuclear energy.
- Greater environmental control for both plants and animals, providing more economical production and higher, more standardized quality.
- The use of microbial action on various feedstocks (such as organic wastes) for the direct production of feed and food.
- Computers which will give us more sense and less nonsense.

How many of these things or additional things might in fact occur, we cannot now know. But of one thing we can be sure - whatever may be the technical developments in agriculture, its poetry will continue. The wonders of life, growth, and death, the cycle of the seasons, the marvels of continuous creation so clearly manifested in agriculture - these will still be with us. In fact, it might be said that these are the most enduring things about agriculture.

## PROTECT PUBLIC INTEREST

During much of the past 200 years we sought to get the public domain into private ownership, and to a large measure succeeded. Henceforth we may be trying to identify and protect the public interest in these privately owned lands.

Is the competitive market to continue as the major, if not sole, determinant of how these lands are to be used? Will they be used for cropping, grazing, timber, mining, recreation, industry, residential uses, highways, airports, wildlife, watershed protection, or flood prevention? What is the legitimate public interest in the answers to these questions and how is this interest to be expressed? We are in a transitional phase with regard to land policy. This will be a major issue during the years ahead.

## LOSS OF UNIQUENESS

Agriculture of the future may lose its uniqueness. In fact, it may be difficult to tell what is a farm and what is not. Farm production may be merged in an integrated fashion with the acquisition of input items and with the processing, transporting, financing, merchandising, and consumption of the product.

For the first 200 years as a nation we flocked to the city. For the next 200 years we probably will look toward the country as a place to live. Its warmer personal relationships, cleaner air and water, greater privacy, and greater social stability will look better and better as the years pass.

In the future the "City Limits" signs may have lost their significance. They may well mark a boundary between units of government, with limited social and economic distinctions.

An important institutional change which may occur in the years ahead is the capacity to manage our system of money and credit so as to check or at least reduce the rate of inflation now rampant and worldwide.

Probably much sooner than many would like, no one will be able to buy a pound of butter or a quart of milk or a bushel of wheat anywhere in the U.S. We will be on the metric system - these products will be sold by the kilogram and liter.

## GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT

For the commodity programs in agriculture, the recent trend has been away from strong government decision making and in the direction of market orientation. Hopefully it may be that the high tide of government involvement in the production and pricing of farm products is passed and that the years ahead will see commodity policies more nearly in keeping with the long tradition of our country.

Those engaged in the production of food and fiber must be alert and concerned with the courses being chartered by all levels of government. Whatever the courses may be, and there are many of them, they will in all likelihood, affect agriculture in one way or another. Actions taken by local, state and federal governments and governmental agencies will determine how agriculture survives the future.

The growing power of the regulatory agencies in government which are enacting more laws than the legislative branch are a growing concern to many. It would appear that it is time to bring these agencies under better control.

## NOT PROFITABLE

Now that we have gazed into the distant future, let's look at the present.

According to Dr. Daniel L. Kruger of MSU, "Total cash receipts for farming have increased - in 1974 it was \$1.7 million - but net farm income continues to decline. It is not profitable being a farmer."

A major force helping influence agriculture is technology, some of which has evolved, in part, because of labor problems. "There has been, and will be, a continuous substitution of mechanical muscle for the muscle of human being," Kruger says.

He partly attributes increased use of harvesting machinery, such as the cherry picker and cucumber harvester, to labor regulations and increasing labor costs.

There are high costs of fertilizer, energy, double digit inflation and high wage costs. "One explanation for high wage costs is the influence of the automobile industry in



which the highest rates in the country are paid. Their spill-over effect influences agriculture wages. The farmer has to cope with higher wages which are more difficult to afford in the face of his market returns and other costs," Kruger says.

"A third factor has been the legislation which has placed restrictions on farmers which have added to the costs of farm operations. These include workmen's compensation, minimum wages, Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) - laws which affect the ability of Michigan farmers to compete with other markets," Kruger says.

"When we talk about these laws, we must understand that Michigan is not an island. Our products compete in a national market and in many of these states with which we compete, farm wage levels and benefits for labor are lower than in Michigan."

A fourth factor influencing farm production is special interest groups. "I want farm workers to have all the rights that other Americans have. I want workers to be protected like workers in non-agricultural employment. But farmers and growers are being sued more frequently. A way must be found to resolve differences without resorting to courts," he says.

## A FINAL ASSESSMENT

We have looked into the distant future, we have looked briefly at the present. True, there are problems facing agriculture, but it is the nature of the human species to have problems. Even if all the difficulties that currently are recognized as problems of agriculture were suddenly solved, a new list would develop within a matter of days or months. Thus, problems will be on the agenda during the years ahead, even though by historic comparison it might appear that they would be of modest proportions.

As a final assessment to the question "Can Farmers Survive?," let's turn to the Book of Genesis for this long-term agricultural outlook statement: "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter shall not cease." That forecast has been good for a good many years. It seems not overly presumptuous to extend it for many more.

# DISCUSSION TOPIC

by **KEN WILES**  
Manager Member Relations



# Farm Bureau Member Life Insurance



## Especially for You... A Second Chance

### Because you are a Farm Bureau Member

The Member Life Insurance program will feature a special enrollment period from January 1 until March 31, 1976

No physical examination

No qualifying health questions

A convenient policy with all the life insurance \$25 can buy

This special program with rates less than 7 cents a day, is offered to no one else but Farm Bureau Members

Covers member, spouse, and children 15 days to 22 years old if single and not covered under their own Member Life policy

Protection continues if in military service

Renewable up to age 71

Automatic updating of coverage

Add Farm Bureau Member Life to your other policies

Your County Secretary and Farm Bureau Insurance agent have the enrollment facts

Don't miss out on your second chance

**Ask your agent about the special enrollment period:  
January 1-March 31, 1976**

**FARM BUREAU  
INSURANCE  
GROUP™**



Farm Bureau Mutual • Farm Bureau Life • Community Service Insurance

