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 opposed 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 VanSiegel (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.

In a report to the Young Farmers Conference in Lansing, February 18, Larry DeVuyt 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 Bureaus - economic benefits to members and membership growth - is vitally necessary.

March 16 is Soybean Day

Michigan Farm Bureau Soybean Division has announced its 4th annual Soybean Day, to be held Wednesday, March 16 at the Lansing Plaza Hotel.

The meeting will be held at 2:30 p.m. at the Lansing Plaza Hotel. Just off 1-96 at the Cedar Street exit in Lansing.

The past year has been a great deal of concern for the soybean producer of Michigan. The competition from Brazilian soybeans, palm oil, and Pauwian fishmeal, plus 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 Experimentation Station and Assistant Dean of Agriculture and Professor of Horticulture, Michigan State University.

Dr. Dale E. Butz, Executive Director of the Illinois Farm Bureau's Crop and Soil Science, Professor of Crops and Soil Science, Michigan State University.

Dr. Richard H. Leap, County Director of the Illinois Farm Bureau's Crop and Soil Science, Professor of Crops and Soil Science, Michigan State University.

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 fiery 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)

MARCH 1, 1976
Membership-NOW!

The charge this month goes out to county presidents and boards, campaign managers and membership workers to call on those unpaid renewalals, 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 short list 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.

STATE STATUS

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<td>Renewals:</td>
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<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>58,194</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of Goal: 94.49% 97.66%

Needed For Goal: 3,392 1,429

DEDICATED DOZEN CLUB

1-300 301-800
2. Iron Range 2.

801-1300 1301-Over
1. Clinton 1.
2. Bay 2.
3. 3.

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.

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 categorized them as farmers at a bill-oversalled character. Children who wore a straw hat and a red kerchief around his neck, 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 communications 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 today's 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 special activity who had the real impact. Whether it's a mall promotion such as this one in Saginaw, a Speakers' Bureau at a Rotary Club or in the schools, or a legislative tour to the nation's capital--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.

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. The recipient must be in the Farm Bureau family, must show financial need, and must be majoring in agriculturally related courses or in medicine.

Farm Bureau Women are 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, Michigan 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 hydrocarbon chemicals, that have entered some Michigan soils, according to a recent Michigan State University study. Information collected by two MSU study

Elton Smith will head
Farmers Petroleum

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

At the 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.

Pridegon is a lifetime farmer, born and reared in Branch County. He farms 1,900 acres near Montgomery and raises 4,000 head of hogs and 3,000 acres of corn annually.

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

Farm Bureau Member Life insurance 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 the new member family life insurance policy.

Farm Bureau Member Life insurance period benefit, was developed at the direction of Farm Bureau's Board of Directors, on the theory that members, working together philosophically, 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, how long a Member remains a Member is an individual, level premium, decreasing term policy. Anyone paying his premiums, that all Farm Bureau members, ages 18 to 71, pay the same premium rates. The Member's age and benefit coverage decreases as the Member's age increases.

The amount of coverage 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 heavy.

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, enrollment will be required to answer a health questionnaire and possibly take a physical examination or health questions.

About 48c a week... $25 annually... provides life insurance protection for Farm Bureau Member families. And for that cost you receive the following benefits: 1. An insurance policy created exclusively for Farm Bureau Members. 2. Coverages for Farm Bureau Members and spouses 18 to 71, and children ages 15 years to 22 years of age (single and not owning a Farm Bureau Member Life policy) are included. 3. Men and women qualifying for Farm Bureau Member Life insurance protection while in the country in the armed forces are eligible. 4. No physical exam or health questions during sign up periods. 5. Automatic updating of coverages for members... as they marry, as children arrive. 6. The program is participatory... as experience and benefit permits, benefits can be increased.

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

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, Inc., has been purchased by C F Petroleum, Inc. "This newly formed corporation is made up of nine regional Farm Supply Cooperatives," stated Mr. Armstrong, "Farmers Petroleum Cooperative is one of those five." 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 Cooperative's 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 its current suppliers.

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

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 dynamic force. □ PCBs 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.

Michigan Farm Bureau News
The second session of the 78th Michigan Legislature is now in progress. Governor Milliken's budget for the 1976-77 year is being presented. The Michigan Farm News has been awaiting Governor Milliken's budget since 1977. 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 million 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 1967 when the total state budget was $1.4 billion.

The two highest budget items are K-12 education and social services or welfare. In 1976, the General Fund budget for K-12 education was $372 million; in 1977, it is expected that the appropriated amount will be less than last year at $861 million, but when 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 $2.42 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 $12.3 million. Of this amount, $130 million will be for "restricted use" of pesticide enforcement. This expenditure is required to carry out the mandatory federal pesticide control program. H.B. 8328 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 Department of Agriculture taking the cost and farmers and/or processors one-third, the split will be changed to two-thirds.

One item in the budget that could be highly controversial is the amendment some legislators want which will solidate present user taxes restricted for special transportation.
FEDERAL ESTATE TAX

Last month this column was devoted entirely to the subject of federal estate tax reform. Details of H.R. 1793, which provides for a new tax on estates exceeding $300,000, were outlined. The February 1 issue of Michigan Farm Bureau News will serve as a refresher for the details of H.R. 1793.

Farm Bureau has now learned of federal estate tax reform. A statement of reform was 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 over all reform as promised 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 be paid within 9 months after death unless the estate receives a deficiency notice 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 20 years after death. After this deferred time period expires, the taxes would be payable in equal installments over the next 20 years at 4 percent interest.

The extended payment period would apply to estate taxes levied on the first $300,000 taxable value of the estate if the estate tax exceeds $300,000. For example, if the estate value were $250,000, 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 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 to determine whether the imports are causing injury to the domestic industry. Senator Robert Griffin (R- Traverse City), Congressman Ed Hitch- linton (R-St. Joseph) and Congressman Gray Vander Jagt (R-Luton) 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 railroad 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 $650 million, and it is not known whether some form of user tax will be enacted to cover these costs. The Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act is intended to substantially reduce or eliminate the adverse effects of the impacts upon the U.S. market.

Auto insurance rates up

Despite hopes that 1976 auto rate increases would be held to about 10 percent, many insurance companies are already shifting the burden of rate increases to the public for the most part by increasing the length of time allowed for payment of auto insurance.

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

Some insurers are pushing the rate increases as a "tax" for the following reasons: inflation and for the most part regulators who have been swamped by inflation and for the most part regulators who have been swamped by inflation. Some companies have been swamped by inflation and for the most part have increased the length of time allowed for payment of auto insurance.

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 market.

To the consumer, this means that insurance 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 have met with indifference and resistance in their attempts to have rates keep pace with their problems. The state insurance departments in recent years have shown signs of relenting, but only in a few cases are the state departments of insurance adopting a level consistent with current underwriting experience and problems."

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Comparitive of present federal estate tax law and H.R. 1793

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Present Law</th>
<th>H.R. 1793</th>
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<tr>
<td>Estate Value</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less Marital Deduction</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less Personal Deduction</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taxable Estate</td>
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* Add $100,000 to present deduction of 50 percent of gross estate value during recent months.
* Increased to $300,000 instead of present $80,000.

Interest on Debentures 5-10-15 year maturity

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<th>Year</th>
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<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>100.00</td>
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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 solicitation to buy these securities. The Federal Register is the only source for the prospect of a prospectus and a call by a registered sales agent.

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

**DEBENTURES**

**INTEREST ON DEBENTURES**

**5-10-15 year maturity**

**F.B.S. only**

**Minimum Purchase**

**100.00**

**100.00**

**100.00**

**100.00**

**100.00**

**5,000,000**

**5,000,000**

Clip and mail this coupon to:

Mc. C. A. Morrill
Farmers Life Services, Inc.
Farmers Petroleum Cooperative, Inc.
P.O. Box 960
Lansing, Michigan 48904

Name ________________
Address ________________

F.B.S. only

**Notes**

**R.F.D. No.**

**County**

**MARCH 1, 1976**

**MICROHAI FARM NEWS**

**PAGE 5**
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.

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.

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.

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.

Hillsdale County Farm Bureau member Bob Dean (seated right) chairs a meeting of the county's "Citizens for Zoning" committee. The non-partisan group of farmers and city people was formed to support the county's 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.

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 Grzechek 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 Bureau's sound studio.

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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 (fruited) 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 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. 
2520 South Building 
Washington, D.C. 20250

William J. Maclean 
District Horticultural Agent 
Federal Building 
Hart, MI 49430

Glen C. Anile 
District Marketing Agent 
107 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.

BEEF
According to preliminary figures, imports in 1975 came to 1 billion 209 million pounds of beef. That's 28 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 overshipment. 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 135,485 million pounds. This is slightly lower than 1974 production. However, it must be noted that 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 10,543 pounds, an increase of 54 pounds from 1974.

Milk prices in January 1978, dropped about 40 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.

Tom Reed, Marketing Specialist 
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 southwest.

Bernie Bishop 
Market Development Division

Important dates for: 
Michigan Farm Bureau Members

You can join Blue Cross & Blue Shield up to 
Your coverage will be effective beginning 
Monday Mar. 15
Thursday May 20

Membership in Michigan Farm Bureau offers you very beneficial 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.

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.


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 stops 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 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 ___________________________

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.

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 and fees must be received in the Michigan Farm Bureau office by October 31, 1976.

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 of 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 vespers 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, all 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.

GROUND PACKAGE consists of 7 nights occupancy of hotel room based on two people sharing twin rooms (single rooms higher), 3 meals daily, Lei greeting, baggage handling of not more than two pieces per person, welcome breakfast, city sightseeing tour and tour 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 Waialua 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 the day free for individual plans.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 18

Fly to the Island of Maui; fly back to Honolulu for a sightseeing trip of the Lihue area to include a visit to the Fern Grotto. Early afternoon, transfer to the airport and return to Chicago. Arrive at 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 and sugar plantations on the way to the Waikiki Park, visiting the Big Island, and back to Honolulu. Arrive at the airport and return flight to Chicago, connecting with Hawaii flights. Upon arrival, transfer to your final hotel.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20

Today the group will tours Hawaii Island for the departure 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 .......... $651.06 per person
Flint ............ $660.02 per person
South Bend ....... $643.42 per person
Chicago ......... $614.73 per person

Cost of tour includes transfers, baggage handling, sightseeing, etc.; 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 received 45 to 60 days prior to departure. Full refund to be made for cancellations received 30 to 45 days prior to 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 48 days prior to departure.

RESERVATION REQUEST

NAME(S)_________________________________________ZIP CODE_____
ADDRESS ________________________________________
TELEPHONE NUMBER _____________________________
COUNTY OF MEMBERSHIP ____________________________
DATE JOINED FARM BUREAU _________________________
I(W)E) Desire Option Tour No. 1 , Option Tour No. 2 ____________________________
1 (W)E) desire to depart from Grand Rapids, ______, ______, ______, ______,
Detroit, ______, Muskegon, ______, Lansing, ______, Chicago ______.

Mail request with deposit check to:

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

*Cost of tour includes inter-island air transportation. Add to above cost of Honolulu Ground Package as shown for hotel chosen in listing for charter tour package.

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 and fees must be received in the Michigan Farm Bureau office by October 31, 1976.
Supply

By Greg Sheffield

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 those 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 additionally using 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 sealing feeds at a rapid pace. Animal health products are also in excellent supply and reasonably priced.

Rumensin, a new feed additive from Eliaco, 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 manufacture of Thimet 15G. This will put pressure on Purd aun with possible backhags into spot shortages at planting time. Deliveries of chemicals are expected to continue from 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, purple corn, it will be getting the new Weevlech alfalfa, an additional supply has been obtained through the cooperation of Farmers Forge Research. This excellent yielding, will resist variety is being shipped to our dealers first come, first served basis.

Farmers have shown great interest in Vernal alfalfa and with a tightening supply that may be temporary, and a pronounced jump in price is anticipated. The early corn, canker seeds have tightened up considerably in supply. The once plentiful early corn is no longer readily available, 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 a 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, 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 price level.

Best selections of home gardening equipment such as hand tools and lawn mowers are available now. If the same interest in home gardening is expressed 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 when tires are at the biggest demand for spring. We are advising our dealers to build their inventories of tires now. Now would be the best time for farmers to order large tractor tires. The April 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. This service can be quick and all your tire needs as well as all your oil, grease, and fuel projects for springing. 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.

PETROLEUM PURCHASED - Farmers Petroleum Cooperative and eight other regional cooperatives have joined in the purchase of a refinery. 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 150,000 barrels per day. While fuels manufactured by the 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.

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 re-enrollment period.

If you have Blue Cross and Blue Shield coverage, you can renew your coverage for next year. This is also the time you may add coverage for those 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 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 issues.

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 and 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, 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 ambulatory surgery? Are we overly 'blemish' and 'gimmick' conscious?"

"On malpractice: Could physician exposure be reduced by better patient relationships?" By more medical Mayo Clinic cooperation?"

McCabe said that the time has arrived when everyone must play a role in helping to contain costs.

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, more sharply demand for 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.

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

On November 19, the 48-member board of directors of the Blue Cross-Blue Shield Board of Directors placed one-year cost caps on physicians and hospitals. The board placed a cost increase limit of 10 percent on hospital inpatient reimbursement in 1975, using 1973 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 executive director Donald F. Ephlin, 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 a message to physicians, McCabe said that it is another effort to avoid unnecessary hospitalization, all participating medical centers 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 health care protection or insurance."
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, "Spiral 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 and county meetings. Farmers' Week began 61 years ago, says Dr. Gordon Gayer, 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 293 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.

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, sputrometer, orthorater and tonometer. Four computers back up the HEALTHMOBILE's analysis test results.

Safeguards have been taken to assure that the results are kept confidential. The family physician will receive the detailed findings after a pathologist reviews twenty-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.

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, crop protection, machinery selection and gardening. The concurrent sessions will be in Wells Hall, Anthony Hall and Agricultural Engineering.

The 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

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.

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 Sexton

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 unparralled ef- ficiency. But, his problems today seem no less formidable than those of 1776.

They are different problems, of course, pollution of the environment, shortages of energy and raw materials, a growing world population pressing on food supplies, the pace of technological change. In addition, we are watching the new ice ages come, or of encroaching deserts. And there is the underlying 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 sequences 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 agriculture began about 10,000 years ago. So, it seems reasonable to project that during the next 200 years, hard as an eyeblink in the context of time, the world will neither freeze nor fry nor chose nor starve nor blow itself up.

**FUTURE 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 only hopefully the new advances will in fact occur. Here are some great things which just might happen:

- Improved protein content of the cereal grains and other crops.
- Hybridization of additional crops.
- Biological rather than chemical control of harmful insects and diseases.
- Successful long-range weather prediction and modification.
- 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 nitrogen fertilizers.
- Conquest of the plant disease, probably by the use of nuclear energy.
- Greater environmental control for both plants and animals, providing more economical production and higher, more standardized quality.
- 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 occur in the next 200 years? Some of them no doubt will, but we cannot be sure—whatever may be the technical developments in agriculture, its poetry will continue. The wonders of life, growth, 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 extent 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 now 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 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 meaning. They may well mark a boundary between units of government, with limited social and economic distinctness.

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 intervention 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 charted by all levels of government. Whatever the courses may be, and there are many of them, they will all in 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—1974 it was $1.7 billion—but net farm income continues to decline. It is not profitable by definition." Kruger says.

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 beings," Kruger says.

He partly attributes increased use of harvesting machinery, such as the cherry picker and cucumber harvester, to labor problems 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. This includes 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.

**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 in 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
**Michigan Farm Bureau offers college credit**

Michigan Farm Bureau is now offering to its members the opportunity to earn college credits through participation in selected seminars held communities throughout the state.

Special seminars are sponsored by the Lansing Community College, in cooperation with MFB, the seminars are conducted by qualified instructors.

**Soybean petitions turned in**

Petitions, containing the names of bonified soybean producers throughout Michigan have been turned in to the Michigan Farm Bureau Office. B. Dale Ball, Director Ball has appointed a temporary committee of soybean producers to draft a final version of a soybean check-off program. The text of the referendum proposal will then be considered at a public hearing. Any soybean producer then vote on a check-off program for soybeans in Michigan. The vote will be conducted by mail with all producers having over $800 value in soybean production eligible to vote.

The seven members committee, chaired by John Pajasz, will meet to hold its first formal meeting early in March. Should you or any others be interested in knowing the details of the check-off program, please contact the Market Development Division.

Michigan Farm Bureau
733 W. Saginaw Hwy.
Lansing, Michigan 48910
Phone 517-485-8211 ext. 222

**NIQUES: Participants examine their personal barriers to effective communication and problem solving. By gaining better understanding of the communications process on both the personal and organizational levels.**

**PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION-MAKING: An introduction to a logical and systematic approach for isolating issues, pinpointing true causes and making decisions.**

**SPECIAL interests and concerns will be solicited and developed into a group decision making program**

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