

Michigan Farm News

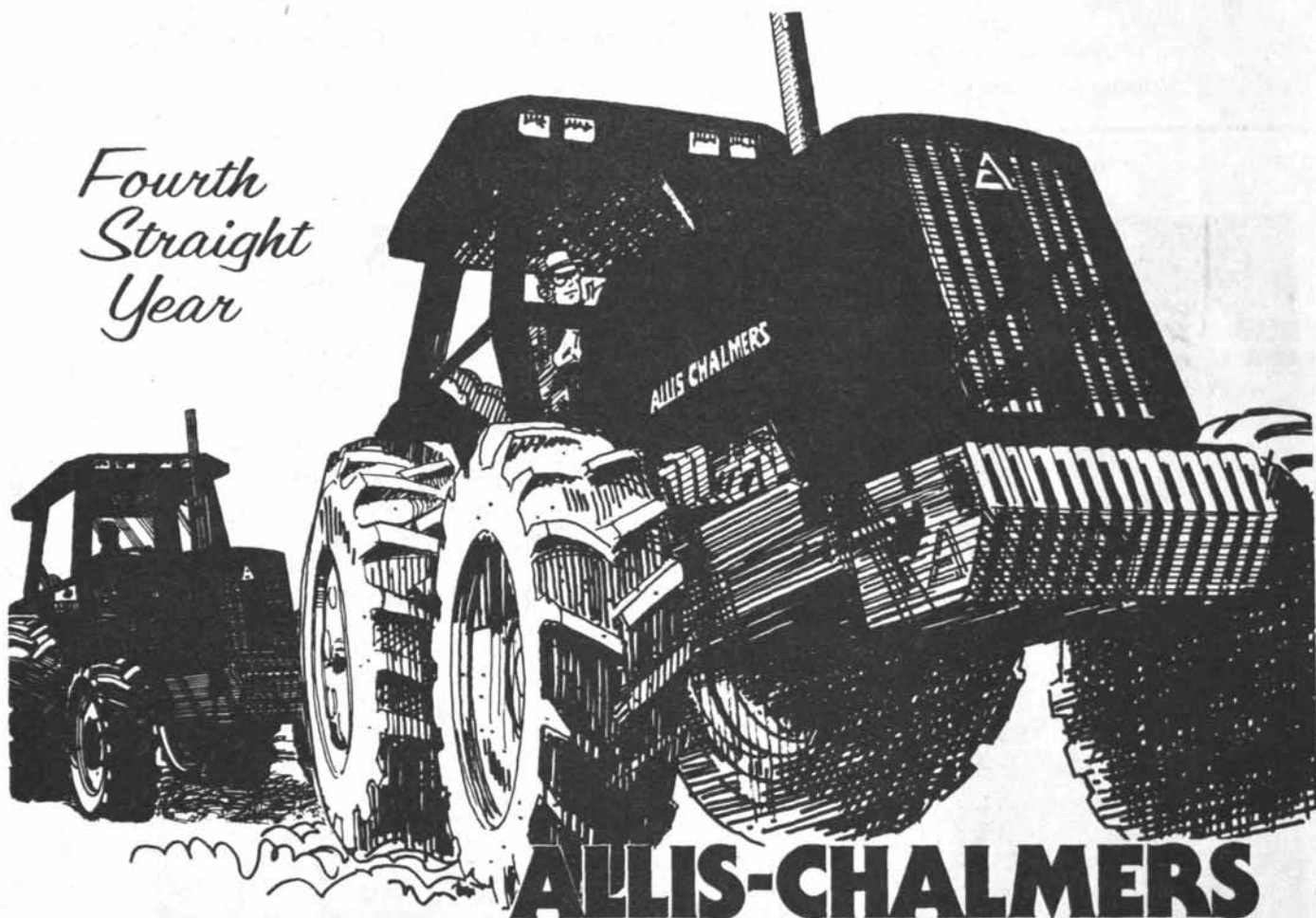
Rural Living

May 1982



A Publication of the Michigan Farm Bureau

*Fourth
Straight
Year*



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For more information, contact your county Farm Bureau office.



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May 1982
Volume 61, Number 5



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Washington Legislative Seminar participants learned that government policies have more impact on agriculture than most farmers realize.

- Photos by Marcia Ditchie

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Rural Route

The Voter's Alternative to Deferred Tax Cuts

We sent up a resounding cheer last summer when Congress passed the tax cut law, calling it a "shot in the arm" for Michigan agriculture. It would be a major factor, we said, toward increasing income for the state's farmers and estimated it would save us nearly \$99 million.

Important, too, was the over \$406 million it would have added to our state's ailing economy, once we invested those savings in new machinery, buildings and equipment.

"Reduction in personal income taxes will mean that Michigan taxpayers will be able to keep \$1.2 billion in their pockets this year, rather than sending it off to Washington," we said.

And we predicted that "1983 will see tax relief in the amount of \$3.4 billion and \$5.4 billion in 1984. The total personal income tax reduction for just the next three years totals \$10 billion for Michigan taxpayers."

That's why it was such a disappointment, when we were in Washington recently, to hear congressmen say there was "no alternative" to deferring those tax cuts. We don't buy that, and a *Wall Street Journal* editorial pretty well sums up why. . . .

"With a free ride on taxes, our elected representatives have built all kinds of automatic increases into their budgets. Social Security payments go up automatically; federal pensions increase even faster. Special interests charge that they've been cut to the bone if their subsidies don't rise by at least the rate of inflation.

"The big projected deficits Washington is trying to use as a fright wig to drive the voters into giving up the tax rate cuts they won last year do not really reflect a reduction in taxes; the rate cuts will only about compensate for bracket creep. The projected gaps, then, just demonstrate how much the government has come to depend on hidden tax increases to pay its bills," the editorial said.

We found an obvious reluctance,



during our visits with congressmen, to reduce even built-in cost increases in the entitlement programs that now consume a majority of the federal budget. Which means, during an election year, that lobbying by special interest groups has been effective, and that our politicians think they can forget the outcry for fiscal responsibility in the last elections.

Perhaps they even think that their unfulfilled promise won't be noticed and they can go on freely spending and continue to feed the inflation that has eroded our incomes. After all, the "average" taxpayer isn't nearly as vocal as those special interest groups who are protected against bracket creep and are unwilling to make the personal sacrifices others are forced to make.

The tax cuts are a key part of President Reagan's economic recovery program. Without them, it has little chance of succeeding - and it must succeed!

Those congressmen who would have us give up what we have won claim that tax reductions will cause larger federal deficits and even more inflation. They should remember the words of President John F. Kennedy

when he proposed his tax reduction program two decades ago:

"Our true choice is not between tax reduction on the one hand, and the avoidance of large federal deficits on the other. An economy hampered by restrictive tax rates will never produce enough revenue to balance the budget - just as it will never produce enough jobs or enough profits."

What some of our congressmen are saying is that it is NOT inflationary for the federal government to take taxpayer money and spend it - but that it **WOULD BE** inflationary to let taxpayers keep some of their money and spend it themselves! We reject that premise. We have proven that we can do a better job of spending - or saving

our own money than the federal government can. We know the meaning of fiscal responsibility.

We have a choice: Do we want to keep that \$10 billion ourselves to save or spend as we choose or send it to Washington for the politicians and bureaucrats to spend for us?

It's really up to YOU, because it will take more than one letter to counteract the pressures your congressman is receiving that will demand YOUR tax dollars. You might remind him, too, that if pleas for fiscal responsibility do not work, there's always the ballot box. That may just get him where he lives.

E. R. Smith

President
Michigan Farm Bureau

If you have a question or opinion that you would like to share in Rural Route, send it to Rural Living Magazine, Michigan Farm Bureau, P.O. Box 30960, Lansing, Mich. 48909.

Donna

Nobody Does It Better . . .

A USDA spokesperson, during our recent visit to Washington, D.C., called the District of Columbia, "64 square miles surrounded by reality." An apt description, I concluded as I pounded the streets of the nation's capital peddling press kits to the Washington based Michigan news media. While my eyes told me the characters I saw were real, my brain kept rejecting them as "unreal!"

Like the man walking down the sidewalk in his Washington "uniform" - a three piece pin-striped suit, with bright blue track shoes on his obviously asphalt worn feet. And the young fellow who stood up from his sidewalk cafe table and burst into song between bites of his hamburg (and nobody - not even the people at adjoining tables - paid him any heed).

We no sooner recovered from this unreal show when down the middle of the street, oblivious to the rush-hour traffic, came a man with a long grey beard, waving his arms and warning that the world was coming to an end.

A good time to get off the streets, we decided, and hailed a cab - only to pick a cabbie who told us (in broken English) his life story, the history of the city, his political views, and his conclusion that "when we get a president who paints the White House green, then we will know we have a man who can make a decision."

Back in the relative calm of my hotel room, I sat at my rented typewriter working on a news release and caught a movement out the window. There, perched on the very edge of the roof of Department of Transportation building across the street, was a man. While I whimpered, "please don't jump," my photographer roommate dashed for her camera, half-hoping, I strongly suspect, to have an unusual action photo in the *Washington Post*. Well he didn't . . . and she didn't, but the news release I finally finished had more typos than usual.

In spite of all these "sideshow" (and this year was not unusual in that respect), the annual Washington Legislative Seminar, sponsored by Farm Bureau Women, is the most exciting and, I think, effective activity this organization undertakes. No matter how many times I have the opportunity to participate, I never lose my awe of the city, its huge marble buildings, its ghosts of heroes past, its "history in the making" atmosphere.

But, most of all, I never lose my awe of our farmers in action there - knowledgeable, articulate, dedicated to the purpose of their mission. It's grassroots policy execution at its finest and a privilege to witness.

It did seem this election year that it was more of a challenge for them to "get a word in." All of the politicians wanted their turn on the soapbox and were reluctant to give it up once they got it. Some of the legislative leaders expressed to me their frustration that "nobody listens; are we really doing any good here?"

My answer to them was: unless you keep on invading that "64 square miles surrounded by reality," your representatives in the nation's capital will become so comfortably isolated that they will soon forget to whom they are accountable. We simply must keep reminding them - at the polls, through letters, calls, visits and participation in activities like the Washington Legislative Seminar.

And, take it from a relatively objective observer - nobody does it better than you!

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Right to Farm: The official guidelines to implement the Right to Farm law (P.A. 93 of 1982) have been approved by the Agriculture Commission. The final version has resulted from a long process, including public hearings held throughout the state by local Soil Conservation Districts. Between 2,000 and 3,000 farmers and others attended. Farm Bureau recommended several changes that were accepted.

It is important that every farmer be familiar with the law and guidelines in order to be sure the protections in the Right to Farm Act are as effective as possible.

The entire law is printed below, followed by a summary of the guidelines which became effective April 14, 1982.

Summary of Guidelines: Following is the policy statement of the MDA: "It is the policy of the director of the Department of Agriculture that a 'farm operation' shall be conducted with due consideration to noise, dust, odors and fumes normally associated with such an operation. A farm operation shall not be restricted to a time of day or days of the week but shall be conducted according to generally accepted agricultural management practices. Agricultural and management practices are in turn subject to varying conditions, which include but are not limited to: geographical location, weather, soil type and conditions, type of crop or livestock and management system."

The guidelines specifically refer to 11 "Types of Farm Operations." They

are production of tree fruit; small fruit; field crops; forages and sod; livestock and poultry; fiber crops (pulp wood, logs, Christmas trees, etc.); apiary; maple syrup; mushrooms; furs (mink, rabbit, etc.); and greenhouse crops.

The guidelines contain a list of how such farm operations should be conducted to meet the requirement in the law that states that farm operations should conform to "generally accepted agricultural and management practices according to policy as determined by the director of the department of agriculture."

The guidelines for each farm production category are practically the same. A short summary follows:

- Machinery and irrigation pumps should be operated and maintained with due consideration to the weather, soil conditions and type of crop, and in accordance with established safety standards.

- Tillage, planting (including aerial seeding), growing, land shaping and harvesting should be conducted in accordance with generally accepted management practices.

- Organic wastes produced in conjunction with or resulting from the growing, packing, processing, cooling and/or storing of tree fruit should be stored, transported, processed and/or applied to the land in accordance with generally accepted practices. (This applies to all types of farm production.)

- Commerical fertilizers and other soil additives should be applied in accordance with generally accepted management practices.

- Application and use (including aerial and ground level spraying and dusting) of federal and/or state regulated insecticides, herbicides, pesticides and other chemical products should be in accordance with label directions.

- On-the-farm product sales should be conducted in accordance with generally accepted practices.

- Facilities for seasonal and full-time labor where necessary to the operation may be made available and shall be constructed and maintained in accordance with federal, state and local law.

- Production resulting from field crop operations should be stored, processed (including on-farm drying operations) and transported in accordance

Michigan Right to Farm Act

An act to provide for circumstances under which a farm shall not be found to be a public or private nuisance.

Sec. 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Michigan right to farm act."

Sec. 2. (1) As used in this act, "farm" means the land, buildings and machinery used in the commercial production of farm products.

(2) As used in this act, "farm operation" means a condition or activity which occurs on a farm in connection with the commercial production of farm products, and includes, but is not limited to: marketed produce at roadside stands or farm markets; noise; odors; dust; fumes; operation of machinery and irrigation pumps; ground and aerial seeding and spraying; the application of chemical fertilizers, conditioners, insecticides, pesticides, and herbicides; and the employment and use of labor.

(3) As used in this act, "farm product" means those plants and animals useful to man and includes but is not limited to: forages and sod crops; grains and feed crops;

dairy and dairy products; poultry and poultry products; livestock, including breeding and grazing; fruits, vegetables, flowers, seeds, grasses, trees, fish, apiaries, equine and other similar products; or any other product which incorporates the use of food, feed, fiber or fur.

Sec. 3. (1) A farm or farm operation shall not be found to be a public or private nuisance if the farm or farm operation alleged to be a nuisance conforms to generally accepted agricultural and management practices according to policy as determined by the director of the department of agriculture.

(2) A farm or farm operation shall not be found to be a public or private nuisance if the farm or farm operation existed before a change in the land use or occupancy of land within one mile of the boundaries of the farmland, and before such change in land use or occupancy of land, the farm or farm operation would not have been a nuisance.

Sec. 4. This act shall not affect the application of state and federal statutes.

with generally accepted practices. (This applies to all other production.)

Property Tax Petition: Rep. Roy Smith's property tax petition is one of the five petitions that Farm Bureau has sent to Community Action Groups, county offices and leaders for circulation if they desire. That petition had to be recalled due to a legal error in wording. Since then, the Michigan Townships Association has decided to promote the petition in order to get the issue on the November ballot. The petition has been corrected and reprinted. Over 286,000 valid signatures are needed by July 6. The proposal would amend the constitution, and if passed by the voters, would be put into effect by the Legislature. The proposal includes:

- Exemptions of not less than 75% of the school operating taxes on resident homesteads up to a limit of \$1,800 and on resident farms up to a limit of \$2,500.

- Exemptions of 100% of the school operating tax on resident homesteads for persons 62 years of age or over up to the same limit of \$1,800.

- Indexing maximum exemptions annually.

- State reimbursement to each school district of 100% of all operating loss due to the exemptions.

- Assessment of agricultural and forestry lands on use.

- No savings for business and industry, therefore they cannot be used to replace any tax losses.

It is estimated that the first year of the program would mean a tax revenue loss to schools of \$1.56 billion. The increase in the sales tax would make up \$600 million. Another \$400 million would result from savings on the present property tax refund programs, which are the circuit breaker and P.A. 116. The rest of the loss of \$520 million or more would have to be made up by an increase in the state income tax of at least .8% to 1%.

Farm Bureau does not have an official policy position on this petition drive at this time, but as with the other petitions, will make it available to Community Action Groups, county offices and leaders, and members for their consideration and decision.

As with other proposals, it is a tax shift and will effect each individual differently. It cuts local property taxes for school operation by increasing the sales and income taxes. Those people who already receive a large share of their property tax back due to the circuit breaker or homestead property tax rebate program and those farmers who have signed up in the P.A. 116 program, would probably pay more total taxes. On the other hand, there are others who would gain.

The provision to permit farm and

forest land to be assessed according to use value instead of market value would be very important as it eliminates the present "uniformity" restriction in the constitution. This Farm Bureau promoted provision has been in other proposals that have been on the ballot.

Lansing Review is prepared by Robert E. Smith, MFB senior legislative counsel.

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Farm Bureau Works to Boost U.S. Exports

With crop surpluses piling up and prices falling, an increase in U.S. agricultural exports is essential, Farm Bureau members participating in the recent Washington Legislative Seminar told their congressmen.

To accomplish this objective, they said, two unused tools for spurring ag exports - the CCC revolving fund and the Export-Import Bank - must be activated.

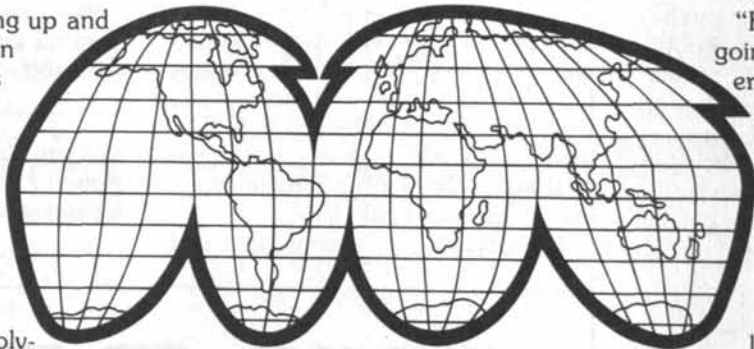
The CCC revolving export credit fund was included in the 1981 Farm Bill, with Farm Bureau's support. It was not funded, however, and there is no money slated for setting it up in the proposed fiscal year 1982 budget.

The Farm Bureau legislative leaders reminded their congressmen that the revolving fund would actually be a savings in the long run because it would eliminate the need for annual CCC export credit appropriations. Like the Farm Credit System, once the seed money is planted, it would be self-perpetuating.

Legislation (H.R. 5388) has been introduced which would provide \$500 million to activate the fund. Farm Bureau supports the bill.

The Export-Import Bank is an independent government agency that provides loans to foreign nations and firms that buy U.S. industrial goods. Legislation (H.R. 4510 and S. 1552) has been introduced which would mandate that a share of Export-Import Bank funds be devoted to the financing of agricultural commodities. Farm Bureau also supports these bills.

In a special meeting with President Reagan's deputy assistant for public liaison, state legislative leaders told him that the current depressed farm prices for many commodities are due, in large part, to the export situation.



They stressed the need for expanded ag exports and the importance of re-establishing the United States' reputation as a reliable supplier.

Farm Bureau Trade Missions

During the legislative leaders' visit with USDA officials in Washington, D.C., Seeley Lodwick, undersecretary for international affairs and commodity programs, commended Farm Bureau for sending delegations of state Farm Bureau presidents to Brussels and Tokyo this spring. The delegations, which will include MFB President Elton R. Smith, will try to convince these major trading partners that American farmers and U.S. trade negotiators are solidly united in their insistence that problems now restricting trade be quickly resolved.

Farm Bureau is credited with stimulating trade promotion activities to improve U.S. ag export prospects.

"Here we have actual farmers going to visit with farmers, government officials and consumers so that these people can realize just how important these markets are and the seriousness with which we are approaching trade barriers," Lodwick said.

One Farm Bureau delegation will talk to Japanese leaders about their restrictive

regulations and selective taxes, and encourage improved access to their markets for U.S. commodities.

In Europe, the farm leaders will have similar discussions with emphasis on commodities that pose unique problems because of subsidized exports.

Value Added Exports

Farm Bureau leaders have been meeting with officials of the USDA, the Commerce Department, and the Department of State regarding increased emphasis on value added exports (a raw product that has been processed). As a result of these meetings, the State Department surveyed 100 U.S. embassies by cable, inquiring about value added product export opportunities.

Results from the 90 responding embassies indicated that the best opportunities for value added exports were the Mideastern countries, which do not have much in the way of processing firms; the more affluent countries in eastern Asia; and the Caribbean area which has made economic progress in countries where the political situation is relatively stable.

The survey data has been given to the Foreign Agriculture Service for analysis and recommendations on how to take advantage of the market opportunities.

Farm Bureau has been credited with stimulating these activities in the value added export area.

FB Blue Cross Blue Shield Group Makes Changes

In an effort to control rising costs within Farm Bureau's Blue Cross Blue Shield Group, John VanderMolen, MFB Member Services Department manager, has announced two enrollment changes that became effective April 6, 1982.

The first enrollment change requires all persons applying to the Farm Bureau Group to complete a brief health questionnaire. The questionnaire is a screening tool that will prevent persons with severe or chronic medical ailments from becoming a subscriber in the Farm Bureau Group.

Current members who want to upgrade coverage from the Econo plan to the Dimension III plan or from Dimension III to the Comprehensive plan during the annual reopening period will also be required to fill out the medical questionnaire.

The second enrollment change involves implementation of a six month pre-existing clause. Specifically, there will be no benefit during the first six months after the effective date of the contract for medical conditions which, within six months before the effective date of a subscriber's coverage, caused that subscriber to receive medical advice or treatment by a physician.

Neither the medical questionnaire nor the six month pre-existing clause will have any immediate effect on current Farm Bureau subscribers. Both changes were approved by the state board of directors and meet the requirements of 1982 Farm Bureau policy as it pertains to health care.

Implementation of the medical questionnaire and six month pre-existing condition clause also enables Farm Bureau members who are not presently Farm Bureau Blue Cross Blue Shield subscribers to apply to the Farm Bureau Group at any time during the calendar year. Previously, Farm Bureau members could only apply during the first 10 days after becoming a Farm Bureau member or during the annual reopening period March 1 through 15.

Members who have questions about these changes should contact their county Farm Bureau secretary.

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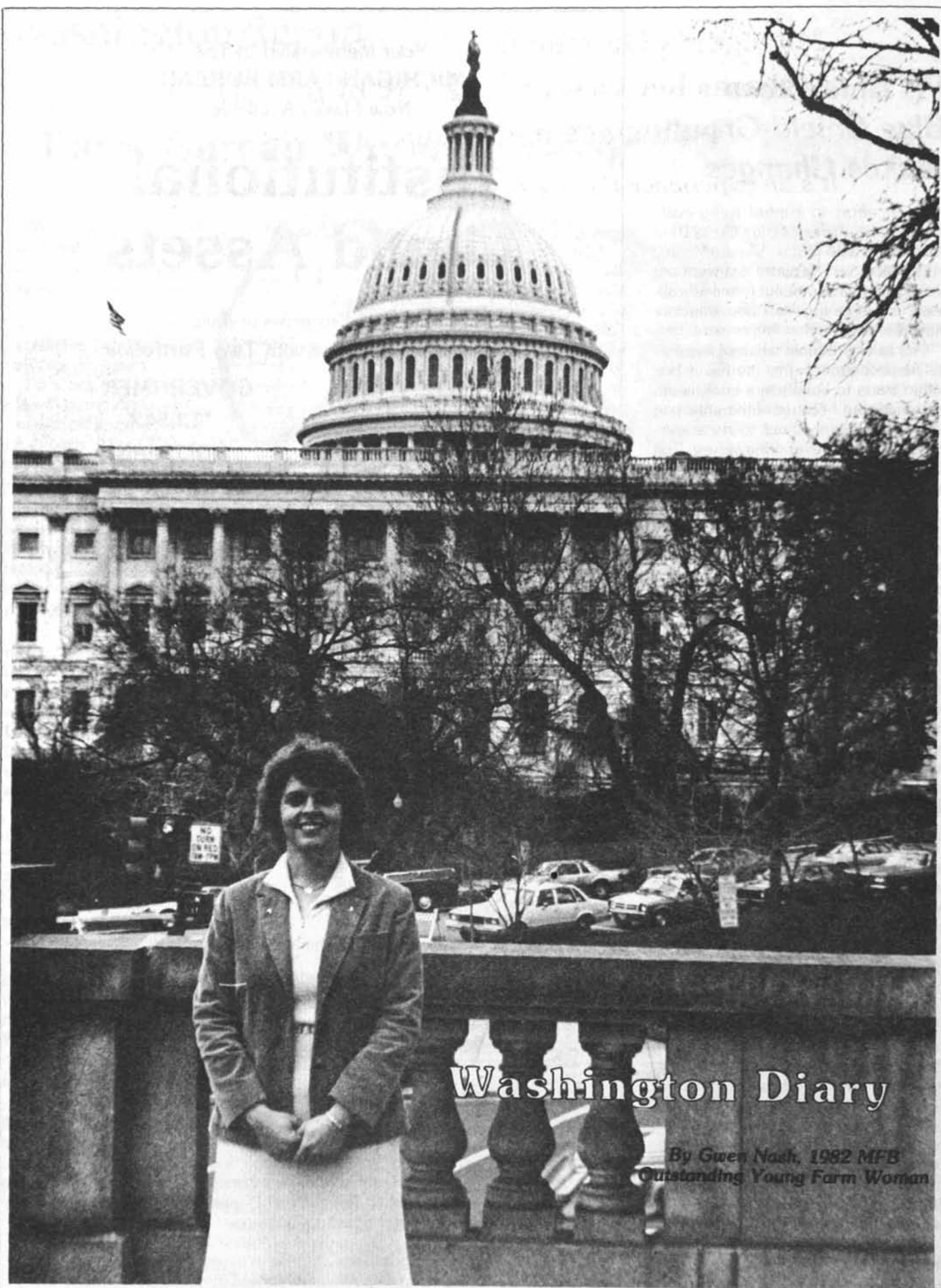
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Washington Diary

By Gwen Nash, 1982 MFB
Outstanding Young Farm Woman

Michigan's Outstanding Young Farm Woman shares her views of the city of presidents, politicians and ordinary people.

"It's an experience I'll never forget. Thank you, Farm Bureau!"

March 29, 1982

4:30 a.m. - The alarm just went off and Dwight has gone out to milk. I can see I'm not going back to sleep, so may as well do something constructive - like make a double batch of bread.

The excitement that comes from within starts to build - not because of the bread, but because of the anticipation when you're about to do something you have never done before. For me, that something is to be two-fold: the visit to the nation's capital and the air flight there.

No time to worry about that now. There are more immediate things to do, like shower, get the kids off to school, shape the bread (why am I making bread?). I see as I glance toward the barn that no one is here to help with chores.

7:00 a.m. - The kids are up and getting along nicely. Grandma just drove in the driveway; what a lifesaver, coming out at the last minute to take care of the kids when they don't feel well.

7:15 a.m. - Still no help for the chores.

7:30 a.m. - Kids are off for the bus. I'm ready. Where's Dwight?

7:45 a.m. - Dwight's in. Bread's done. I'm glad I made the bread. It seems to relieve my guilt about leaving the kids.

8:05 a.m. - Kisses, hugs, and we're off!

11:00 a.m. - To my surprise, I'm not nervous, just excited as we board the 727 and take off. Everything on the ground is going from normal to matchbox size. Mountains look like lumps of sand. The ice shifting on Lake Erie looks like a big sheet of broken glass. The closer we get to Washington, the greener it looks down there.

There's the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument, the capitol - how special it all is! We're going down but I don't see the airport. Are we going in the river? Ah! There's the runway... and we've landed.

After the bus ride to the hotel, check-in and a quick lunch, there's still some time before the 3 p.m. briefing with the experts from the American Farm Bureau Federation and our legislative leader workshop. So we walk to the capitol, past the reflecting pool, and statues and more statues. Get lost on the way back, but make it in time.

The briefings go well, but I begin to wonder if I can do the job I was assigned to do. The Farm Bureau staff urges us to speak out on the issues, but I'm not sure I'm qualified to speak out on entitlement programs and CCC.

After the workshop, things seem a lot clearer. Sen. Riegle was to be our first target. I wondered - how do you handle a politician? I suppose under the politician's mask, there's an everyday person just like me.

During the get-acquainted dinner tonight, everyone is asked to introduce themselves. Some people are so witty and try to outdo the ones before them. I wish I could do that... maybe with practice... like Charlie, for example. Charlie asked that no one condemn the Post Office because "20 years ago, you could mail a letter for 4 cents and it got there in one day. Now it costs 20 cents and takes five days to get there. And that, my friends, is still only 4 cents a day."

March 30, 1982

It's coffee and rolls with Sen. Riegle this morning at the Rayburn Building. The senator is quite the - ahh - speaker. I can see that between politician's long-winded speeches and a lot of topics to cover, we'll have trouble getting any question time in.

Sen. Riegle comes across as a very pleasant, warm man. He explained his position on defense spending. I don't think he totally understood Farm Bureau's position on the cuts in entitlement programs. He sort of talked like Social Security was the only entitlement program there is.

Time ran out fast, but I got a few minutes to present him with a copy of

Rural Living and a "Real Seal" cup, and gave his aide a "Real Seal" pin to promote the use of real dairy products.



It's a beautiful, warm, sunny day. The cherry blossoms aren't out yet, but the daffodils and some tulips are in bloom. We head for the Senate buildings, walking past the Library of Congress, the east capitol lawn, the Supreme Court. We pay 10 cents to a little boy to take our picture.

I have some mixed feelings about the office buildings. The high ceilings and doorways make me feel small. Maybe that's good in a way. Those powerful men and women have something to remind them of their purpose, get them back on the right track when they forget where their power comes from. On the other hand there's a lot of wasted space and wasted energy.

The stairways are beautiful with their brass rails and marble steps. Everything here seems to be marble, giving a cold, impersonal feeling. It surprised me to see how eagles can be

Farm prices, taxes and social programs were among the issues Nash discussed with her congressman, Rep. Don Albosta.



put in, on, under and beside everything. When it's not eagles - it's stars! There's an awesome kind of beauty about everything and the realization that most of our country's history was made here adds to the awe.

After the tour of the capitol, we sit on the steps for awhile to rest our toes in barefoot warmth. Oh, it feels good!

It's time for our meeting with officials at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It amazes me, so far, that the people we've met limit the time for questions to near zero. Makes you wonder if there's something they don't want to talk about. I was impressed, however, with the comments made by Seeley Lodwick, undersecretary for international affairs and commodity programs, who congratulated us on our policy development process.

"It's probably one of the most elaborate, one of the most sophisticated, one of the most dedicated processes that any organization has any place," he said. "It involves a lot of work on the county level, the state and national levels, and the end result that you have is certainly familiar to many of us in the department.

"There are copies throughout the various agencies and although I'm not going to tell you it's among the best sellers, it certainly is referred to often," Lodwick said.

He's talking about OUR policy book! Remember that as policy development time nears and you're wondering whether you have time to be involved.

A subway ride, a journey on the world's longest escalator, dinner (doesn't anyone in Washington speak English?), a visit to the Hyatt Regency's "calorie bowl" . . . thank goodness it's bedtime.

Wednesday, March 31

Today is going to be my busiest day, starting with breakfast. It's raining as we travel to the Capitol Hill Club where we'll be meeting with our Michigan congressional delegation.

During breakfast, we talk with Congressman Albosta and his aide, Charlie Ehrlich, about the budget and the cuts we think should be made. Albosta states that it is time to stop giving oil companies the tax breaks. He thinks it's time we stop exporting our grain for nothing - or close to it - and proposes we use the grain for gasohol, keeping the dollars at home.

I was rather impressed with my congressman upon this first meeting, but I can't help but wonder . . . how much of it is frosting on the cake? Perhaps in the future, there should be time planned for the districts to meet and compare notes and impressions after the breakfast.

Albosta admires my "Proud to be a Farmer" pin, so I give it to him. I'll have to get more just for such occasions.

At 10 a.m., I have an appointment with Fredrick J. Ryan, special assistant to the president of the United States! I suppose our only function here is a promotional one, but I feel it's important to promote our industry any time we can.

Following our appointment with Ryan, we get a tour of the White House that few people have the opportunity to enjoy - thanks to Netta Dickey of Ryan's office. We are taken down to the service entrance by the kitchens and up the back steps. Netta points out the private living quarters of the first family. We see the president's private theatre, which Netta says no

one is allowed to enter except the president's family. Just then a man on the phone motions for us to come in and look around.

We look into the president's library, which he uses every day. Across the hall from the library is a portrait of Betty Ford, a truly beautiful woman. Netta tells us that Mrs. Reagan is truly devoted to her husband and is not especially interested in special projects like many other first ladies. Her whole purpose in life is her husband.

We see the east room with its hardwood floors, four fireplaces and three chandeliers that reflect in the huge mirrors. The east room is where Caroline Kennedy learned to roller skate! This is something special. I feel kind of tingly knowing this is once-in-a-lifetime experience. We see the green room, the blue room, the red room (which has invisible doors!), the state dining room and go past the oval office. The president is there! I've always been a good window peeker, but not good enough this time.

We finish the tour just in time for our appointment with Jack Burgess, President Reagan's deputy assistant for public liaison. Of all our meetings in Washington, Burgess was the only one who took notes during our visit.

This meeting involved our knowledgeable, articulate state leaders, but I got a word in, too, and it seemed to count. I said we were in favor of the long-range plans we're seeing and are willing to stick with them. We want to see the two to three year programs discontinued and start planning for the future.

I felt the best about this meeting as far as believing he will take our suggestions and pass them along!

"The attitude that farmers should only worry about the farm worries me most."

After a candy bar for lunch, and a quick stop at the Post Office to mail cards back home, we head back up the Hill. Dwight is lost, can't figure out where he is! I've figured out where the capitol sits and I think I'm going to make it. This is great! I'm glad I was sent here. I can't believe it!

Our appointment with Sen. Levin is at 3:15 p.m. at the Russell Building. He doesn't impress me as much as I thought he would. He knows very little about the farm, but I think if we worked with him, he might come around to see our viewpoint. He acts like he is trying to be nice enough to win a vote, but not willing to listen wholeheartedly.

Next is our appointment with Congressman Albosta. Don talks and talks and talks. . . . He is very much in favor of using the surplus corn in distilleries for fuel. He seems resentful that Farm Bureau did not support him in his bid for reelection "because of his education vote." He believes that Farm Bureau should stick with strictly farm issues, like organized labor sticks with labor issues. They don't give him any trouble, he says.

I pointed out that we are farmers, but we are also consumers. We feel that as individuals our voice can get lost, but as an organization we can have more of an impact on our surroundings.

He also opposes our position on welfare. When I pointed out that we did not get upset when deserving people received welfare checks - it's when the 18-year-old goes in the store with a \$50 coupon, buys \$12 worth of beer and takes the rest in change to spend on drugs - that we object to - he had to agree.

Our last night in Washington. With all the fun, there is a little sadness that our time has gone so fast. It is nearly over. By noon tomorrow we'll be on our way home. There is still so much to do. I feel like I've only touched the tip of the iceberg. I can't believe it went this fast. . . .

April 1, 1982

We tour the new offices of the American Farm Bureau Federation, which is just across the street from our

hotel, and meet some of the staff members. We take a cab to the Washington Monument. The view from the top of the monument is unbelievable! I look out at the old executive building and the White House and that rush of excitement of the previous day comes back.

Time for a visit to the Smithsonian before going to the airport. We take a few last pictures and then hail a cab (new phrase!). Even though I miss the kids and home, I am somehow sad about leaving. We had a productive stay, but there seems so much more to do.

The attitude that farmers should only worry about the farm, worries me the most, I think. I am a farmer and proud of it, but I am also a mother. I have interests in education and I have always been interested in child welfare programs. I want my voice heard on these subjects and if I can belong to an organization which supports my beliefs - I will support that organization.

I also have interests in labor because my family (father, brothers, sister) are

affected by labor's problems. In the long run, so am I.

In my opinion, Farm Bureau has a consistent record of supporting the farmers' position. I believe that if Farm Bureau and its members limited themselves to farm problems alone, it would be a detriment to the organization and its members. Most farmers don't have time to belong to 20 different organizations. They want "one that does it all." That's what Farm Bureau is developing.

The flight home seems shorter, bumpier, and the landing is a real experience. But we're back in Michigan again. At home, the kids greet us with hugs, kisses and a sign that says "Welcome Home," signed by all the family.

This trip has really broadened my sights on life. Maybe it's because the excitement hasn't worn off yet. I prefer to believe that it is a new turn in my life, a new beginning. Just where it will lead is not clear. But it is clear that I am ready and enthusiastic about this new expansion - wherever it may lead!



The Farm Bureau policy book is one of the best read reference books in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Undersecretary Seeley Lodwick tells Nash and MFB President Elton Smith.

Election Rhetoric Clouds Issues



Montcalm County Farm Bureau member Charles Mulholland (left), says that meetings with his congressman, Rep. Hal Sawyer, opened his eyes to the far-reaching influence of government policy decisions.

"My recent visit to Washington, D.C., convinced me that the policies of our government have more impact on our farms than most of us realize."

This was the conclusion of L. Charles Mulholland, who served as Montcalm County Farm Bureau's legislative leader in Washington, D.C., March 29-April 1. Many of the 106 farmers who participated in the 22nd annual Washington Legislative Seminar, sponsored by Michigan Farm Bureau Women, agreed with Mulholland's observation.

The key issues discussed in group and individual sessions with congressmen were inflation and government spending, marketing and bargaining legislation, farm exports, food safety legislation, and health care cost deductions for self-employed persons. It didn't take the Michigan farmers long to become acutely aware that the outcome of these concerns would rest with decision-makers in the nation's capital, some of whom had little or no knowledge of how their decisions would impact the viability of farms back home.

It was their "mission" to try to convince the decision-makers that Farm Bureau policies on these issues were the best direction for agriculture and the nation. That was not always easy in this election year, with politicians anxious to do most of the convincing.

"The impossible budget" was the phrase Sen. Don Riegle used to describe the president's proposed budget during a meeting on the first morning with the farmers who had traveled to Washington to reaffirm their support of President Reagan's economic recovery program.

The senator agreed with their concerns regarding the size of the proposed deficit and its role in keeping interest rates high. But, unlike the Farm Bureau members, he did not feel that entitlement programs were the "worst offenders." Rather, he zeroed in on the proposed budget for national defense and the "exotic weapons" which he believes are not needed. This, he told the farmers, will be the "center of the issue" in upcoming budget battles.

During the congressional breakfast at the Capitol Hill Club the next day,

Sen. Carl Levin charged the Farm Bureau members with being "inconsistent" in their policy of supporting the president's economic recovery program and urging that the proposed budget be cut. "You can't have it both ways," the senator said. He also stated there was "no alternative" to deferring the tax cuts passed last year, action which Farm Bureau opposes.

In addition to Levin, the meeting was attended by Congressmen Broomfield, Pursell, Wolpe, Siljander, Sawyer, Traxler, Albosta, Bonior, Dunn and Blanchard (who told the group he hoped to be their next governor), and aides to Congressmen Kildee and Hertel. Congressman Davis met separately with his constituents the following morning at their hotel headquarters.

Following the congressional breakfast, MFB President Elton R. Smith expressed disappointment that "not one of the legislators recommended cutting the size of government or addressed the issue of entitlement programs which are causing us so much problem in the growth and size of government spending. Sooner or later, Congress is going to have to face up to the fact that we have not cut the size of government. It's still growing; all we've done is slow down the rate of growth."

Smith also said Farm Bureau could not support delaying the tax cuts. "This would stop the economic recovery program from ever having a chance to be successful."

He denied that the organization was inconsistent in its policies of supporting the economic recovery program while asking for deficit decreases. We can cut the deficit by cutting the size of government, he said.

When the Farm Bureau group arrived back at Detroit Metro Airport following their three days of intensive lobbying in the nation's capitol, President Smith said, "I think it was important for our farm leaders to be in Washington, D.C., at this particular time expressing their views on key issues to their congressmen and other key decision-makers. Hopefully, our visits with them had a positive impact."

Front and Center

Governor's Conference on the Horse Industry: Michigan's horse industry, contributing about \$1.5 billion annually to the state's economy, has potential for significant economic expansion. To what extent is what Gov. Milliken wants to learn, so he's called a Conference on the Horse Industry for June 2-3 at Long's Convention Center in Lansing. Dr. Paul Kindinger of MSU's Cooperative Extension Service and one of the coordinators of last year's Governor's Conference on Agriculture, will serve as coordinator.

The first bill to come out of the Regulatory Review Task Force (a recommendation from the Governor's Conference on Agriculture) is H.B. 5004, which repeals the regulation for cattle producers to have their animals tested for TB prior to sale within the state. There has not been a case of TB in Michigan cattle in 15 years and it is estimated that the bill will save farmers about \$100,000 a year. The bill only affects cattle sold within Michigan; cattle coming in or going out of the state will still have to be tested. The task force is chaired by Lt. Gov. Brickley.

MFB makes gain over last year. With 72,346 memberships as of April 16, the organization reached the "gain" benchmark. And another benchmark is in sight. When membership workers surpass the 72,361 mark, they will have exceeded the all-time high for Michigan Farm Bureau membership. Twenty-one counties have reached goal as *Rural Living* goes to press.

AFBF and MFB Forestry Advisory Committees will use an FB-produced film documentary to inform and educate farm landowners regarding the need to manage and expand woodlots for increased profitability. Through interviews with growers, landowners and foresters in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, California and Georgia, the film introduces timber production as an agricultural crop which can be managed for profit. This film will be available soon through the Michigan Farm Bureau.

An editorial apology to Congressman Jim Dunn (R-East Lansing) for identifying him as a Democrat in the April issue of *Rural Living*. Dunn, a Republican, has added his name as a co-sponsor to agricultural marketing and bargaining legislation (H.R. 4975), which FB supports.

Farmers of the Week

The Farmer of the Week program, co-sponsored by Farm Bureau Insurance Group and the Michigan Farm Radio Network, honors Michigan farmers for their contributions to the community and the agriculture industry. March 1982 recipients were:

March 1 - Richard Marshall, 58, is a beef cattle farmer from Concord who farms 1,000 acres. He is a member and past president of the Calhoun County FB; director of the Federal Lank Bank of Concord Hills; past Albion Elevator Co. president; and a member of Progressive Farmers, a local group formed to exchange agricultural information.

March 8 - Robert Conrad, 60, is a cash crop farmer who farms 325 acres near Scottville. Conrad is active in his church. He served as a township supervisor, township assessor and a Mason County Zoning Appeal Board member. He is active in the Mason County Farm Bureau, and his wife, Ann, is county FB secretary.

March 15 - Edward Johnson, 44, a dairy farmer from Daggett, farms 450 acres and milks 55 cows. He is Menominee County DHIA president; county ASCS committee chairperson; Menominee County FB vice president; Upper Peninsula Holstein Assn. secretary-treasurer; a church deacon; and a past member of MFB's Policy Development Committee. Johnson also taught high school for 17 years.

March 22 - Verne Macke, 54, a dairyman and cash crop grower from Bronson, farms 950 acres and milks 72 cows in partnership with his son. Macke is a past local DHIA president; a county ASCS committee member; a Branch County FB member; and he belongs to the local Lutheran church.

March 29 - Charles Winn, 44, is a lifelong dairy farmer from Richmond. He farms 670 acres and milks 50 cows. He serves as a deacon, Sunday School teacher, and Sunday School superintendent for his Baptist church. He is a 4-H livestock sale committee member, a past president of the local MPA chapter and served four years on the Memphis School Board and six years on the DHIA board, including five years as treasurer.



County Newsletter

The county Farm Bureau newsletter is published monthly by the Michigan Farm Bureau, P.O. Box 30960, Lansing, Mich. 48909. Subscription price to members, \$1.25 per year, included in the annual membership dues.

Blue Cross Blue Shield Claims Can Still be Filed

We know, we know.

You've been meaning to take care of it, but you've just been too busy the last year-and-a-half. Or perhaps you've been avoiding sending anything by mail as your own personal protest against the postal service's seemingly endless series of rate increases.

If you're desperate for an excuse, there's always the time-honored, oops-my-dog-ate-it plea.

Whatever the reason, take heart. . . Blue Cross Blue Shield Master Medical Claims from as far back as Oct. 1, 1980 (and on through Dec. 31, 1981) can still be filed.

To determine whether or not you

have this Master Medical coverage, merely check your BCBS identification card for group number 93762.

Master Medical covers a number of services, among them office calls, ambulance requests, prescriptions, artificial limbs, allergy tests and insulin injection. The plan does include a \$100 deductible clause.

It is important to note, though, that while you still have time to file a number of past health care charges, the grace period does have a deadline. Make sure that you take the steps necessary to file those old claims in the next few weeks. And, as always, if you have any questions you need answered, contact the county FB secretary.

Over \$258,480 Paid to FBS and FPC Member-Patrons

Farm Bureau Services, Inc. and Farmers Petroleum Cooperative, Inc. made patronage payments of more than \$258,480 on March 12, 1982 to member-patrons who did business with cooperatives in 1980 and 1981. Of this amount, \$189,610 was retained on the companies' records in the stockholders' names as equity.

As cooperatives, FBS and FPC distribute all earnings resulting from business transacted with stockholder-patrons. The retained equities are used by the regional cooperatives to finance improvements in services and facilities for their members.



Speak Loudly and Carry a Small Stick

By

Myra Hand

Cheboygan County Farm Bureau



Who ever said "speak softly and carry a big stick" did not have Michigan farmers in mind. I think if agriculture is to remain a healthy industry we must do just the opposite: "speak loudly and carry a small stick."

We hear often that the percentage of Americans who are farmers is a shy 3 percent. Some figures show as low as 2 percent. Do you know what percentage of Michiganders are farmers? According to John VanderMolen of Michigan Farm Bureau, the figure is only .09 percent. That sure makes us a minority!

How can .09 percent of the population speak softly and still expect to be heard? Our voices are sure to be lost if we don't speak loudly to let the rest of the people know what we have to offer them in food and fiber and what it takes for us to produce it. We also must let our legislators know what regulations and laws do to help or hinder us. We can't expect them to

know what our complicated businesses need!

Don't think we are being selfish if we are only .09 percent but still want people to understand our problems and want them to help us. Studies show that between 30 and 40 percent of the Michigan population depends on agriculture for some part of their incomes. These are farm workers, processing plant operators, machinery dealers and builders, truckers, grain elevators, money lenders, etc. We aren't being selfish wanting our farms to be profitable if that many people depend on us!

The ways to make ourselves heard are innumerable: newspapers, TV, radio, school programs, letters to congressmen and the press, rural urban programs, fair and mall displays, program speakers, and being active in other organizations. Find the way you are best at and speak so you can be heard.

The small stick I feel we farmers should carry is the gavel. I know the gavel is usually the symbol of the president, but I mean it to refer to any of the offices or positions of authority: vice president, secretary, treasurer, committee heads, editors, directors, delegates, etc.

I'm not talking about just Farm Bureau either. I mean all organizations: township government, county positions, school boards, churches, etc. Many of these organizations often lack, and sometimes need, the voice of the farmer or rural people. As few of us as there are, we all need to be active on several levels.

By carrying this small stick we can help the farmer's voice be heard a little louder and clearer. Think about it and I hope you will agree the Michigan farmer should speak loudly and carry a small stick.

Member Life Offers 125% Increase in Protection at No Extra Cost

There's good news for all Farm Bureau members who renew their Member Life Insurance policies. They will continue to receive a 125 percent increase over their policy's original benefits throughout the policy year of April 1, 1982 to March 31, 1983.

"It may be a little hard to believe in this age of inflation, but we're more than doubling the Member Life Insurance benefits without raising the cost by a single cent," said Robert Wiseman, executive vice president of Farm Bureau Insurance Group. "The 125 percent increase in benefits that was in effect for the 1981-82 policy year will

continue in effect for the entire 1982-83 Member Life policy year."

Here is an example of what the 125 percent increase means for a Farm Bureau member and his or her spouse: The original policy schedule shows \$5,180 coverage on the named member at age 30 and \$1,000 on the spouse. Under the 125 percent increase, these amounts become \$11,655 on the member and \$2,250 on the spouse.

"In other words, to figure the new level of benefits, just multiply the benefit amounts in the original policy schedule by 2.25," Wiseman said.

"Scheduled benefits vary according to age, although the flat cost for any Farm Bureau member is only \$25 a year."

Members enrolling for the first time will receive benefits as listed in the original policy schedule, although they will be eligible for any benefit increases that may be declared when they renew their policies. Increases ranging from 10 percent to the current high of 125 percent have been declared each year since the inception of the Member Life program eight years ago. To find out more about the program, call your local Farm Bureau Insurance agent.

Always Put Safety First

By George J. Wizner
Clinton County Farm Bureau

We are now at a time of the year when we farmers are getting busy, many times over tired. One area of concern should be the handling and use of on farm chemicals. Modern agriculture requires the use of numerous chemicals. Herbicides, fungicides, pesticides and fertilizers all should be handled with care and caution. We are responsible to protect ourselves and the environment.

Prompt treatment for victims of agricultural accidents is vital to protect the victim from further injury. Have the emergency phone number of the poison center nearest you posted where it can be used in a moment's notice.

Always follow label recommendations on handling, rates, crop use and proper disposal of containers. Check out your application equipment every year, replace worn out parts, wear proper protective clothing. It's always a good idea to let someone know which farm or field you are working on.

Safety should be one of our top priorities, most of us could not be replaced as the operator if we are injured.



In Balance With Nature

By Dr. John Carew

In the beginning

There was Earth: beautiful and wild;
And then man came to dwell.

At first, he lived like other animals
Feeding himself on creatures and
plants around him.

And this was called IN BALANCE
WITH NATURE.

Soon man multiplied.

He grew tired of ceaseless hunting
for food;

He built homes and villages.

Wild plants and animals were
domesticated.

Some men became Farmers so that
others might be Industrialists,
Artists, or Doctors.

And this was called Society.

Man and Society progressed.

With his God-given ingenuity, man
learned to feed, clothe, protect,
and transport himself more
efficiently so he might enjoy Life.

He built cars, houses on top of each
other, and nylon.

And life was more enjoyable.

The men called Farmers became
efficient.

A single farmer grew food for 41
Industrialists, Artists and Doctors.

And Writers, Engineers, and
Teachers, as well.

To protect his crops and animals,
the Farmer produced substances to
repel or destroy Insects, Diseases,
and Weeds.

These were called Pesticides.

Similar substances were made by
Doctors to protect humans.

These were called Medicine.

The Age of Science had arrived and

with it came better diet and longer,
happier lives for more members
of Society.

Soon it came to pass

That certain well-fed members of
Society

Disapproved of the Farmer using
Science.

They spoke harshly of his techniques
for feeding, protecting, and
preserving plants and animals.

They deplored his upsetting the
Balance of Nature:

They longed for the Good Old Days.
And this had emotional appeal to the
rest of Society.

By this time, Farmers had become so
efficient, Society gave them a new
title:

Unimportant Minority.

Because Society could not ever
imagine a shortage of food

Laws were passed abolishing
Pesticides, Fertilizers, and Food
Preservatives.

Insects, Diseases, and Weeds
flourished.

Crops and animals died.

Food became scarce.

To survive, Industrialists, Artists, and
Doctors were forced to grow their
own food.

They were not very efficient.

People and governments fought wars
to gain more agricultural land.

Millions of people were exterminated.
The remaining few lived like animals.

Feeding themselves on creatures and
plants around them.

And this was called IN BALANCE
WITH NATURE.

Member Life insurance for you and your family. . .

At only \$25 a year, it's worth a lot more than you bargained for



Here's good news for Farm Bureau members who renew their Member Life policies. The 125% increase in Member Life benefits that was in effect for the 1981-82 policy year will continue in effect for the entire policy year of April 1, 1982 to March 31, 1983.

That means renewing members and their families will receive more than double the life insurance protection listed in the original policy schedule, and it won't cost a cent more in premiums.

Member Life, an exclusive member benefit from the Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company of Michigan, now protects more than 7,000 Michigan Farm Bureau families. Although the amount of protection varies according to the member's age and family composition, the cost for any Farm Bureau member is only \$25 a year.

Members enrolling in the program for the first time will receive benefits as listed in the original policy schedule, although they will be eligible for any benefit increases that may be declared when they renew their policies. Increases ranging from 10% to the current high of 125% have been declared each year since the inception of Member Life eight years ago.

To find out more about Member Life and its special features, call your local Farm Bureau Insurance Group agent.

Member Life. . . a lot of value for only \$25 a year.

We're working to make your future a little more predictable

**FARM BUREAU
INSURANCE
GROUP**



FARM BUREAU MUTUAL • FARM BUREAU LIFE • COMMUNITY SERVICE INSURANCE • 10 ANNUITY

Grow Some Green \$tuff on Your Back Forty

You don't have to be a forestry expert to make money on your woodlot.

Even if you can't distinguish a maple from a spruce, you can produce timber and make a profit. How? By knowing who to call for help.

Government organizations and the forest products industry offer various services - many free of charge - to help small woodlot owners increase production and improve the quality of their timber.

Timber production from private woodlots is expected to become increasingly important as Michigan's forestry industry enters an expansion period, says Ken Nye, commodity specialist for the Michigan Farm Bureau. "In the next twenty or thirty years the demand for forest products should double," he says "and with commercial and state owned forestland already producing at near capacity, much of the additional timber production will need to come from the private woodlot."

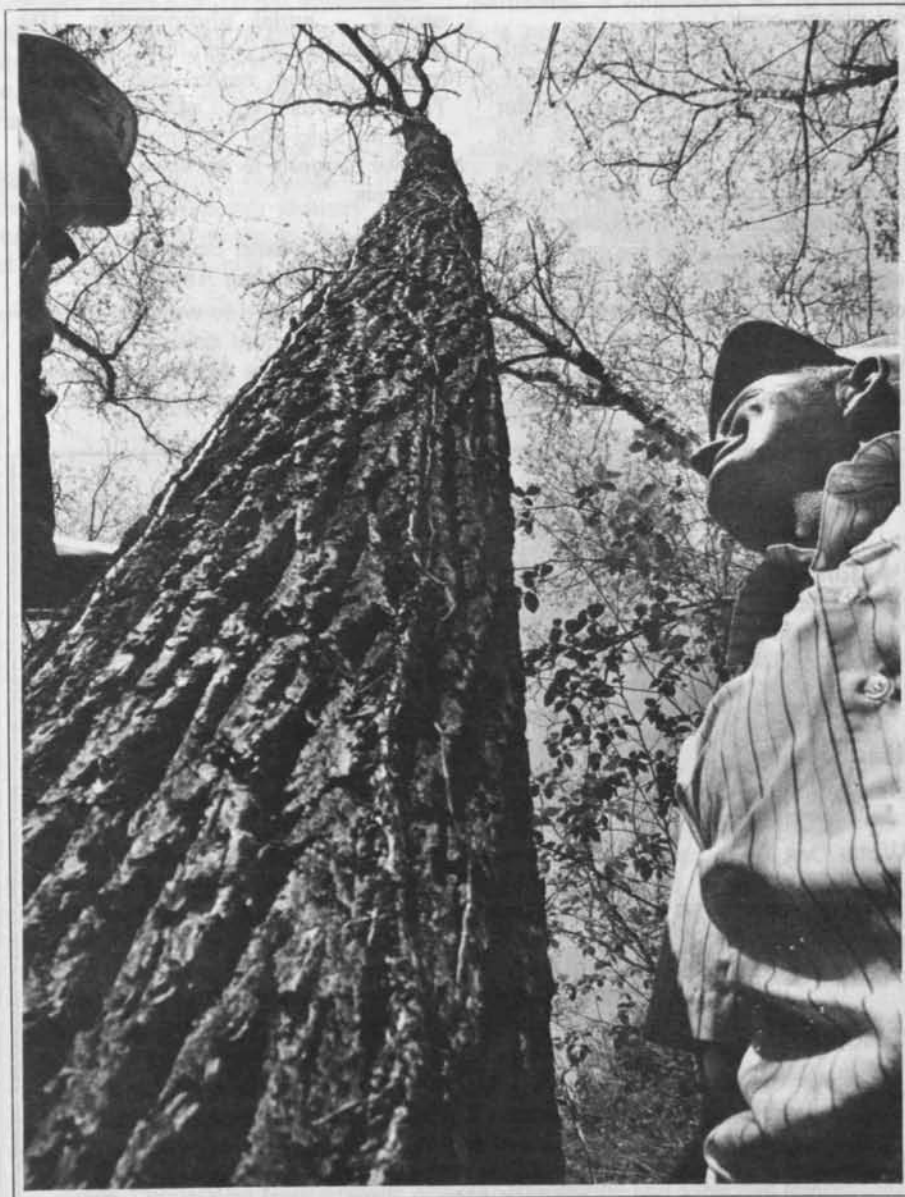
Nye points out that the forest industry has already made significant investments in the state for new processing facilities. "New processing plants, with an investment value of nearly one billion dollars, have been built by several major forest products companies."

The forest products industry is currently an important economic force, but investment of this sort points to an important growth period ahead for the industry.

Because good timber stand management is the key to increased production, government and private industry offer various financial, technical and educational assistance programs. All are geared to help forestland owners increase timber production and quality.

Educational Assistance

Managing your woodlot to produce the highest possible volume of good quality timber can begin with the Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service office in your county. County Extension staff can help you track down forestland management



assistance programs and resources in your area.

Extension also offers a variety of printed publications on forestland management and frequent seminars and workshops.

Financial Assistance

If you have at least a 10 acre woodlot and your land is good enough to produce a reasonable volume of timber, you're probably eligible for financial assistance.

The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) offers a co-sharing program to owners of hardwood stands and pine plantations.

"The cost share plan was designed by Congress to provide an incentive for small woodlot owners to invest in timber production," explains Nye. "Woodlot owners can recover up to 65 percent of their planting and timber stand improvement costs through the program."

Government and Industry Assistance Is Available for Woodlot Management

All you have to do is apply for cost-share assistance at the ASCS office in your county or district. (ASCS is listed in the U.S. government section of your phone book.)

Once your application is filled out, ASCS will refer a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) service forester to you for a visit to your property. The DNR forester will provide you with a management plan and timber stand improvement recommendations.

After your application for cost-share assistance is approved, you may complete your improvements and receive a refund on part of your expenses from ASCS. The program covers labor costs, equipment rental, planting

stock, etc. The actual percentage of expenses covered (up to 65 percent) will vary from county to county.

ASCS also offers another valuable service - aerial photographs. The photographs can often make management planning easier and quicker. They serve as a map of your woodlot and can help you document changes in your property as photos are taken at intervals.

Timber Stand Improvement and Planting Assistance

There's no need to worry if you're a forest management novice. If you apply for cost-share assistance through ASCS, your DNR service forester will

provide management assistance and show you what to do.

The DNR, however, has suffered serious budget and staff cuts. Consequently, service foresters are generally only available to help landowners in the northern two-thirds of the state - from Oceana County (west) to Bay County (east) and all counties north of that line.

In some Michigan counties, the Soil Conservation District (SCD) office may also provide some management assistance. Check with the SCD office in your county.

The SCD office is usually a good source for planting stock. Generally, the SCD offers good quality trees at lower than average prices.

Private Forest Consultants

Public organizations, such as the ASCS, DNR and SCD, can help you finance and formulate plans for planting and improving your woodlot. However, their responsibilities end there.

What do you do when it's time to harvest and market your timber? Many woodlot owners use consultants to increase the profits from their timberland.

Private consultants can completely handle the sale of your timber, from assessing its value, making arrangements with bidders, to handling timber sale contracts.

Because consultants are usually paid a commission or percentage (generally 10 to 20 percent) of the timber sale price, it's in their best interests to do a good job for you and to get the best possible price.

If for some reason you don't have access to a DNR forester, a private consultant can also formulate a management and timber stand improvement plan for you. This service is usually billed at an hourly rate.

Lists of private industry consultants are available through the Department of Natural Resources, Forest Management Division, P.O. Box 30028, Lansing, Mich. 48909; Gerald Keiser, Michigan Association of Consulting Foresters, 7528 South Straits Highway, Indian River, Mich. 49749; or the local Cooperative Extension office.

How Much Is Your Woodlot Worth?

Money doesn't grow on trees - or does it? If you have a woodlot out in your back forty, it could be worth a small fortune.

The following shows some industry uses of Michigan hardwoods and softwoods and their market value per board foot (MFP).

Tree Variety	Uses	MFP Price*
Hardwoods		
Black Walnut	Cabinets, furniture, gunstocks	up to \$1,500
White Oak	Furniture, veneer, interior trim, flooring, railroad ties, barrels, kegs	\$250 - \$450
Northern Red Oak	General construction, railroad ties, veneer, hardwood flooring, furniture	\$200 - \$360
Yellow Birch	Furniture, interior trim, woodenware, and spools	\$200 - \$350
Yellow Poplar	Furniture, cabinets, veneer production	\$150 - \$200
Sugar Maple	Bowling pins, flooring, woodenware	up to \$270
American Basswood	Woodenware, boxes, furniture, veneer, carved wood novelties	\$160 - \$200
Softwoods		
White Cedar	Saw timber, telephone poles, and pulpwood	\$250 - \$350
White Pine, Red Pine, White Spruce, Balsam Fir, Hemlock, and Cedar	Pulpwood and timber	\$25 - \$75

*Veneer Market Price. Selling price information is based on statewide averages and may vary.

New Tax Incentives Improve Investment for Profit Opportunities in Forestry

Tax Incentives for Forest Management

Recently enacted changes in the tax laws pertaining to reforestation investment offer incentives for landowners to manage their timber for profit.

Amendments to existing law provide tax incentives to private landowners. Title III, Sections 301 and 302 of P.L. 96-451, permit the taxpayer to claim amortization deductions of up to \$10,000 over a seven year period for reforestation expenditures incurred during a single year and adds reforestation expenditures to the list of items that qualify for the regular 10 percent investment tax credit.

The credit would be limited to expenditures of \$10,000 or less in any one year and the amortization and investment credit for certain reforestation expenditures would apply to qualifying reforestation expenses incurred after Dec. 31, 1979.

Under the old law, costs for site preparation, seedlings, planting, etc., had to be capitalized. These costs were not recovered for tax purposes until the timber was harvested. Since the new law allows amortization of these costs over a seven year period, the landowner can recover his costs for tax purposes in a much shorter time period. However, currently deductible costs, such as precommercial thinning and other cultural treatments not associated with establishing a timber stand, don't qualify for amortization.

Qualifying timber property is defined as property held for commercial production of timber. Shelter belts are excluded and, at present, Christmas tree production does not qualify under the provisions of the law.

Management Help From Industry

Large wood products companies also may provide management assistance to woodlot owners. You can check with these firms to find out if management services are available in your area.

Many Michigan Farm Bureau members are currently involved in forestry production - from the management of a small woodlot for additional farm income to the full-scale cultivation of Christmas trees, softwood or hardwood tree varieties.

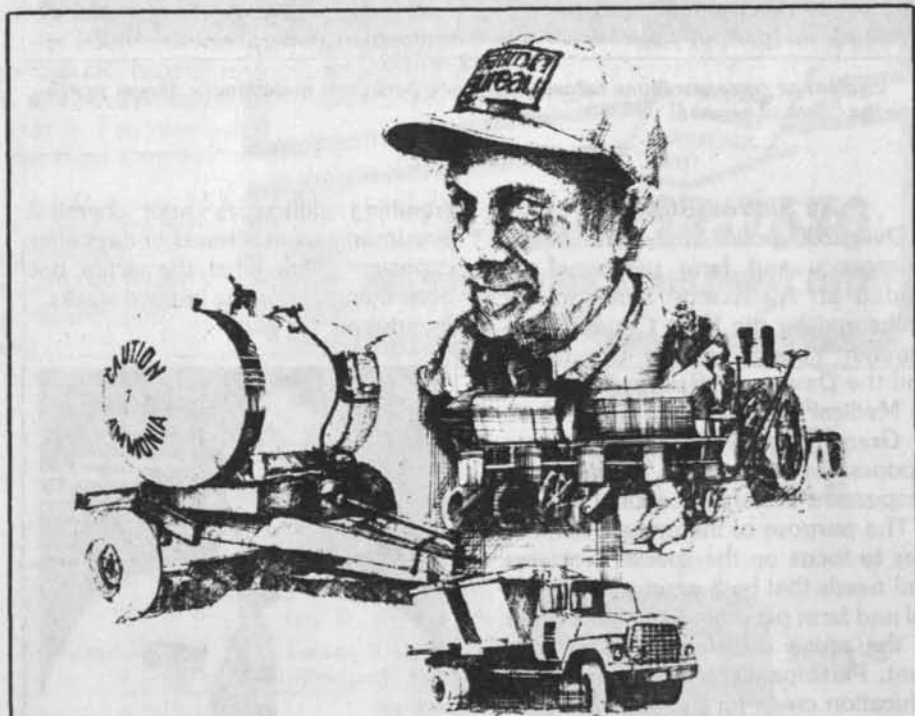
"Because timber producers have many of the same problems as producers in other agricultural commodities, Farm Bureau has established advisory committees to the boards of directors of the American Farm Bureau Federation and the Michigan Farm Bureau," Nye says.

These committees monitor state and national legislation, regulation and markets for the forestry industry and make recommendations to the board of directors whenever issues arise

which may affect the industry or the landowner.

In Michigan, the forestry advisory committee is composed of 10 members nominated by county Farm Bureaus. The American Farm Bureau advisory committee is composed of 14 members from the timber producing states.

Don Shirley, Copper Country Farm Bureau member and timber producer, serves as chairperson of both the AFBF and MFB committees.



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Equipment demonstrations helped emergency personnel to determine danger points in the "flow of power."

By Sharon Steffens

Over 200 police, fire, ambulance, emergency and farm personnel attended an Ag Rescue Seminar, co-sponsored by the Kent County Farm Bureau Young Farmer Committee and the Davenport College Emergency Medical Services Unit, on April 10 in Grand Rapids. The Kent County Cooperative Extension Service also cooperated in the educational effort.

The purpose of the unique seminar was to focus on the special problems and needs that both emergency medical and farm personnel may encounter at the scene of an agricultural accident. Participants received continuing education credit for the seminar.

Seminar participants included representatives from 23 fire companies, five police and sheriff units, six emergency medical units and seven ambulance crews, including one from as far away as Grand Traverse County.

George M. Brown, of the Department of Agricultural Engineering, Michigan State University, conducted the morning program covering rescue procedures, personal protection, farm machinery, equipment hazards, first-aid and patient transport, material hazards, toxic atmospheres and cave-ins.

Brown stressed that emergency personnel need to "look for clues when they arrive at a farm." Sometimes the cause of the accident is not readily apparent as with silo gas, which results in

breathing difficulties and chemical pneumonia usually hours or days after exposure. "Ask what the victim has been doing during the last two weeks," he advised.



George Brown

In discussing farm machinery, Brown cautioned that you remove the equipment from the victim, not the victim from the equipment. If you follow the "flow of power" or the "flow of agricultural production" through the machinery, you can discover the danger points, he said.

Brown has been attempting - unsuccessfully thus far - to convince equipment manufacturers of the need for standardizing the methods of shutting down a tractor. He suggests they should all use a key because emergen-

Kent Young Farmers Focus on Ag Rescue Preparedness

cy personnel or farm family members unfamiliar with a machine could shut it off quickly in an emergency.

"Teamwork is critical within agencies and between them," Brown said. As an example he discussed the use of anhydrous ammonia fertilizer, which is extremely toxic. Most accidents are caused by the breaking or misuse of a hose or plugged tubes. Eighty-five percent of the accidents involve the face. He said the use of chemical goggles and gloves by farmers is critical.

The need for team work became apparent when he startled the group with the information that it takes 1,300 gallons of water to dilute one gallon of anhydrous ammonia. Therefore, when the ambulance crew or police get a call to come to an anhydrous ammonia accident, they should immediately call the Fire Department for a source of water, Brown said.

Much of Brown's presentation contained words of warning which farmers should heed to avoid accidents.

- Farm shops can be oxygen deficient, particularly in winter with doors closed and a wood stove burning. It creates a fatal carbon dioxide atmosphere in five to seven minutes in the average garage and a fatal concentration in 12 to 15 minutes.

- No one should ever try to weld galvanized steel which is coated with zinc because it releases zinc fumes into the air.

- In a grain bin, it only takes three seconds to cover a person when the auger is on. A rescuer must approach the victim from below by punching evenly-spaced holes in the silo three feet off the ground to let the grain out and reach the victim as fast as possible. Approaching from above does not work because the grain flows back on the victim.

In the afternoon, the Kent County Young Farmers demonstrated 13 different pieces of farm equipment and then discussed the flow of power or

In a farm emergency, agency teamwork is critical to saving lives.

product, the danger points and method of shutting down each piece of equipment. Every Kent County equipment dealer volunteered equipment for the seminar.

Culminating the session was a demonstration by emergency personnel using a "Hearst" tool to take apart an old corn picker.

Fritz Schweitzer, Alpine Township fire chief and fruit farmer, summarized his feelings regarding the seminar: "It was really needed by emergency personnel. A rescuer could make things worse if he didn't have some familiarity with the equipment."

Craig Schweitzer, event coordinator for the Kent County Young Farmer Committee, said: "Consideration is being given to conducting other seminars like this one, rotating counties and focusing on other areas such as fires on the farm or pesticide accidents."

He and John Singer, co-coordinator for the Davenport College Emergency Medical Services Unit, plan to develop a "how to" manual on organizing similar events. For more information, contact Schweitzer through the Kent County Farm Bureau Office at 616-784-1092.

Sharon Steffens is newsletter editor and information chairperson for Kent County Farm Bureau. She and her husband, John, operate a fruit farm in partnership with John's brother, Joe. They have five children.

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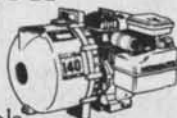


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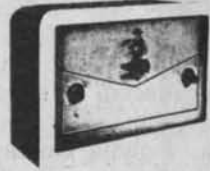
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Will Apathy Allow Animal Rights Groups to Win?

Animal rights advocates charge modern agriculture with promoting "factory farms." How will the farm community respond?

By Donna Wilber

Is Brer Rabbit our brother?

Do unhappy chickens sing?

Do pigs have an inherent need to wallow?

Is the animal rights movement a "red herring"? Will it go away if ignored?

Currently addressed as a moral issue, how long before it will become a serious economic issue - for both producers and consumers?

Will the general apathy of the agricultural community allow animal rights legislation to "slip through"?

Should good operators put peer pressure on the "one bad apple in a barrel" farmers who do not use good management practices?

How can agriculture counteract the misinformation regarding animal welfare without providing the activists with a platform for their message?

Is Al Cook a sadistic monster?

All these questions and more were discussed by leaders of the animal agriculture industry at an animal care meeting in Lansing on April 16, sponsored by the Michigan Farm Bureau. No concrete, unqualified answers were surfaced, except perhaps for the last question. Anyone who knows Al Cook, Ingham County poultry producer who serves on the MFB board, knows that he is a gentle man, not a sadistic monster.



Dr. Ullrey said that the issue of animal rights has been raised by those who know little about animals, especially farm animals. There is a mixture of truth and fiction in their information that confuses and misleads the average citizen, he said. The animal rights activists are very astute, though, in their organizational skills and are effective in dealing with the media and legislators.

He warned the group that proposed legislation, if enacted, could have a "serious negative impact on animal agriculture, animal research, and the productivity of farm families." The fact that legislation has been proposed indicates that congressmen have concerned constituents to whom they are listening, he said. Letters to congressmen which have spurred the introduction of animal rights legislation and its support have outnumbered - 1,000 to 1 - those received from concerned farmers, he reported, and urged that all farm organizations be informed on pending legislation and take appropriate action.

Of major concern to the farm leaders was the curriculum guide for school children, prepared and distributed by the Humane Society of the United States, which introduces the concept of animal rights and discourages the consumption of meat and the use of animal products and by-products. This curriculum guide has been introduced in Michigan and is being used in the Lenawee County school system.

Farm Bureau was successful in inserting its analysis of the curriculum guide (see Agronomic Update, page 26) in the information distributed to the teachers. Lenawee County Farm

In a slide presentation, Dr. Duane Ullrey of Michigan State University's Animal Science Department, used a picture of Cook and his son, Wayne, and posed that question to the group. "No, they are not monsters," he said, a picture animal rights activists are painting of modern-day animal agriculturists. "They are just people trying to make a living, who handle their animals with love and care. This is the story we need to share."

This was the second meeting called by Michigan Farm Bureau to discuss the animal welfare issue with other agricultural groups and agencies, and concern had raised considerably since the first such meeting, held last September. Activities by the animal rights activists and resulting publicity during the intervening six months had left no doubt that it was an issue that needed to be addressed by the agricultural community.

Present at this second meeting were representatives from the Michigan Live Stock Exchange, Michigan Beef Industry Commission, Michigan Allied Poultry Industries, Michigan Milk Producers Association, Michigan Pork Producers Association, Michigan Cattlemen's Association, Michigan Department of Agriculture, Michigan State University and the Cooperative Extension Service. Also involved were chairpersons of MFB's beef, dairy, poultry and swine state advisory committees.

Mixture of truth and fiction in animals rights publicity confuses and misleads the average citizen.

Bureau members have made personal contacts with teachers, expressing their concerns, providing them with the analysis, and offering qualified resource people.

"What concerns us," said Mike Kovacic, MFB's animal care project leader, "is that if the guide is in the schools of Lenawee County, an agricultural area, it's very likely that it is also in other schools and we aren't aware of it so we can take appropriate action."

Farm Bureau members have been urged to become involved in local humane societies, to serve on school boards and curriculum committees, and also to survey what agricultural information is currently available in school libraries and classrooms, he said.

Kovacic also discussed the "no veal this meal" campaign which has been launched by animal rightists protesting that milk-fed veal is "inhumanely raised." A group has called for the boycott of Burger King restaurants because of

their veal sandwich menu item, and "no veal this meal" cards are being distributed to Detroit area restaurants. Action sheets are also available, giving instructions to contact senators and representatives urging their support of the Mottl farm animal welfare bill.

This report raised the concern: "Will we be the next target?"

The group generally agreed that agriculture's "skirts are not entirely clean" and that all farmers need to look at their own operations and management practices and consider appropriate alternatives.

"No industry is free of practices or methods which need updating or change," Kovacic said. "We must have enough faith in agriculture and the land grant universities to believe that if better production systems exist, they will be found."

Helen Atwood, manager of the MFB Women's Department, reported on the "Ag Lessons in Schools" workshops sponsored by Farm Bureau Wo-

men. To date, over 200 members have been involved in the workshops, which are aimed at training farmers to take the positive story of agriculture into the schools. A follow-up to in-class presentations will be farm tours, she explained.

The group concluded that an organized, positive effort is necessary to address the animal welfare issue and will meet again in six months. In the meantime, each organization will continue its own efforts to raise member awareness of the issue and educate the general public about production agriculture. Cooperative efforts, such as Farm Bureau and the Cooperative Extension Service working to involve 4-H and FFA youth in educational projects, will also be under consideration.

In closing the session, MFB Vice President Jack Laurie, who chaired the meeting, said, "I know of no better way to tackle a problem of mutual concern than sitting down together and sharing ideas on how to solve it."

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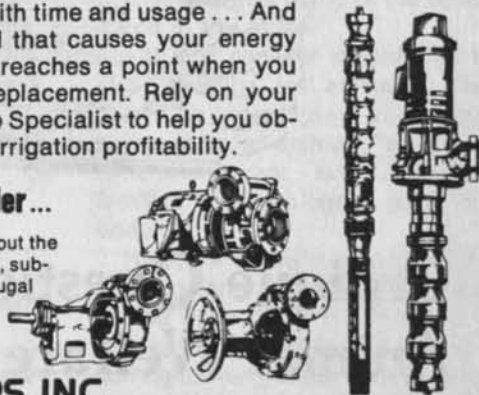
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Critique Questions Goals of Animal Welfare Curriculum

Over the years, the American farm family has endured many hardships while developing our nation's agricultural industry. Despite these hardships - droughts, government over-regulation and sky-rocketing production costs - our country is the leading producer and exporter of food. At the same time, Americans spend a smaller percentage of their disposable income for food than any other country in the world.

This envious position was not achieved without great personal sacrifices, devotion and tremendous capital investments. The commitment to meet the challenge to feed a hungry world is surpassed only by the American farmer's love for his land and concern for his animals. He would be the first to suffer if he mistreated either of them.

In the past decade or so, however, there has been a concerted effort to discredit the American farmer. Such criticism has come, for the most part, from those individuals or organizations with a particular cause to espouse. A case in point is the publication, "People and Animals: A Humane Education Curriculum Guide," developed by the National Association for the Advancement of Humane Education, a division of the Humane Society of the United States. The guide is currently being distributed to schools.

The humane care and treatment of animals is a worthy project, especially for those who have or are about to receive their first animal or pet. However, when such a project is incorrectly presented, or is used to disguise other objectives, it can be extremely dangerous. Farm Bureau's specific concerns center around four points that are either stated or implied in the guide.

Authors Have Little Agricultural Knowledge

The introduction to the guide's farm animals chapter points out that "Almost four billion chickens, cattle, and pigs are processed . . . in the United States each year." Rather than being presented in such a matter-of-fact manner, these figures should show the tremendous productivity of American agriculture. The results of this are that never before in the history of mankind

has a society been able to so alleviate hunger, malnutrition and related suffering as in 20th century America. This number represents an enormous supply of high quality, nutritious protein food for the total population of our society, regardless of the economic position of the individual.

The paragraph continues with the statement, "Many small farms have been replaced by large meat-, milk- and egg-producing operations." It is not pointed out, however, that the free-enterprise system, when allowed to operate, permits the production of *maximum food at minimum cost* to the consumer.

The paragraph concludes with the statement: "While some farm animals still have the relative freedom of a field or barn, many of the animals that provide our food products are kept indoors throughout their entire lives. This intensive confinement can prohibit the animals' exercising their natural behaviors and can cause suffering and reduced resistance to disease."

Animal care practices are normally researched thoroughly before being used by a majority of U.S. farmers and ranchers. The purposes of modern confinement systems are to permit farmers to give each animal selective treatment, adjust diets and in short, give each animal better care. No longer do animals have to wait for the farmer to break the ice on a cold winter day before they can get a drink. They have heat in winter, cool ventilation in summer and clean, dry living areas with food and water readily available. In most cases, animals raised in confinement have adapted to this type of agriculture and could not survive well in a barnyard or range environment.

Normally any good, sound study guide or curriculum must be backed up by a list of factual references on the subject. Resources listed for this publication include such things as "The Vegetarian Alternative," "Factory Farming" (a booklet from the Humane Society of the United States), and "Animal Machines" (a book by the vegetarian Ruth Harrison). These materials are, in most cases, extremely biased and unfit for classroom instruction.

Several organizations and individuals are listed as sources of information. But in no cases are the most knowledgeable people in the community - farmers, county Extension agents and agriculture teachers - asked to speak or discuss agriculture in the classroom.

Vegetarianism Pervades the Guide

The most obvious question is: What does vegetarianism have to do with animal welfare? Nothing. It is evident, however, that the guide is being used to instill a value into the children rather than helping them clarify their values.

Vegetarianism is introduced in the concept: "Humans sometimes choose alternatives to the use of animals or animal products."



Two approaches are used in this concept to discourage the use of animals and their products. One is aimed at placing meat in a "luxury" class as opposed to a "necessity." Then, the students discuss whether or not it is important for humans to have the luxury products if it involves the killing of an animal. Next, the use of animal products is discussed. A number of pictures of wild and domestic animals are shown to the youngsters. The teacher is asked to initiate a values voting game by pointing to one picture at a time and asking the students if they would buy or wear the skin of that animal. After voting (e.g., thumbs up, thumbs down) the students discuss such questions as: "Is one animal's life worth more than another? Would you want to wear that skin if you had to kill the animals yourself?"

The suggestive nature of vegetarianism continues in the full concept: "Humans raise and keep farm animals to fulfill physical needs."

In this concept, students are asked to cut out pictures of food, clothing and household items that come from farm animals. Then, they are asked to

determine: "Is this a product humans need (necessity), or a product that humans want but don't need (luxury)?" During a field trip to a grocery store, students are asked to identify products from farm animals and after identifying each product are asked: "Which products come from a living animal? Which products require that an animal be killed?"

The goals of this curriculum as stated in the introduction are to assist the students in developing compassion, justice and respect for all living creatures - an admirable goal. But this goal is unachieved. The curriculum is completely lacking in objectivity. This lack of objectivity is caused by the preconceived conclusion that vegetarian-

ism is the only life-style compatible with humane treatment of animals. Because the curriculum demands of the students a vegetarian conclusion, input and discussion by agriculturists is completely lacking.

Animals Are Equated Directly With Humans

The animal rights movement supports the philosophy that animals should be provided the same moral protections that govern our behavior toward one another. This philosophy is entwined into many of the concepts found in this guide.

The first concept stresses the tenet that "humans are animals." This is done by identifying characteristics common to "all animals," e.g., sounds to communicate, living together as families, and analogous parts of the body.

Next, the thesis is developed that if humans are animals, then animals should have rights like humans. This concept starts out by identifying certain rights that people must have to exist together peacefully. Then some basic human needs are identified

(continued on page 30)



Here's to Your HEALTH

As the cost of medical care rises in a time of limited resources, many observers claim we are in the midst of a health care crisis. But they do not tell us if we are spending the right amount on health care. In the U.S. economy, it is assumed that for most goods the total expenditure on a particular item resulting from an individual buyer's decision is the right amount, or close to it.

However, that assumption cannot be made for health care because of peculiarities in its market. The foremost of these peculiarities is the wide spread use of insurance to pay medical bills.

About 90 percent of all hospital bills are paid through public or private health insurance. As a result, financial constraints play a less important role in health care decisions than they might otherwise.

There is substantial evidence that consumers respond to low cost hospital care by demanding more services and expensive services, even when fewer and cheaper services would do. For example, in-patient hospital care is often substituted for out-patient treatment that would be equally effective. The production of high cost hospital care is a self-reinforcing process: the risk of expensive hospital care stimulates patients to buy more comprehensive insurance, while the growth of such insurance tends to make care more expensive.

Because of the highly technical nature of most medical decisions and the protection from costs provided by insurance, patients tend to delegate consumption decisions to their physicians. Incentives for medical providers to restrain costs are relatively weak.

Most providers are personally committed to alleviating human suffering. Medical education reinforces that by

focusing on evermore sophisticated modes of care, with little regard for what economists call "cost effectiveness." This is reflected in the increasing specialization of the medical profession.

Theoretically, competition among insurance companies should provide incentive to restrain the increased premium prices. The predominance in the market of employers purchasing group insurance for their employees make competition especially vigorous.

Since the expense of medical insurance premiums is probably the primary deterrent to extension of private health coverage, it is useful to understand how premium rates are determined. Generally, commercial companies rely upon experience rating to determine premiums. Under this system, the insurer uses the previous claim experience to determine their expected future medical costs. The primary advantage of experience rating is that by setting premiums according to personal characteristics, those individuals with the highest expected costs will pay the highest premiums.

Medical Care: A "Right"?

The importance Americans attach to good health is reflected in their immense economic commitment to medical care. Some observers believe, however, that not enough is done to protect individuals against the personal and economic costs of illness. They conclude that government should guarantee medical care for all citizens. They would, in effect, make medical care a "right."

Guaranteed medical care would shift the economic burden of treating illness from the individual victim to society. It might improve the health of some citizens, probably those who receive the least treatment now. But no medical system could completely

protect an individual against disease. Some illness is purely accidental. Other health problems can be controlled, but only if the individual alters his life style. Still others are related to environment, especially the work place.

Whatever its health impact, guaranteed medical care for all citizens would require increased expenditures.

The purpose of any comprehensive medical system is to increase access to health care and improve the general health status. However, there is much controversy about what factors influence health and to what extent.

Health Indicators

Before one can determine how health care can be improved, it is necessary to understand how health status is measured. The available health indicators (life expectancy, mortality and morbidity) usually measure the incidence of ill health or death.

Life expectancy quantifies potential life span. Life expectancy statistics may be misleading if separate estimates are not made for various geographic, racial and economic groups. Life expectancy says nothing about the quality of life. It is conceivable, for example, for a group to have a relatively long life expectancy, but also a high incidence of minor illness.

Although mortality, the frequency of death, has the advantage of being easy to measure, it too provides little information about the population's health prior to death. With rapid increases in medical services, one would expect a higher proportion of deaths to be preceded by prolonged illness.

Infant mortality figures also tend to give a distorted picture of medical successes. For example, effective medicine may enable a pregnant woman to bring a baby to term that otherwise would have been lost through miscarriage. Yet if the infant dies shortly after birth, it will be included in the infant mortality rate.

Morbidity is a measure of the prevalence or extent of illness, injury or disability in a population. Cautious interpretation is again necessary. Definitions of morbidity are subjective, making reliable compilation of statistics difficult. For example, discomfort that one person deems inconsequential

might cause another to stay home from work or even to see a doctor. The latter's illness would more than likely be reflected in the morbidity statistics than the former.

A number of economists have analyzed the education-health relationship. They have found a pervasive and strong relationship between education and health. One which appears more important than that is the relationship between income and health. One study of children found that while the incidents of certain illness or disabilities were unrelated to economic status, it was inversely related to the educational level of the mothers. Such studies suggest that removing economic barriers to health care through guaranteed health care might do less to equalize health status than is commonly supposed.

Individual Responsibility

A recent report concludes: "a number of factors such as smoking, drinking, exercise and eating habits have been found to be related to a person's general health status." Because personal overindulgence often takes its toll only over a period of years, its victims are unaware of effects until they are well advanced. Thus, the three leading causes of death among persons 55 to 64 are heart disease, cancer and strokes, all of which are partially controlled by prudent life style.

A broad concept of health care emphasizes individual responsibility for good health. In a sense, each person who persists in habits which are known to affect him adversely is opting for increased investment in health services. Some have questioned whether society should underwrite such individual folly through the tax and insurance systems.

Discussion Questions

- Are costs preventing people from getting proper medical care?
- Should government impose cost-control on hospitals?
- Should government impose cost-control on doctors?

The Discussion Topic for Community Action Groups is prepared monthly by Ken Wiles, manager of the MFB Member Relations Department.

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_____	Wisconsin Pepper Jack Cheese, 12/8 oz. pkgs.	\$14.50	_____
	Total		_____

Emotional Approach Generates Fear, Tension

(continued from page 27)

(e.g., adequate food, water, shelter and freedom from pain/fear/stress). In still another section, a series of questions are asked: "Do all animals have rights? What would life be like for humans if they had no rights or if their rights were not respected? What would life be like for animals if they had no rights or if their rights were not respected?"

The next concept has to do with hurt and pain. It starts out with the teacher asking the students to describe how a chicken would feel living with thousands of other chickens or how cattle might react to being crowded "shoulder-to-shoulder" in a tractor trailer truck on their way to market.

Another concept has to do with emotions. After discussing emotions and human/animal communications, the students are introduced to the word anthropomorphism (the attributing of specific human characteristics to "other animals"). The anthropomorphism concept is controversial at best, and rejected at worst.

In the farm animals chapter, a concept is introduced on suffering.

First, four or five students are asked to lock arms to form a small circle around three or four other students. The guide says: "Make circle small enough that inside students have difficulty lifting their arms away from their sides." In this way, battery or laying cages for poultry are introduced.

Next, the students are paired together and one member of each pair is asked to stand as close as possible to his/her partner (facing the partner) and begin talking. After a few minutes, the quiet partner is asked if he/she is uncomfortable having the speaker standing so close. Then, the talking partner is asked to move back until the quiet partner is comfortable. It is pointed out that this should be approximately arm's length or human flight distance - the distance at which humans feel "safe" from others of their own kind. The teacher is asked to explain that all animals have a biological flight distance, and if forced to live too close together, can suffer constant stress.

The need for humane treatment and for the minimizing of pain and suffering is a matter of general agreement

among all those who work with animals. As yet, however, the pain/fear/stress syndrome associated by some with farm animals cannot be measured objectively or expressed numerically. So, the principal scientific basis now available for determining farm animal welfare is the response of these animals to their environment provided by traditional production and clinical criteria.

But the basic misunderstanding that lies at the core of this curriculum and forces it to lack universal objectivity is its lack of philosophical basis in our Judeo-Christian society. The curriculum is based on the premise that humans and animals share equality. If, indeed, this religious-philosophical stance is accepted, then, obviously, there is no alternative except vegetarianism. However, our Judeo-Christian society and thus, our modern western agriculture, is based on stewardship of animals, not equality. Stewardship of animals always recognizes animal welfare within the perimeters set forth for the use of these animals for human betterment. Animal welfare based on equality can never be accepted in our modern American society.

A Restructuring of U.S. Agriculture is Implied

Several references are made in the guide to practices, which if followed or implemented, would alter the structure of American agriculture.

The students are introduced to a number of terms that apply to "modern food production practices." After discussing the word "intensive," the youngsters are asked to speculate on what "intensive farming" might mean. The teacher is asked to explain that "some people object to it (intensive farming) because of the problems it can cause for the animals." The final step in the teaching strategy is to refer to intensive farms as "factory farms."

Another concept offered in the guide is a discussion of the "return to the land" life-style in which humans raise and maintain farm animals to provide for their own personal consumption. The students are asked to discuss "the reasons for this."

Yet another concept has the students identify additional laws that may be added to regulate the keeping of

farm animals. Discussion questions include: "Do laws exist to require minimum care for pets (food, water, shelter)? For farm animals? Do laws exist that prohibit cruel treatment of pets? Of farm animals? Which category has more/fewer laws? Why do you think this is so? Are additional laws needed to guarantee either group of animals proper care or treatment?"

A fourth concept deals with the "ways in which some pesticides have proved harmful to the environment." The teacher discusses DDT: specifically what it is, why it was used, and the concerns about its effects on the environment that led the federal government to ban its use in the United States. Further discussions deal with the way DDT and other pesticides can accumulate in bodies of birds and how the pesticides (residues) get there.

Nothing is said in the guide about the positive effects of pesticides in the food chain.

Conclusion

The Humane Education Curriculum Guide is a broad based attack on American agriculture. Animal welfare is listed as the stated purpose, but vegetarianism, environmental concerns (pesticides), and the dismantling of large farms in favor of small, inefficient ones pervade the guide. Also, questions and statements are worded in such a way as to be suggestive and leading rather than thought provoking. This emotional approach tends to generate fear, insecurity and tension in youngsters and does not foster learning.

It seems prudent from this review that the Humane Education Curriculum Guide as now structured NOT be recommended for use in our nation's school systems. Continued efforts should be made to keep abreast of any future modifications and revisions of the curriculum that might change this recommendation.

(Editor's Note: This critique was prepared by staff members of the American Farm Bureau Animal Welfare Committee. It has been edited for length. For a complete copy write: Michigan Farm Bureau, Commodity Activities and Research Department, P.O. Box 30960, Lansing, Mich. 48909.)



Photo by Cindy Nimz of Jackson, Mich. Award of Excellence winner in Farm Bureau Insurance Group's color photo contest.

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