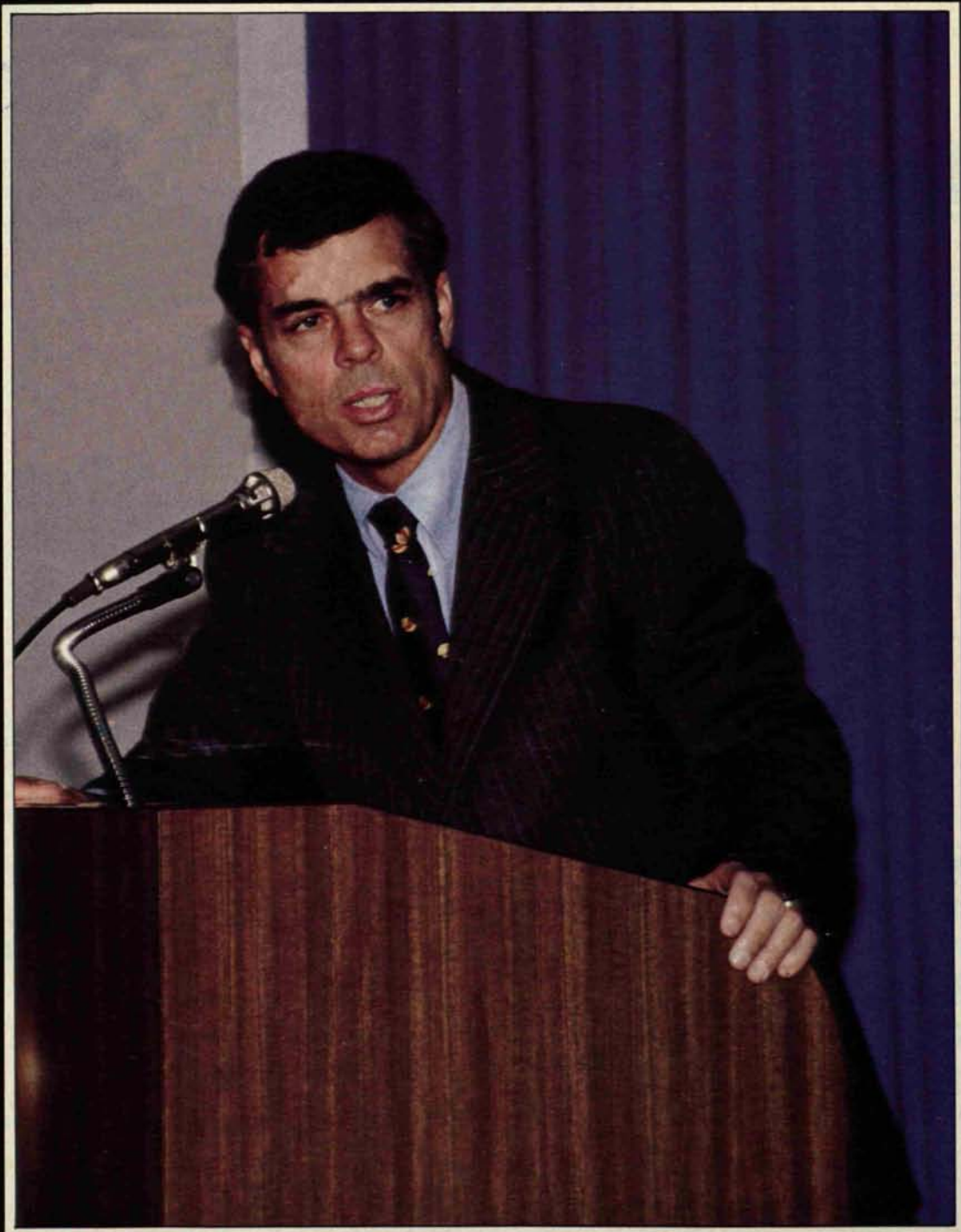


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Legislative Leaders Get Involved During Annual Capital Trek

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Michigan Farm News RURAL LIVING



Legislative Leaders Get Involved
During Annual Capital Trek

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THE COVER

Agriculture Secretary John Block calls for strong market orientation in long range planning for agriculture.

Photo by Marcia Ditchie

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OMB Power Grab Irks Farm Producers

Michigan Farm Bureau members were proud when President Reagan named a native son, former Congressman David Stockman, to direct the powerful Office of Management and Budget. We liked his market-oriented philosophy and his dedication to fiscal responsibility.

But last summer, when OMB's delayed veto of use of the federal marketing order for the 1982 tart cherry crop cost our state's industry millions of dollars in losses, we became disillusioned with the president's choice for this position. "An abuse of power" was how one of our members described OMB's devastating blow to cherry growers. Our organization began to question whether USDA could win the power struggle that had developed, and if it did not, what would happen to other marketing orders.

We also questioned why there should be a power struggle. The Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937 gave the responsibility of administration of marketing orders to the secretary of agriculture and for 45 years, that responsibility was carried out in an impartial, effective and efficient manner — until the big cherry fiasco of 1982 when OMB got involved.

We made our concerns known at that time to Stockman and to our congressmen. We thought we had assurances that administrative authority for federal marketing orders would remain where it belonged — with the secretary of agriculture. That's why we were concerned to learn, during our recent trip to Washington, D.C., for our annual legislative seminar, that OMB is still trying to gain administrative control of marketing orders.

In response to this latest development, your board of directors, at its recent session, drafted a statement urging President Reagan to reaffirm his support of federal marketing orders and asking that the sole authority for their administration remain with the secretary of agriculture. We told the president that the bureaucratic interference of OMB is contrary to the intent of Congress, is outside provisions of the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act and is disruptive to the farm community.

This is an issue that should be of concern to all members, not just cherry growers, because the future of other marketing orders is at stake, too. If OMB has the power to tell producers of a commodity that they can't use a program that's

authorized by law and which they've approved for continuation through industry referendums, who knows where it will stop? What assurance do we have that the same abuse of power wouldn't be used in the case of federal milk marketing orders, for example?

The OMB director has proven that the health and welfare of his home state's agricultural industry is not one of his concerns. We must not stand by and allow his office to gain the power to damage it. Hopefully, the president, who has displayed an understanding of agriculture's problems and needs, will respond favorably to our concerns by taking appropriate action.

Elton R. Smith

President
Michigan Farm Bureau

'Show Me' Volunteerism

By Donna Wilber

If there was anything I didn't need to complicate my life, it was Project AIM.

I was already meeting myself in the proverbial revolving door without involvement in "outside" activities. Besides, I couldn't really relate to being out of work and hungry. I'd always worked from the time I was old enough to swat a potato bug, feed the chickens and pull a weed. I can remember some lean meals, like creamed onions on boiled potatoes (no meat, no dessert), but hungry? Not really! Granted, there was a deeply buried, post-farm memory of having to sell a cherished bedroom suite to buy baby formula. . . .

Whether it was my Dutch-Finnish heritage or my formative years on a ranch in South Dakota and later a Michigan farm that developed my skeptical "show me" attitude, I'm not sure.

I was a two-year-old toddler when I entered the corral to pet the leg of the "nice horsey" Dad said was the terror of the range. As a four-year-old "show me kid," I smashed two dozen eggs against the barn door to see if they were the rotten ones Mom said roosters layed.

Although a few decades older, the same "show me" attitude cropped up as I raised skeptical eyebrows when Jim Byrum (the Michigan Bean Commission executive secretary who sells

ideas as convincingly as he does beans) enthusiastically explained why agriculture, and specifically Farm Bureau, should get involved in addressing Michigan's crucial hunger crisis.

Not that I, personally, could stand by and let anyone go hungry, especially little ones like my grandsons. But to ask my organization to contribute my time and the involvement of Farm Bureau members across the state in the volunteer effort? What about all the other things we had to do? Benefit the organization as well as the hungry? Show me!

It took about two weeks to replace that initial skepticism with flaming zeal and a cauliflower ear from answering news media calls. The human interest appeal of farmers (who weren't in great economic shape themselves) responding to the needs of their fellow citizens in Michigan was irresistible to the press. Agriculture, and Farm Bureau, were the focus of *positive* news coverage. The all-volunteer, no red tape project indeed had involved agriculture in Michigan. Good things were happening for the hungry in the cities and towns in Michigan from border to border; and good things were happening for agriculture!

Further reinforcement that our involvement in this humanitarian effort was "right" came with the grassroots feedback that Farm Bureau members who hadn't been active in the organization before were taking

leadership roles in Project AIM activities.

The "show me" skepticism crumbled completely as I saw the enthusiasm with which county Farm Bureau AIM coordinators undertook this challenge and the innovative ideas that sprang from their creative minds and giving hearts. And I haven't even mentioned the tons of Michigan commodities that were donated and purchased with AIM contributions. . . . or the new positive relationships that developed as agriculture and organized labor worked together to fill a need.

All this. . . while feeding hungry people!

Certainly, all of us hope that the need that was so critical in the winter months has eased, but we also recognize that it hasn't ended. We also realize that in the months ahead, farmers will have another priority — producing food — and the time they'll have to devote to AIM activities will be limited. That's why project coordinators are urging members to commit their fields and orchards to AIM for gleaning after harvest.

What greater way to celebrate harvest time than by sharing with those in need? It would lend a special meaning to Thanksgiving 1983 for both the givers and receivers.

Budget Watchers Criticize 'Tax and Spend' Pattern

WASHINGTON

Tax and Spend Policies

Still Evident — In a strongly worded letter to Sen. Pete Domenici, chairperson of the Senate Budget Committee, John Datt, secretary of the 3.2 million member FB organization, said the budget resolution, "continues the all too familiar pattern of increasing domestic spending and raising taxes."

FB has supported a balanced budget through decreased federal spending rather than through increased taxes. Pointing out that FB was among the earliest supporters of the economic recovery program to reduce taxes and spending, halt inflation, trim federal regulations and control the growth of the money supply, Datt said, "So far we have seen nothing more than the raising of taxes and business as usual in federal domestic spending."

Citing the resolution which raises spending by \$33 billion while providing an additional \$30 billion in unspecified sources, Datt warned that the House Ways and Means Committee chairperson, Dan Rostenkowski, has proposed freezing all currently scheduled tax cuts at the 1983 level.

While this would preserve the third installment of the 1981 individual income tax cuts, scheduled for July 1, it would effectively repeal the indexing of income tax brackets and elimi-

nate the 1984 and 1985 reduction in estate and gift taxes rates.

"Farmers and ranchers worked too hard for the estate tax changes and other tax reforms enacted in the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 to see them sacrificed now for the monumental growth in domestic federal spending," Datt said.

Lab Animal Research Legislation

— An amendment to the National Institutes of Health bill, H.R. 2350, to require regulations and standards for the proper treatment of laboratory research animals, could have future implications for animal agriculture. If the amendment passes, it is expected that animal welfare groups will attempt to have farm animals included at a later date.

However, a substitute amendment calling for an 18-month study of the use of animals in research would require the National Academy of Sciences to collect data and evaluate current laboratory practices so that Congress can determine if a problem exists and if a legislative or regulatory solution is appropriate. The substitute amendment, introduced by Congressman Madigan, offers a rational approach to study of an emotional issue created by isolated press reports.

In the Senate, legislation has been introduced which would require a study similar to that proposed in the Madigan amendment. S. 964 was introduced by Sens. Hatch and Kennedy. Co-sponsors are needed for this legislation.

Immigration Reform Bill Threatens Seasonal Labor Shortage

— FB has indicated that there could be a disastrous shortage of available seasonal labor in many areas of the country unless the Immigration Act Reform bill (H.R. 1510) is amended. AFBF asked that the bill be amended to give producers reasonable assurance that temporary foreign workers will be made available on a timely basis when it is demonstrated that qualified U.S. workers are not available. FB has suggested that a special ad hoc subcommittee be appointed to recommend amendments that would meet the needs of agriculture.

MASAWOPA Law and Regulations

— The Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Workers Protection Act became law on April 14. Concurrently, regulations under the new act were published by the Department of Labor to become effective on April 14, and will remain in effect until Aug. 12 unless withdrawn, extended or superseded by another issuance. Although the joint effective date of the law and regulations does not offer the normal 30-day comment period, comment on the regulations will be accepted until mid-May and changes may be made as a result of comments received.

MASAWOPA replaces the Farm Labor Contractor Registration Act (FLCRA). It clarifies many of the ambiguous terms that were used in FLCRA and does not require farm employers to regis-

ter as farm labor contractors. It also completely exempts family farms and small businesses from any of the provisions in the act.

Major concerns of agricultural producers were addressed in the regulations and while the regulations, as in the case of the act, balance the interests of labor and the House Education and Labor Committee, it is not expected that FB will have to call for significant changes in the announced regulations.

PIK "Special Handler Agreements" — USDA has approved procedures for Payment-in-Kind "special handler agreements" for non-approved warehouses. The agreements will give temporary PIK grain handling authority to warehouses not approved under the uniform grain storage agreement. The "special handler agreements" were developed because some farmers due to receive PIK grain did not live near an approved warehouse. USDA expected to have all of the special handler warehouses signed up by the end of April.

Export Equity Legislation — AFBF President Robert DeLano has testified on behalf of a general export promotion bill which includes provisions for an export Payment-in-Kind program in the Agricultural Export Equity Act of 1983.

Although this bill mandates certain export actions that run counter to administrative flexibility, FB supports the legislation as a major thrust in countering unfair trade practices and stimulating exports.

Three amendments to the bill, S. 822, would:

- Remove the "mandated" sale of dairy products abroad, and substitute language which

MFB Women Join in Legislative Salute to Michigan Agriculture



Legislative and gubernatorial salutes to agriculture were accepted by MFB Women's leaders on Agriculture Day, March 21. Pictured are, from left, Vivian Lott, Rep. Debbie Stabenow, Faye Adam and Diane Horning.

makes it clear that the agriculture secretary has the authority to sell as much as possible without damaging trade relations with foreign customers.

- Eliminate the provisions specifying which commodities will receive the limited export credit assistance.

- Eliminate the requirement that one-half of the revenues generated from the sale of dairy products be used for an export credit program.

A provision of the bill which exempts blended credit and future export PIK programs from cargo preference requirements is facing strong opposition in the Senate.

It is essential that the cargo preference exemption be retained in the legislation if the export PIK program provision and the blended interest export program are to be effective.

In the case of the Egyptian flour sale earlier this year, cargo preference requirements added \$60 to the shipping cost of each ton of flour.

LANSING

Income Tax — FB staff testified before both the House taxation and Senate finance committees in support of the income tax increase as outlined in the official FB position. The final version of the tax bill, as passed and signed by the governor, provided that it is "not permanent" and will be phased out as the economy recovers, which is very close to FB's position.

It is not a permanent tax and contains definite cut-offs. The rate raises from the present 4.6% to 6.35% with .25% being
(continued on page 30)

Legislative Leaders Get Involved During Annual Capital Trek

By *Connie Turbin*

There has been little to cheer about in the farm economy in recent months, but USDA officials say they are more optimistic in view of the voluntary response of farmers to the Payment-in-Kind (PIK) program throughout the grain producing states. That was the message presented to a delegation of 100 farmers in Washington, D.C., on April 7 by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture John Block and chiefs of the U.S. Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, the Foreign Agricultural Marketing Service and

the U.S. Agricultural Marketing Service.

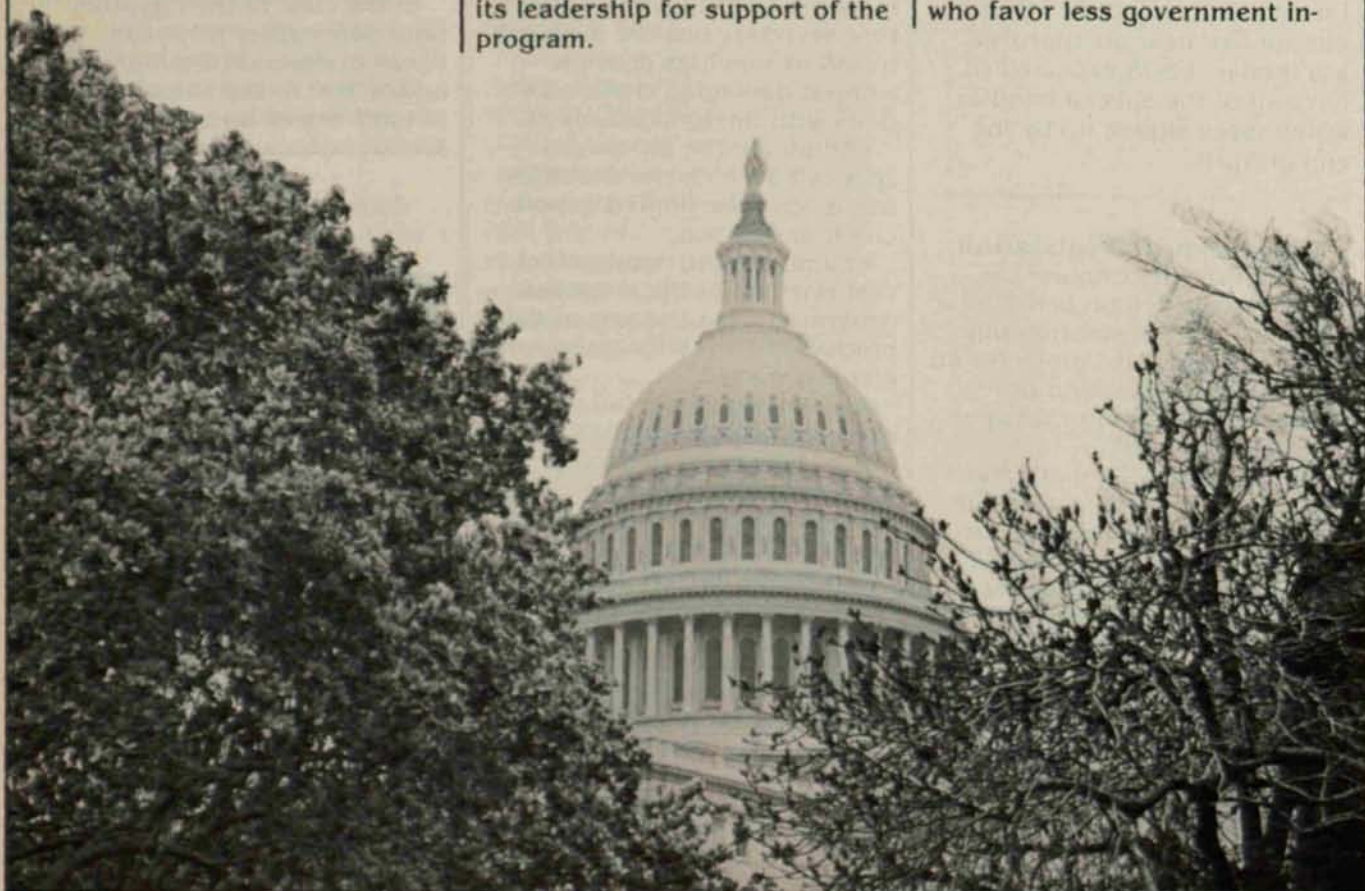
Speaking to Farm Bureau "legislative leaders" who were in the nation's capital for their annual lobbying effort, Block said that while he was not eager to set aside production on nearly 83 million acres enrolled in the PIK and reduced acreage programs, the solution to the oversupply conditions in wheat and feed grains had to be "bold and imaginative" to bail out of a difficult situation.

Michigan farmers enrolled the highest percentage of PIK acres and Block complimented the Farm Bureau organization and its leadership for support of the program.

"I believe we can look forward to better times," Block said, referring to the upward trend in grain prices since the announcement of PIK participation figures in late March. The USDA spokesperson said PIK was designed to be a "self-destruct" program to be in effect for one or two years.

"PIK is a short-range solution," Block said, "and we must look ahead for long-range solutions in both the wheat and feed grains programs and the dairy program. There must be more market orientation in agriculture."

Block cautioned that those who favor less government in-



involvement in agriculture will face strong opposition from factions that believe government controls and programs are the answer. Block urged the Farm Bureau group to continue to support proposals to freeze price supports at the 1983 levels for 1984 and 1985.

Managing overproduction in the dairy industry continues to be the subject of controversy and Block said that while the USDA is looking at several proposals or combinations of proposals, the basis of any future program must include discretionary authority for the secretary to adjust support levels to match production with consumer demand.

The April 7 meeting was the last of the official meetings scheduled for the Farm Bureau legislative leaders group during the three full days of the Washington Legislative Seminar. Earlier in the week, the farmer delegation met with Michigan senators and congressmen in their Capitol Hill offices to discuss legislative issues and Farm Bureau policy, attend hearings and committee meetings.

In addition to the information briefing with USDA chiefs and the secretary of agriculture, Farm Bureau members gained additional insights into the policies and issues outside of their farm agency from Michael Calingaert, deputy assistant secretary for international resources and food policy in the State Department. Calingaert reported that in 1982 U.S. exports had declined for the first time after 13 years of steady growth. He indicated that further declines are expected in 1983. The drop in agricultural exports, he said, was the result of many factors, but he cited a worldwide recessionary economy as a major



MFB President Elton Smith introduces Agriculture Secretary John Block to the Michigan delegation of Farm Bureau legislative leaders. Block met with the Michigan farm group at the USDA offices in Washington, D.C., on Thursday, April 7.

factor affecting trade throughout the international markets.

Subsidized exports from European Economic Community countries is also a contributing factor in lost export market shares for U.S. farm commodities and Calingaert pointed out that the U.S. continues to work through international channels and agencies, such as GATT, and through trade missions involving public and private sector interests to open the doors to trade.

Referring to the recent sale of flour to Egypt, Calingaert said that the trade action by the U.S. was designed to bring the EEC to the bargaining table to discuss and negotiate the use of subsidies and tariff policies in international trade practices. The wheat deal, he said, was



Exports and international food policy were the topics for discussion at a State Department briefing for MFB members on April 6. The group met with Michael Calingaert, deputy assistant secretary for international resources and food policy.



Michigan Sen. Levin (center) gets an early morning update on the position of Michigan's fruit growers regarding the administration of marketing orders from Mark Drake of Northwest Michigan Farm Bureau. Drake and MFB Vice President Jack Laurie (left) explained to Levin that growers want assurances that OMB will not usurp USDA authority to carry out the producer approved marketing orders.



No apathy among these voting constituents Levin learned when, following the Thursday morning meeting with Farm Bureau legislative leaders, they questioned him on federal spending, farm programs and taxation.

advertised as a one-time-only deal, aimed directly at the EEC.

However, Calingaert warned against the effects of protectionist trade practices and legislation by the United States. He called protectionist measures potentially dangerous and warned that "to the extent we are protectionist, it makes it difficult to open or expand trade in other countries."

Domestic issues from the budget to federal marketing orders were on the agenda for Farm Bureau legislative leaders in their personal contacts with their congressional representatives and senators. Members of the Farm Bureau legislative delegation had delivered copies of the proposed Agricultural Recovery Act of 1983 and discussed the importance of a comprehensive rewrite of farm program authorities. Priority issues were for a freeze on target loan prices and a reduction in the dairy support price level to \$11.32/cwt.

Veto of the 1982 cherry marketing order hurt producers and disrupted the price and supply stability for consumers, the farmers told their Washington representatives. They requested clear cut authority for the USDA to approve and administer marketing orders in the future without intervention from other government agencies, notably the Office of Management and Budget.

Activity and interest in the proposed federal budget for 1983-84 was a concern shared by both congressmen and the legislative leaders. The projected \$200 billion deficit marks the highest deficit in U.S. history and Farm Bureau leaders, supporting a balanced federal budget and reduced government spending, pressed their stand for a three-year freeze in cost of living adjustments for all federal programs.

During the three-year freeze, reforms in the benefit structures would be required, Farm Bureau's grassroots lobbyists said. Such reforms would promote a more equitable burden sharing between entitlement beneficiaries and taxpayers and allow for the growth of benefits, but not at a rate faster than the wages of taxpayers who must finance the programs.

Speaking to the seminar participants on Thursday, April 7, Michigan Sen. Carl Levin complimented the farm community for expressing a willingness to sacrifice in reducing the cost of government, however, he held out little hope that he would support the third and final phase of the three-year tax cut scheduled to go into effect July 1, 1983.

"If we're going to have deficit reduction," Levin told the group, "we're going to have to sacrifice across the board instead of what we have now, which is sacrifice in some places, but huge gains in others."

Levin charged that the tax cut gave a disproportionate advantage for families with incomes over \$45,000 per year. He proposed a \$45,000 or \$50,000 cap on the scheduled July tax cut.

Tax issues were a major policy concern to Farm Bureau members who were in Washington to support and defend tax relief measures granted in 1981 legislation.

In an interview with the news media while in Washington, D.C., MFB President Elton R. Smith reaffirmed the farm organization's support for restraint in government spending and a balanced federal budget based on reductions in the size and cost of government, not increased taxation.

(continued on page 34)



Meeting with Thumb area Farm Bureau legislative leaders, aide to Congressman Bob Traxler, Roger Szemraj, discusses the future of farm programs. Traxler, who did not attend the meeting, was in Michigan to address leaders of the Michigan Rural Electric Cooperative.



Rep. Guy VanderJagt and 9th district constituent David Woller of Oceana County continue their informal discussion following the MFB Congressional Breakfast meeting on Wednesday, April 6.

Fair Treatment of Farm Laborers Keeps Labor Organizers Out

By Donna Wilber

"It's not nice to shoot the organizer!"

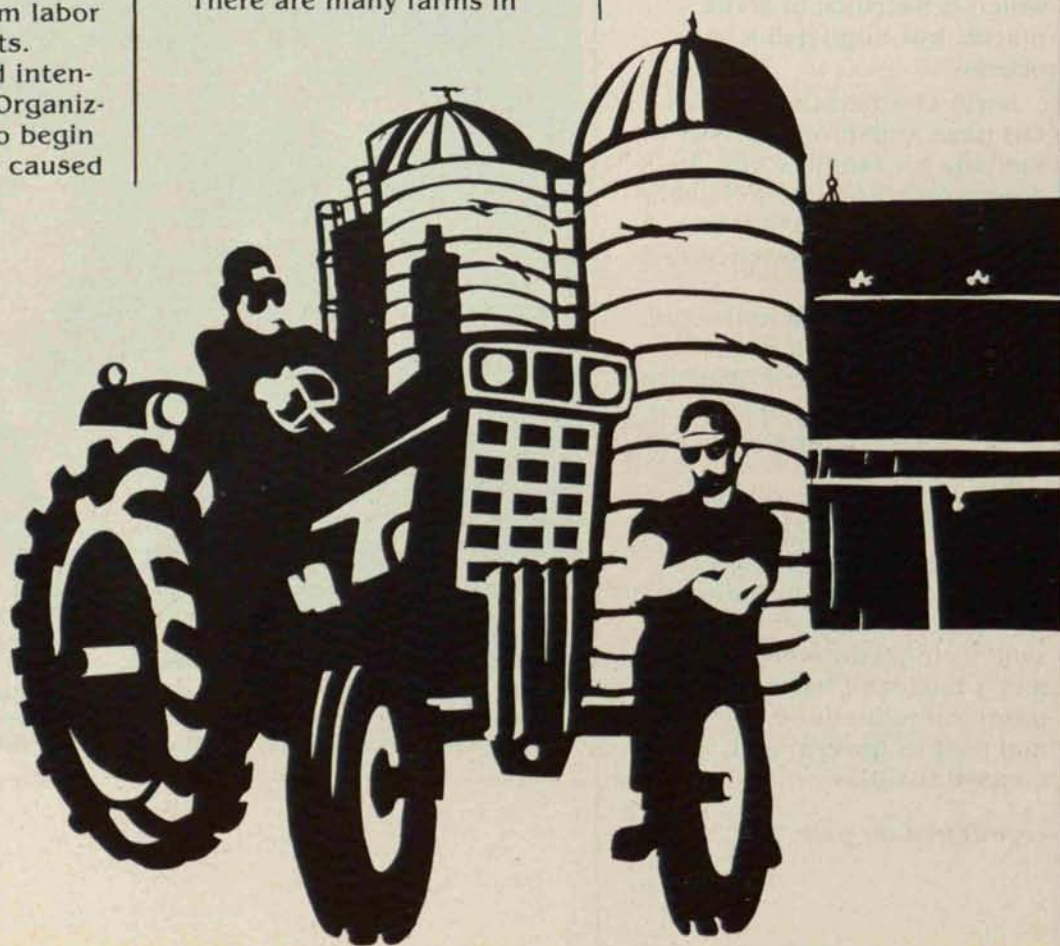
With that satirical, exaggerated response, Dr. Allen Shapley, Michigan State University labor management specialist, broaches the serious subject of how farmers should handle the delicate situation of farm labor union organizer attempts.

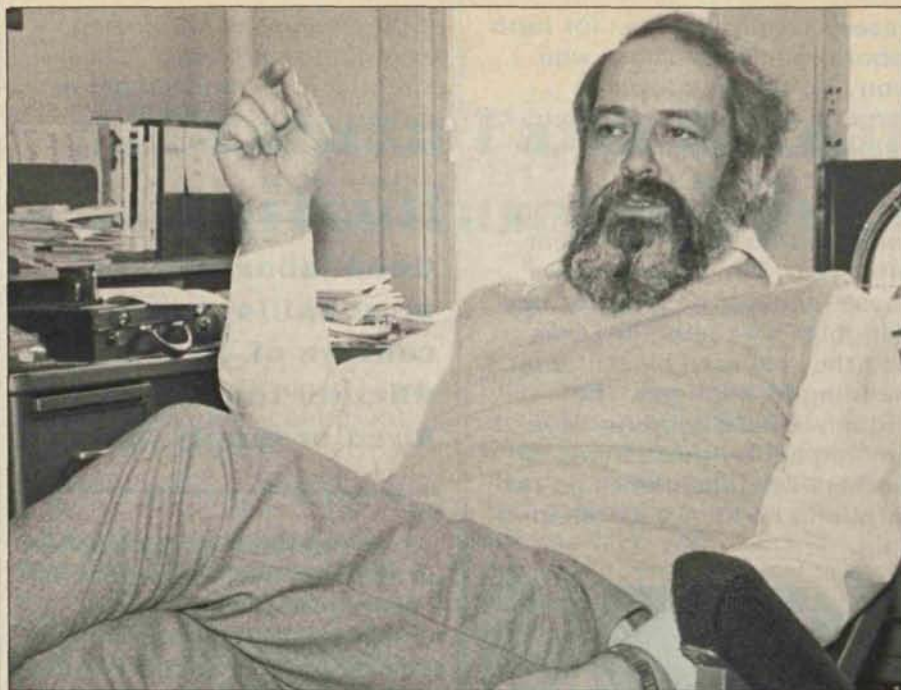
The recent announced intention of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) to begin activity in Michigan has caused

concern among producers regarding their rights and responsibilities involved in dealing with organizers who approach their workers. But Shapley believes that if farmers have used sharp human relations and management skills, there will be little cause for that concern.

"There are many farms in

Michigan where, if an organizer came on the property, the farm workers themselves would throw him off because they would see him as a detriment to the positive relationship they have with their employer," Shapley said.





Farm labor specialist, Dr. Allen Shapley, advises farm employers that good wages and benefits, sound and clean housing and open lines of communication are the basic components of "common sense" labor management.

"Theoretically, the whole idea of an organizer coming onto a farm is to improve the situation for the workers. Therefore, he will be ineffective and unable to get the workers to sign with his union unless they feel it will be of benefit to them. It costs money to join a union, so it's a cost-benefit situation for the worker," he said.

Fair Labor Management Based on Common Sense

This kind of positive relationship, Shapley said, does not happen overnight. It takes time, constant concern, and most important, open channels of communication between the employer and the workers.

"Farm employers need to do everything in their power to see that their workers are satisfied and that doesn't necessarily

mean higher wages. It means good wages, good benefits, structurely sound and clean housing, open communications and recognition of a job well done. If the farmer can make his workers perceive that he is concerned for them, that he's not trying to exploit them, they will see this as a job benefit and will reject anything that might harm that relationship," Shapley said.

If such a relationship does not exist between a farmer and his workers, the time to start improving it is now — not when the organizer is at the farm gate, Shapley warned. "It's not something you can say, 'yesterday I did it this way and today I'm going to do it a better way.' It's something you have to work on, but it can be done," he said.

"A large part of labor management is just using a lot of common sense in three areas: planning, empathy and communication. Planning is thinking ahead; empathy is the practice of putting yourself in the other's shoes, of trying to see things from the worker's point of view, and communication is not just telling and showing, but also asking and listening."

Theoretically, the whole idea of an organizer coming onto a farm is to improve the situation for the workers. Therefore, he will be ineffective and unable to get the workers to sign with his union unless they feel it will be of benefit to them.

Shapley has some recommendations for farmers if an organizer is successful in approaching their workers (other than it's not nice to shoot him) and he reminds them that if their farm has a labor camp, they cannot deny an organizer access to it.

"It was ruled several years ago that a farmer cannot say who can and cannot visit a camp because the camp belongs to the migrants while they are there," he explained. "If he has evidence of an organizer having been there, he'd better start visiting with the migrants. It doesn't do any good to threaten either the organizer or the workers involved.

"If an organizer gets the workers to say, 'you do this or we will strike,' the best thing to do is to ask for some time to

review their list of demands. Then, the employer must decide what to do — get a lawyer, fire the group of involved employees, or give in to their demands.

"He can sit down with his farm workers and analyze the demands, explaining what he can and will do and what he cannot do without going out of business. If the workers trust the farmer, this will probably work, but that element of trust must be there," Shapley said.

Michigan — A "Paradise" for Migrant Workers

Nationally, migrants do need a better situation than they have, Shapley said, and Michigan offers them the best situation of almost any state in the nation.

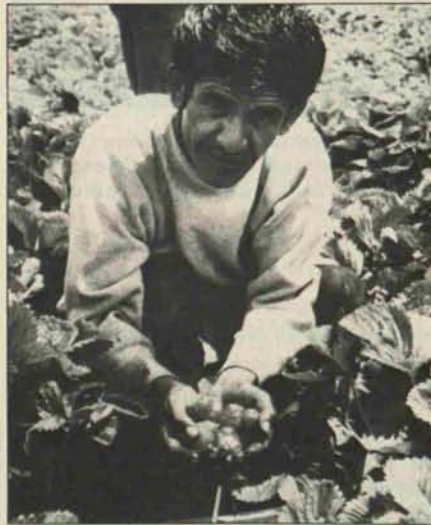
"Talk to any migrant, most of whom do work in many states, and they'll tell you that Michigan is paradise. . . that the housing is pretty good and in some places excellent, the growers are fair, the wages they pay are fair, they can get food stamps, and the people 'in town' aren't apt to be as prejudiced as in other states," he said.

"But there's still a ways to go. Some migrants are exploited. There are still some camps that are horrible. There are some bad employers in the state who don't recognize migrants as human beings with basic needs and rights."

While these kinds of situations are few, they are the focus of migrant worker advocates who still believe that "The Harvest of Shame" is a reflection of Michigan today, Shapley said. Even though that's far from true, it's these isolated

cases that provide fuel for farm labor organizers. Those who won't be impacted will be farmers who have solid, long-established relationships with migrant families.

"Many Michigan growers hire families who come back year after year. The farmer knows these families; he goes to their daughter's wedding in Texas and they come to his daughter's wedding in Michigan. The organizer isn't going to have any impact on those kinds of workers when he comes on the farm and he knows it!" Shapley said.



Farmers Seek Management Training

Sharon Steffens, Kent County fruit grower and member of the Agricultural Labor Commission, is one of a growing number of progressive farmers who recognize the need to sharpen their labor management skills.

"The value of good labor management skills should not be considered only on the basis

of the amount of labor used," according to Steffens. "The potential economic impact of workers on the profit of the business is an even more important factor."

Good labor management skills should be a concern of all of us, whether that labor is hired or family labor.

"For example, 10 dissatisfied pickers can hurt the profits on a fruit farm, but one angry herdsman can be disastrous to the profits on a dairy farm. On the positive side, 10 enthusiastic pickers will harvest more fruit with less damage, but one dedicated, well-trained herdsman can increase the production of a whole herd.

"So, good labor management skills should be a concern of all of us, whether that labor is hired or family labor," she said.

She encourages farmers to take advantage of four bulletins available from Dr. Shapley: "Putting Labor Management in Perspective, Motivating Farm Workers, Tips for Training Farm Workers and Designing Incentive Planning for Farm Workers. To order these bulletins, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Dr. Allen Shapley, Department of Agricultural Economics, 20 Agriculture Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich. 48824.

Michigan Farm Bureau Appoints Agricultural Labor Committee

A 10-member Michigan Farm Bureau Agricultural Labor Advisory Committee has been appointed by MFB President Elton R. Smith. Formation of the committee was requested by the MFB board of directors to fill the void created by the recent "inactive status" placement of the organization's labor affiliate, MASA, the Michigan Agricultural Services Association.

The committee, chaired by Oceana County fruit and vegetable grower John Riley, held its first meeting on March 30 at Farm Bureau Center in Lansing, where members reviewed their objectives. These include: advise the MFB board in areas related to the use, management and problems confronting agricultural labor; develop an effective working relationship with other organizations, groups and governmental agencies concerned with ag labor; and to suggest and encourage ag labor programs by MFB, universities, government agencies and others.

It will also be the committee's role to consider county Farm Bureau policy resolutions that concern ag labor and, in turn, make recommendations to the MFB Policy Development Committee.

Members of the committee, in addition to chairperson John

Riley, are: Mike Satchell, Tuscola County dairyman; Earl Goetz, Lenawee County vegetable, cattle and hog farmer; Robert Grams, Clinton county dairy farmer; James Erwin, Oakland County orchard and farm market operator; Robert DeBruyn Jr., Ottawa County multi-state vegetable grower and shipper; Les Dowd, Van Buren County fruit and vegetable grower; Ruth Rigg, Branch County dairy farmer; Hardy Elowski, Montmorency County forester; and Donald Nugent, Benzie County fruit grower and representative of the MFB board.

Serving as secretary for the committee is Ron Gaskill, MFB local affairs specialist.

Committee to Oversee Legal Defense Fund

The committee will also be responsible for administration of the Legal Defense Fund, one of MASA's member programs. Through annual fees paid by MASA members, the fund was developed to provide financial assistance to members who were involved in litigation on agricultural issues. New advisory committee chairperson Riley chaired the Legal Defense Committee for three years. The MFB Ag Labor Advisory Committee will evaluate all requests for legal defense funds and make recommendations to the MFB board.

The possible re-establishment of the Legal Defense Fund as a membership entity, with provisions for generating new income, will be considered by the committee at a later date. There is currently over \$10,000 remaining in the fund.

In an appearance before the committee, Genesee County farmer Sandy Hill gave a report on her attendance at a multi-state meeting of church people who support the union organization activities of FLOC (see accompanying feature). Hill explained that the purpose of the meeting was to create a dialogue between farm workers, growers and corporations so church representatives could understand the conflict among the three. Also discussed was how the churches would support FLOC's efforts to organize migrant farmworkers.

Hill reported that she was one of only a handful of growers present at the meeting. She expressed her frustration at the "church's insistence upon creating an emotional issue rather than listening to any facts or logic" pertaining to the issue of alleged migrant worker abuses.

FLOC's activities in Michigan will be monitored by the MFB Labor Advisory Committee in the months ahead.

Farm Bureau Services, Inc. has been granted a 30-day extension for submitting a reorganization plan under Chapter 11 of the federal bankruptcy law. The extension was approved by the four creditors' committees and the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Bay City. Executive vice president and chief executive officer Newton Allen said progress has been made in the development of a reorganization plan, but some work must be completed before it can be submitted to the court.

Farmers who hire an economically disadvantaged youth this summer can get a tax credit under a new federal program. The Targeted Jobs Tax Credit applies to the hiring of youths 16 or 17 years old on the hiring date after April 30. The tax credit is equal to 85% of the first \$3,000 of wages paid to each eligible youth during any 90-day period between May 1 and Sept. 15. The tax credit applies only to wages paid to youths who have not previously worked for the employer. Farmers may get more information from their nearest Michigan Employment Security Commission Job Service office.

Michigan's horse population ranks 5th in the nation, higher than Kentucky, and its 250,000 horses are part of a \$2 billion industry in this state. Ed Brennan, president of the Michigan Horse Council, told the MFB board of directors at its April meeting. Brennan said the council is working on getting recommendations from the Governor's Conference on the Horse Industry implemented and also reported on a legislative day activity scheduled for June 8 on the state capitol lawn. Forty-two organizations representing 20,000 people are now members of the Michigan Horse Council.

How does your local unit of government spending compare with others? You can get this information from the Treasury Department now. Available are 1982 fiscal reports for a specific unit (\$1 each), fiscal reports comparing 1982 with 1981 (\$2), and fiscal reports comparing 1982 spending of your unit with another local unit (\$2). To order, specify local unit and county for each report requested, send check payable to the State of Michigan, along with your name, address and phone number to: Michigan Department of Treasury, Local Government Audit Division, 2nd Floor, Treasury Bldg., Lansing, Mich. 48922.

The AFBF Young Farmer and Rancher Committee has announced 1983 Discussion Meet topics. They include: (1) Subsidies — ammunition for a trade war? (2) How does the supply of credit affect the farm community and what will be the source of this credit in the future? (3) How can Farm Bureau, as a general farm organization, ensure farmer input into farmer programs without creating division along commodity lines? (4) Political action committees have proven beneficial to many special interest groups — are farm PACs a threat to our effectiveness as a bi-partisan voice for agriculture? Young Farmers planning to compete in upcoming Discussion Meets may obtain further information by writing: Young Farmer Department, Michigan Farm Bureau, P.O. Box 30960, Lansing, Mich. 48909.

Gov. Blanchard has appointed 11 members of the 15-member Michigan Dairymen's Market Program Committee. Named for terms expiring Dec. 31, 1983, were Harold Ward, Romeo; Ernest Girbach, Saline; and Harold Bahrman, Skandia. For terms expiring Dec. 31, 1984, Carl Kline, White Pigeon; Frank Lapinski, Buckley; Wilfred Wardin, Hemlock; and Keith Brown, Jonesville, were appointed. Named for terms expiring Dec. 31, 1985, were: Elwood Kirkpatrick, Kinde; Velmar Green, Elsie; Jerry Good, Caledonia; and Elmo Heft, Grand Rapids. The new committee was created last year to promote sales of Michigan milk and milk products.

Michigan Blue Cross Blue Shield has filed a legal challenge to the ruling handed down by the Michigan Commissioner of Insurance which prohibits BCBS from age and area rating subscribers in certain association groups, including the Michigan Farm Bureau group. Neither the commission ruling nor the subsequent legal action by BCBS will have an immediate effect on the MFB subscriber group. MFB management is evaluating programs offered by alternative, private insurance providers to ensure continued, long-term health care coverage for Farm Bureau members.

Family Farm Development Loan Process to Begin

Interest in the Michigan Family Farm Development Program continues to run high. To date, more than 4,500 people have made inquiries about the program and are included on the authority's mailing list.

The program developments are progressing with final details being completed during April on the document package necessary to complete a loan by the authority and for purchase of the tax exempt revenue bond by the participating lender.

With finalization of these documents, the application process can be set into motion. Applications will be available through participating lenders. A participating lender is any lending institution in the state which has agreed with the authority to participate in the program. Qualified beginning farmers who have located property which they desire to purchase through a Family Farm Development loan are encouraged to contact local bankers to determine their interest in developing a loan package and in purchasing a tax exempt revenue

bond to finance the loan.

Persons who have requested information, and are now on the authority's mailing list, may expect to receive information and guidelines regarding the application process for Family Farm Development loans soon.

The authority wishes to express its appreciation for support of the legislation and programs being developed which has been extended by Farm Bureau members. A special thanks should go to the various Farm Bureau Young Farmer groups who have sponsored local information meetings about the program. To date, more than 2,000 people have attended these meetings and received information regarding qualifications and answers to the various questions that have arisen regarding the program.

*Don Schaner, Executive Director
MDA Family Farm Development*

Getting Started: Challenge to Beginning Farmers

I am a young man, 25 years old, who is trying to get started in farming. I was born and raised on a farm. While I was grow-

ing up, my father worked 500 acres and milked 30 cows, which I helped with. I was interested in farming from an early age and took FFA in high school for four years. After I graduated from high school, I left the farm for three years to branch out on my own and worked in a factory. It was then that I realized that my love was farming.

With my father still in the business, I could see a future, but only with his help could I begin. I have been farming with my father for three years and have been managing my share of the farm for the last two.

The Family Farm Development Program, offering low interest loans, is very important to me as I'd like to buy more land and be able to expand with more efficient machinery. In these hard times we are facing, I realize the importance of effective and efficient operations and this is my goal.

Dennis Weidman, Huron County

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

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. Four farmers were honored in March 1983:

March 7 — Lyle Hoskins, 60, a dairy and hog farmer from Climax, farms several hundred acres with the help of his family. He is a member of the National Cattlemen's Association and the Michigan Milk Producers Association, is active in the county Farm Bureau and the local FB Community Action Group and is a member of the Masons and the American Legion.

March 14 — Ralph (Pat) Sletsema, 60, of Allendale, is a cash crop and beef

farmer. He farms 600 acres and raises corn and pickles. He is an active member and past deacon in the Christian Reformed Church, is active in the church men's society, is an Ottawa County Farm Bureau member and has been involved in tractor pulling competitions for over 30 years.

March 21 — Gerald Heck, 32, of Ida, operates a 900-acre cash crop and poultry farm with his brother. Their egg-producing operation includes 14,000 chickens and they also raise corn, soybeans and wheat. Heck serves as a Sunday School teacher and church council member in the Lutheran Church in Ida, and is on the Monroe County Farm Bureau Board of Directors. He is a member of the Monroe County Extension Service advisory committee, the Michigan State

University Alumni Association and served on the MFB Young Farmer Committee.

March 28 — Larry Kartes, 31, operates a 350-acre dairy farm near Alger. He is chairperson of the Edwards Township Citizens Association, is an active member of St. Joseph Catholic Church in West Branch, has been township constable for seven years, serves on the Ogemaw County Farm Bureau Board of Directors, is chairperson of the county Young Farmer Committee, earned the Farmer of the Year Conservation Award in 1979, earned a Congressional Award presented by U.S. Rep. Don Albosta, is a member of the Michigan Milk Producers Association and he and his wife were named Outstanding Young Dairy Couple in 1981.

Eaton County FB Burns Mortgage



They say a picture paints a thousand words! The above picture says it all as Eaton County Farm Bureau burned its mortgage on March 29. There was an open house from 1 to 3 p.m. at the office at 430 State Street in Charlotte, and then in a ceremony the mortgage was burned with County President Duane Tirrell doing the honors.

Hawaii Prize Offered in State No-Till Contest

New rules for the 1983 Michigan No-Tillage Corn Yield Contest, sponsored by Chevron Chemical Co. and Soil Conservation Districts, are now available.

Along with the cash prize of \$100 for the highest no-till corn yield in each county, the farmer with the highest no-till corn yield in the state will receive an all-expense paid trip for two to Hawaii. Second highest yield in the state will earn \$500 in cash, third highest yield will earn

\$300 cash.

Rules and entry forms are available in the offices of the Soil Conservation Service/Soil Conservation District, and in the ASC office. Posters advertising the contest, accompanied by rules and entry forms, will also be at many farm implement and ag sales outlets in the county.

The highest no-till corn yield for Michigan in 1982 was 182 bushels per acre on a Capac loam soil in Clinton County.

Cheboygan Fish Farmer on National Panel

Clem Valot, a Cheboygan County Farm Bureau member from Mackinaw City, was asked by the American Farm Bureau Federation to speak on a panel at the AFBF Aquaculture Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana. He and his wife, Shirley, flew there for the March 22 & 23 meetings.

The Valots operate Green Acres Camp Ground at Mackinaw City. As part of this camp they raise trout from eggs to maturity. Tourists like to stop there and pay a fee to try their luck at fishing for trout. The ponds are heavily stocked so fishermen usually catch a fish weighing from 1 to 2 pounds in a few minutes. The Valots say approximately 20,000 trout are caught there by fishermen each season.

On March 22 Valot served on a panel to review marketing opportunities for various phases of aquaculture. Valot spoke as an industry specialist on trout. Other speakers were from California on shellfish, from Washington on oysters and clams, from Louisiana on shrimp and from Mississippi on catfish. Special speakers at this conference included Wilmer D. Mitzell, assistant secretary for governmental and public affairs, who spoke on "USDA Activities in Aquaculture" and Bruce Hawley, assistant director of national affairs for AFBF, who addressed, "Issues of Concern to Aquaculture."

On March 23 Valot attended a meeting of the AFBF Aquaculture Advisory Committee of which he is one of the 12 members. Their agenda stated, "Commercial Fishermen Are Farmers Too!"

**Do your friends
a favor —
Ask them to join
Farm Bureau**

Farm Credit System Helping in a Crunch

The Farm Credit System has several servicing options used in progressive steps to help farmers who are experiencing repayment problems. Within the servicing guidelines, each of the following options is explored by the loan officer before any loan is called into foreclosure.

Federal Land Bank:

- Extension — Granting the borrower an extension and not pursuing further collection activity for a given period of time. An extension is possible when the member-borrower has a positive source of repayment funds which will be available to him by a specific date.

- Deferment — Allowing the borrower to make the interest payment only and postponing payment of the principal portion of the loan.

- Reamortization — Combining all money due, such as interest, billed and unbilled principal and any other advances, and amortizing them over the previously established term of the loan or a new term of years.

- Refinancing — Providing funds to pay off short-term debt, thus allowing a longer term of years in which to repay debt.

- Voluntary Liquidation — Allowing the borrower to convert equity to cash during a mutually agreeable period of time.

Production Credit Association:

- Short-term Extension — Carrying payments past due until assets are sold to provide repayment.

- Refinancing — Renegotiating terms of the loan or providing interim financing if there appears to be a reasonable chance that the borrower can refinance the loan through another lender.

- Renewing — Moving short-term debt into the PCA annual operating loan and allowing the borrower additional time to make the repayment.

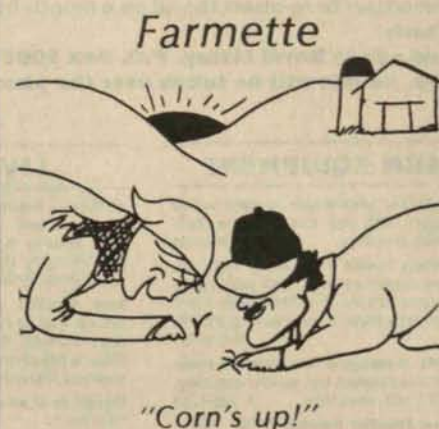
- Voluntary Liquidation — Allowing the borrower to convert equity to cash during a mutually agreeable period of time.

Farm Animal Rightists on the Move

Members of Congress were recently invited by the Farm Animal Reform Movement (FARM), an animal rights organization, to a reception in Washington D.C. In a letter from Alex Hershaft, president of FARM, the congressional leaders were told: "Things just ain't what they used to be down on the farm! The traditional tranquil family farm of yesterday has been displaced by a giant factory farm operated by an agribusiness conglomerate." Some purposes of the reception, said Hershaft, were to promote the humane treatment of farm animals and to return to wholesome and unadulterated farm products.

These organizations were very vocal, busy people. In short, they are condemning our care and ability

to produce wholesome products. We must keep informed and keep our legislators and urban friends aware of the truth.



MACMA Asparagus Sale Deadline May 11

The deadline for ordering products in the MACMA Asparagus Sale is Wednesday, May 11. Delivery is scheduled for the week of May 22.

Contact your county Farm Bureau secretary to see if your county is participating in the 1983 Asparagus Sale.

Quantity	Product	Price	Amount
_____	Fresh Asparagus, 20 lbs.	\$18.85	_____
_____	Fresh Asparagus, 10 lbs.	\$10.80	_____
_____	Summer Time Franks, 12/1 lb. packages	\$13.45	_____
_____	MACMA Hams, 4/4 lb. average	\$2.65 lb.	_____
_____	Thick Cut Bacon, 10/1 1/2 lb. pkgs.	\$27.70	_____
_____	Hickory Stick, 4 lb. average	\$10.35	_____
_____	Michigan Apple Concentrate, 24/12 oz. cans, 5+1	\$27.00	_____
_____	Michigan Grape Concentrate, 24/12 oz. cans, 3+1	\$28.00	_____
_____	Dried Tart Cherries, 4 oz. bag, 5+1	\$ 1.60	_____
_____	Florida Valencia Oranges, 4/5 bushel carton	\$ 9.50	_____
_____	Florida Pink Seedless Grapefruit, 4/5 bushel carton	\$ 8.90	_____
_____	Florida Orange Concentrate, 24/12 oz. cans, 5+1	\$31.80	_____
_____	Florida Grapefruit Concentrate, 24/12 oz. cans, 5+1	\$19.80	_____
_____	Lemonade Concentrate, 24/12 oz. cans	\$14.20	_____
_____	Grapefruit Sections, 24/16 oz. cans, no sugar added	\$15.25	_____
_____	Florida Skinless Peanuts, 20 oz. can	\$ 2.60	_____
_____	Wisconsin Sharp Cheddar, 4/1 lb. pkgs.	\$11.65	_____
_____	Wisconsin Medium Cheddar, 4/1 lb. pkgs.	\$11.65	_____
_____	Wisconsin Colby Cheese, 4/1 lb. pkgs.	\$10.95	_____
_____	Wisconsin Monterey Jack, 4/1 lb. pkgs.	\$10.95	_____
_____	Total Units	Total \$	_____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Other Phone _____

Spring

Morel Madness Strikes in May

Each year in May, thousands of otherwise normal-seeming people drive for miles for the privilege of enduring mosquito bites, wet feet and a backache from stooping and squatting to scan the forest floor — all for the chance that they'll return home with a mess of mushrooms.

The object of this quest is no ordinary mushroom. It's the morel, that stalked, spongy-topped fungus whose appearance in May is taken as justification for towns to hold festivals and mushroom hunters to flock to the woods.

Mycologists such as Everett Beneke at Michigan State University, who study mushrooms and other fungi, suggest that part of the romance of the morel is its brief period of availability. Morels rarely pop up before May 1 and they're generally gone by June, so if

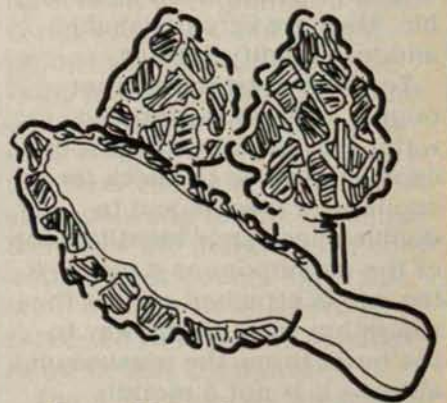
the morel fancier wants to indulge, May is the time.

Another reason for the popularity of the morel is that it's one of the easiest of all Michigan mushrooms to identify.

The true morel has a deeply pitted, hollow top portion that's attached at its base to the hollow stem. Other mushrooms with folds or gnarled caps that bear some resemblance to the morel are attached only at the top, the same way an umbrella is attached to its handle.

Morels range from creamy-white to black, but all have the deep, irregularly spaced pits in the cap, a light-colored stalk and a hollow interior. The attachment of the bottom of the cap to the stalk is the acid test, however. This is why all mushroom hunters, old hands and novices alike, are advised to slice lengthwise every pitted morel they collect. While they're

double-checking their identification of the mushroom as a morel, they can also clear out any millipedes or other bits of protein that may have taken up residence inside the mushroom.



True Morel

No matter where you look for morels — whether on your land or most of the way across the state — the first morel is the hardest one to spot. The mush-

rooms blend into the mottled browns of last year's leaves, and until your eye becomes adept at seeing the mushrooms in spite of their protective coloration, you can be literally walking on morels without spotting a one. Some veteran mushroom stalkers suggest getting as close to the ground as you can and looking toward the sky. "Doing the mushroom squat" throws morels into silhouette so they're easier to see.

Go equipped with shallow baskets or cardboard boxes to stow your harvest in. Plastic bags do not protect the mushrooms against breakage and promote hot, moist conditions that result in rapid spoilage.

Pick only fresh, young mushrooms, stem and all, so you can be sure of a positive identification. Trim off the lower part of the stem and remove any forest floor debris before you add each morel to your collection.

Keep mushrooms cool and well ventilated until you get home. Then clean and process or cook them as soon as possible. They are very perishable and lose quality rapidly.

To clean mushrooms thoroughly, several soakings in water may be necessary. Split caps lengthwise to check for spoilage or insects and to double-check your identification of the mushroom as a morel. If the cap is attached only at the top rather than all the way to the base, throw the mushroom away — it is not a morel!

Freezing and Canning Morel Mushrooms

Carolyn A. Lackey, Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service foods and nutrition specialist, suggests using one of two methods to preserve morel mushrooms for months.

To freeze morel mushrooms, cook them until covered by their own juices and almost done. Cool in air or set the pan in cold water. Pack into containers leaving ½ inch head space. Seal and freeze.

You can also steam blanch mushrooms before freezing. Cut large mushrooms into 1-inch chunks. Immerse mushrooms in a solution of 1 teaspoon lemon juice or 1½ teaspoons citric acid per pint of water for 5 minutes to keep them from darkening. Remove from anti-darkening solution and steam. Steam 3 minutes for small mushrooms and pieces and 5 minutes for larger mushrooms. Cool in cold water. Drain. Pack in containers, leaving ½ inch head space. Seal and freeze.

To can morel mushrooms, cut into 1-inch chunks. Steam mushrooms for 4 minutes or heat in a covered saucepan for 15 minutes. Pack hot mushrooms to within ½ inch of tops of jars. Add boiling-hot cooking liquid or hot water to cover mushrooms, leaving ½ inch headspace. (You may add 1/16 teaspoon ascorbic acid to half-pint jars or 1/8 teaspoon to pints to prevent darkening.) Adjust jar lids. Process in a pressure canner at 10 pounds pressure for 30 minutes for half-pints and pints.

Use Common Sense When Collecting Other Wild Edible Mushrooms

You can collect and eat wild Michigan mushrooms throughout the warm months if you follow these tips from experts at MSU:

- Learn how to identify a few edible species. Find out where they grow, when you're most likely to find them and how to distinguish them from similar looking but poisonous species. Know what you're after and collect only those species known to be safe for human consumption.

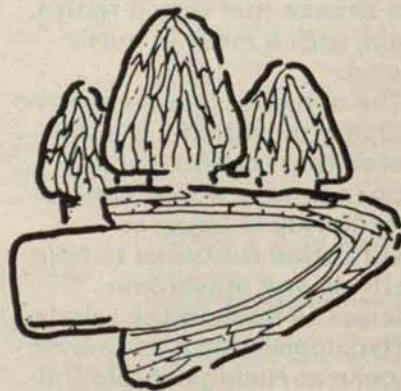
- Have an authority confirm your identifications so you know they are correct. Mushroom hunting with an authority — a real authority, not an overnight expert — is a good way to learn mushroom identification.

- Collect only one kind of mushroom at a time.

- Do not collect or eat over-mature or spoiled mushrooms. Eat only the commercially produced mushrooms raw.

- Eat only one kind of known edible mushroom at a time and that in small quantities for the first time. Some types of mushrooms contain toxins that must reach a certain level in your body before they begin to do any damage or cause poisoning symptoms. At lower levels, the body may tolerate the toxin. This is not true of all poisonous mushrooms. Some are deadly poison in small quantities.

- Check each mushroom for positive identity as you collect it. Poisonous mushrooms often grow alongside edible ones and can be swept up with them in a careless moment.



False Morel

- Always keep a sample of the fresh mushrooms and of the cooked product you consume. If you become ill, your physician or local poison control center can do more for you if they know what you have eaten.

(continued on page 33)

Staying Healthy in Rural America

By Cathy J. Kirvan

"A nation's greatest resource is not found in its commerce, academics, military, political or agricultural wealth or potential. Instead it is its people — resourceful, industrious, seeking and searching for greater personal and collective growth and well-being," said Robert Delano, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, in the introduction to AFBF's health program guide.

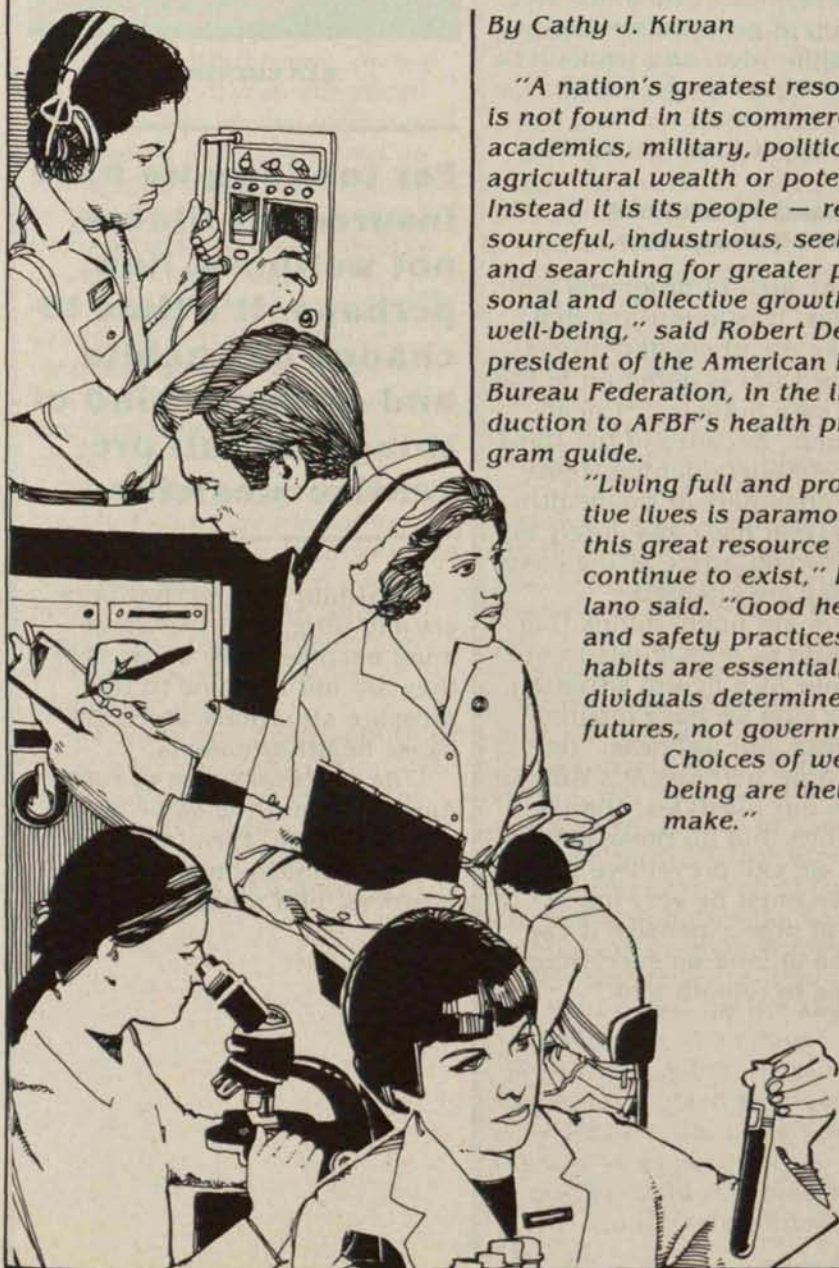
"Living full and productive lives is paramount if this great resource is to continue to exist," Delano said. "Good health and safety practices and habits are essential. Individuals determine their futures, not governments. Choices of well-being are theirs to make."

Thus a challenge is extended to state and county Farm Bureaus to form rural health committees and implement health care programs that encourage individuals to be responsible for their health and aware of the costs involved.

Michigan Farm Bureau is in the process of forming a state-wide Rural Health Committee that will work with the AFBF rural health program and with various hospital and doctor groups within Michigan to develop a higher quality, efficient and cost effective program for rural residents. One representative from each district in the state plus one to three at-large members will make up the committee. Kent County Farm Bureau member Ruth Johnson serves on AFBF's nine-member Rural Health Committee.

The AFBF program breaks the health care effort and its delivery system into three major areas — economics, legislative and programs and activities.

"All of these are designed to assist and service our members



in reducing their health care costs and also to make people more aware of the cost of their coverage, and of what is happening to the total cost of health care," said Ken Cheatham, director of AFBF's health and safety program.

Cost Containment Important

About one-third of all Farm Bureau members nationwide have health care coverage through their state organizations. Annual premiums paid by those members are approximately \$1.5 billion.

"Farm Bureau leaders and staff are quite concerned about what effect the spiraling cost of health care is having on our membership, and on the entire nation," Cheatham said.

In 1981, health care costs accounted for 9.8% of the Gross National Product, up from 8.9% the previous year, he said. In 1982, that figure rose to 10.5%. The total cost for health care in this country was \$287 billion in 1981 and it rose to \$321 billion in 1982.

"Let me put that in perspective," Cheatham said. "In 1981 it cost every man, woman and child \$1,225 for health care; in 1982 that figure rose to \$1,395. It has been predicted that during the entire decade of the 1980s, health care costs will rise in double digit figures.

"We have a health care system that is the envy of the world," he said, "but we have to ask — at what cost?"

AFBF Seeks Legislative, Regulatory Reforms

On the legislative front, Farm Bureau policy calls for federal income tax credits or tax deductions for people who self-fi-

nance their health insurance. If such legislation is not possible, policy states that the value of employer-financed premiums should be taxed to the employee as income.

During the recent Washington Legislative Seminar, Michigan Farm Bureau legislative leaders urged their congressmen to support Farm Bureau's position on these issues.

State and county rural health committees are encouraged to monitor legislative issues and regulatory programs and activities at the state and local level that add costs or limit services, identify and monitor health-related agencies and assist in selection of persons serving in leadership roles, and respond to "action requests" on health care issues based on Farm Bureau policy, Cheatham said.

Individual Awareness Goal of FB Programs

"In the area of programs and activities, it is important that we make members and others aware of what is going on in the health care industry," Cheatham said. "Because of the third party reimbursement system, most consumers of the health care system have absolutely no idea how you arrive at the costs that they are charged.

"There are many things that we can do as individuals to improve our own health situation. For too long we have insured for illness, not wellness," he said. "Now, perhaps, it's time to change our lifestyles, change our habits and do those kind of things we call preventive medicine. We must be very much aware of how expensive it can be to be ill, and do everything possible to remain well."



KEN CHEATHAM

For too long we have insured for illness, not wellness. Now, perhaps, it's time to change our habits and do those kind of things we call preventive medicine.

Cheatham warned that farmers and others in rural areas must become more aware that they are not immune to the pressure situations which can cause health problems.

"The pastoral scene of rural America is not the same as it was years ago. Farming today is a very complex, challenging business, and many farmers

suffer from high blood pressure," Cheatham said.

He suggested that farmers cut back on consumption of salt, watch their diet, reduce their weight and get more exercise. "Farmers work hard," he said, "but they need a different kind of exercise than they're used to. They need exercise that builds body tone and helps reduce high blood pressure."

Many Farm Bureau women's committees across the country, including some in Michigan, conduct health fairs that, among other things, offer hypertension (high blood pressure) screening. Other health and safety projects of county women's groups in Michigan include promoting home, recreational, agricultural, chemical and farm machinery safety; and identifying and supporting appointment of qualified members to serve on Farm Bureau health committees and local hospital or rural health boards. They also support seminars and programs on nutrition, exercise, identifying stress symptoms, stress management and alcohol and substance abuse awareness.

"We're also encouraging county Farm Bureaus to meet with county medical societies or professional groups to become better acquainted, to understand what the problems are and to discuss the issues," Cheatham said.

"We want America to continue to be a very healthy nation. We want our members to have affordable, accessible, high quality health care — but we hope we can do this at a lower cost," he said.

More Doctors Needed in Rural America

AFBF policy also addresses the need for more doctors in rural areas. It calls for medical schools to train additional family physicians who intend to practice medicine in rural areas and supports state and local economic inducements to encourage doctors to practice in rural areas.

According to the Michigan Health Council, recruitment of physicians by rural communities usually includes three phases: the initial contact, a visit to the town and helping the doctor set up his or her practice.

But the council warns that rural communities face major obstacles when trying to recruit a new physician: doctors do not respond well to mail, word of mouth seems to be the best way; because of residency and other schedules, it is very difficult for him or her to visit the town; doctors are concerned about being isolated from other colleagues in a small town; and smaller towns usually mean smaller incomes. A doctor may also worry about his or her spouse not being able to find a job.

Through the council's Physician Placement Service, communities can learn where a doctor graduated from medical school, the location of his or her residency, area of specialty and where the doctor would ideally like to practice. The council also publishes an annual roster of opportunities in which registered communities list their needs for physicians.

In addition, the council sponsors two Physician Recruitment Conferences each year which give doctors and community leaders an opportunity to talk informally with one another.

The council offers the follow-

ing tips to communities interested in recruiting one or more physicians:

- Be willing to spend a substantial amount of time and effort.

- Ask area hospital administrators to help in recruitment efforts.

- Assure the doctor that all other physicians agree that another doctor is needed in the community.

- Show the doctor how community leaders could assist in setting up a practice. Some hospitals guarantee an annual income and will make up the difference if the doctor does not make that amount through his or her practice.

- Find out where the doctor was born and where he or she went to high school or college. Studies show that doctors who grew up in small towns are more likely to return to one.

- Express an interest in the doctor as an individual. Find out what his or her interests are and how the community can meet those interests.

- If the doctor is married, talk to the spouse. If he or she will also be working in the community, offer to help find a job.

- If the doctor has children, discuss the quality of the community's schools.

- Emphasize the benefits of living in the community, i.e. the high quality of life, the advantages of raising a family in a quiet, country atmosphere.

- After the doctor visits the town, send a small gift to help remind him or her of the town.

For more information on recruiting physicians, contact the Michigan Health Council, Suite 340, Nisbet Building, 1407 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing, Mich. 48823.

1983 Farm Outlook Revised

The farm outlook for 1983 has changed rather dramatically from earlier forecasts. This is due primarily to the USDA's Payment-in-Kind program. Now that more of the details are available on the impact of PIK, we have revised our agricultural outlook.

Farm Income

Net farm income could improve by \$4 or \$5 billion over last year, due primarily to producer acceptance of the Payment-in-Kind program. This reduced acreage program will result in higher than expected commodity prices, lower carry-over and reduce production expenses. However, the improved income and reduced year-end supplies do not necessarily signal continued good economic times for agriculture as long-term prosperity will not return until demand is increased to meet our productive capacity.

Cattle

Cattle prices have trended significantly higher than many analysts had expected. Poor weather and muddy feedlots had slowed weight gain and prevented the late February/March marketing bulge that was anticipated following the January cattle inventory report. With a seasonal tendency for strength into the spring period, prices have continued their strong upward bias.

A 22-24 month cycle top is expected to be in place by late spring and prices should trend lower as large numbers of feeder cattle will come off wheat pasture into feedlots for fall and winter marketings. At the same time, we can expect larger numbers of hogs to be coming to market, which will increase the possibility for downward price movement.

Two additional negative factors to watch are the chance for hot summer weather to drive cattle off pastures earlier than planned, and the very real possibility for higher interest rates by the end of the third quarter, which could increase liquidation and pressure prices.

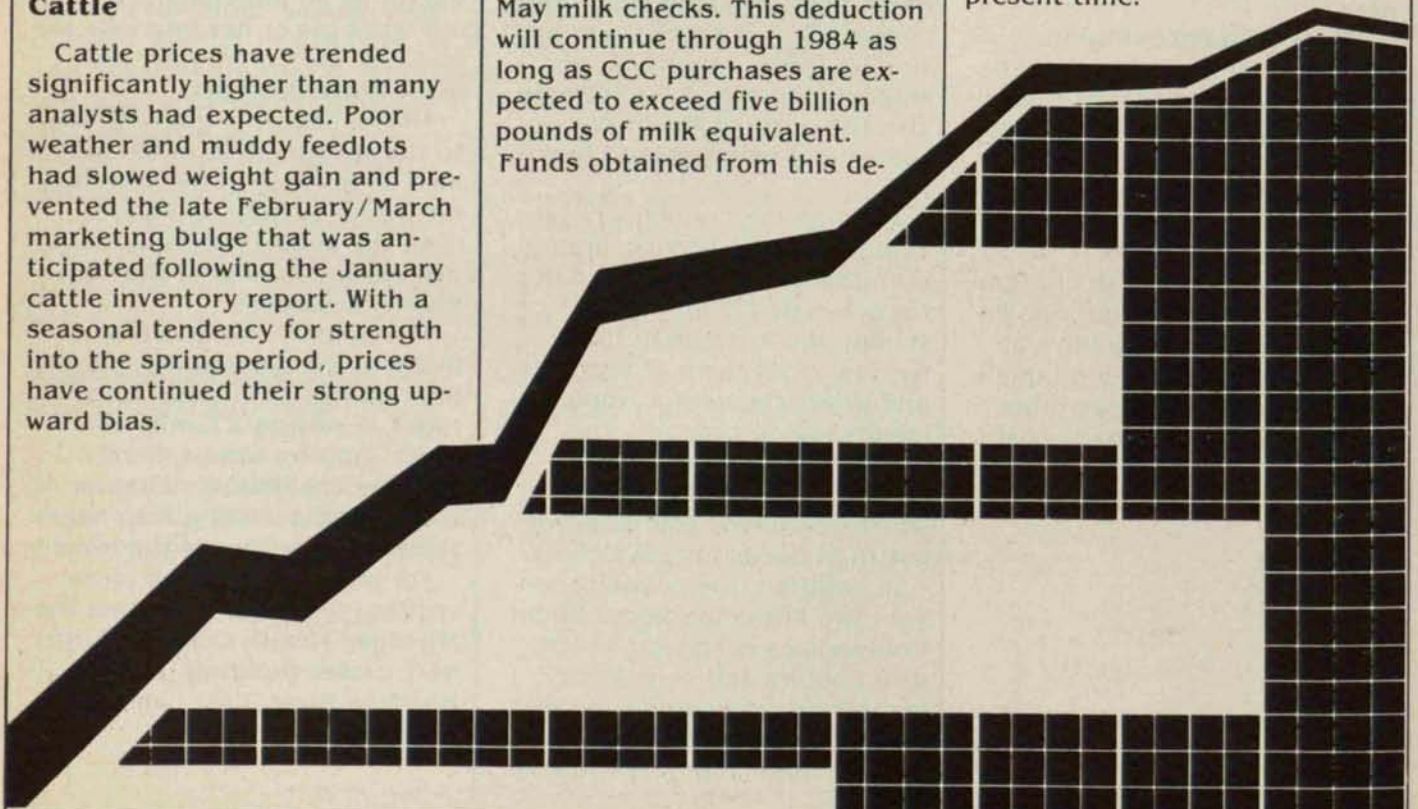
Dairy

The secretary of agriculture has authorized the deduction of 50¢/cwt. from the proceeds of milk sales. Michigan dairy farmers should see this in their mid-May milk checks. This deduction will continue through 1984 as long as CCC purchases are expected to exceed five billion pounds of milk equivalent. Funds obtained from this de-

duction are to be used to reduce the direct cost of the removals by the CCC.

This program is unlikely to achieve the desired decrease in production immediately. The real gross margin over direct costs will decline by about 6% in 1983, unless Congress takes definitive action to further reduce the national dairy price support program and thereby reduce the huge surpluses of milk and dairy products. Such action is quite possible as several proposals have been introduced and the Reagan administration does not like the two 50-cent deductions currently authorized by Congress last August.

The reduction in revenues will only press the marginal dairy farmers, whereas most operators are likely to respond by increasing milk production. Numbers of cows and production per cow continue to increase at the present time.



However, over the long run, the national dairy program will lead to a reduction in cow numbers and milk production, and this should lead to a stable dairy industry with demand expected to increase over the next three to four years because of population growth and economic recovery.

Hogs

The March 22 hogs and pigs report showed expansion in excess of the trade's expectations. With cash prices in the upper 40s as of this writing, it appears we are close to, if not at, a low for the time being. We expect some seasonal strength into the summer months which should move cash back to the mid-50s. The heavy sign-up in the government's PIK program has sparked a rally in the grain market, and many analysts are speculating that higher feed

costs could temper the expansion.

Price risk could be as low as the lower 40's this fall and early winter as a major four year cycle low is put in. From there, prices should be working higher into 1985.

Eggs

With lower egg prices, producers have increased the number of mature hens slaughtered during late 1982 and the first quarter of 1983. By selling old hens and adding pullets, producers have kept the rate of lay high. So, even though there has been a slight decline in total hen numbers, egg production is likely to hold very close to year ago levels for the near future.

The hatch of layer replacements for February was reported by the USDA to be 10% lower than a year ago and eggs in incubators on March 1 were

19% below 1982 levels.

The impact on feed prices from participation in the PIK program could limit any gain in returns even if egg prices do respond to the lower supplies indicated by the figures above. Latest estimates show that Grade A large eggs in New York could move to near the 80 cent level in the last quarter of 1983.

Corn

Nationally, farmers will idle 33.2 million acres of corn under the RAP and PIK programs. This 39% acreage reduction is much higher than had been expected. While some additional corn acres will be planted by producers outside of the program and from "switchover" of non-program crops, the 1983 U.S. corn crop will likely be only 5.5 to 6 billion bushels. This com-

(continued on page 32)



**MICHIGAN'S
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pages 18-19**

The Calorie Counter's Friend

The Discussion Topic is prepared by Ken Willes for Community Action Group policy discussions.

Water is the primary limiting factor in agriculture in the United States and the world. The western states have gained importance in agricultural production only through extensive use of irrigation from surface and ground water sources. With the increase in population, these water supplies are facing new pressures for reallocation.

Adequate scientific information concerning water availability, behavior, management and value is essential in optimizing water allocation on farms, in

production and among various agricultural users of water resources.

Essentially, all the water used in the United States is derived from precipitation. A portion of the precipitation flows to streams, ponds, lands and reservoirs and some of this eventually reaches the ocean; another portion infiltrates the soil to the rooting zone; and another portion percolates below the rooting zone and becomes ground water. Surface sources of water are recharged rapidly, but ground water reservoirs are recharged slowly in dry regions.

Ground water reservoirs in some dry regions are being exhausted by pumping.

The proportion of the precipitation received in the

United States that is returned to the atmosphere as water

vapor is estimated to be 70% from non-irrigated land areas and 2% from irrigated areas.

Plants use far more water than is required in the vital processes of growth and development. This inefficiency is largely a consequence of stomatal apparatuses in the foliage through which water vapor leaves the plants. Although vaporization of water is important in cooling the leaves, loss of water vapor is not an essential function as such. Rather, it can be considered a necessary evil that accompanies absorption of atmospheric carbon dioxide in the essential process of photosynthesis. The stomata close when the water supply is deficient, and this decreases the transpiration, but it also decreases photosynthesis.

Water is also essential in animal production. The total agri-



WATER USE

New technologies and increased demands on our water resources call for a re-examination of water use policies

cultural use of water, however, is so heavily dominated by plants that the amount required in animal agriculture is of only minor concern.

Use of Irrigation Expanding

Irrigated cropland harvested amounted to 14% of the total acreage harvested in the United States in 1978, but the value of these crops amounted to 36% of the total value of all crops produced. About 85% of the irrigated land is located in 17 western states, and in nine of these states, more than 50% of the total acreage of harvested crop is irrigated.

All states have periods of low rainfall in which irrigation is needed, however, and irrigation is gradually increasing in the eastern states. The extreme example, Florida, is in a high-rainfall area, but more than 50% of the total value of the crops it produces is derived from irrigated crops.

Water for irrigation commonly is stored in surface reservoirs or underground reservoirs and is applied as near to the time it is needed as the facilities will permit. Application methods include surface systems, in which the water flows on the soil; pivot and traveling gun systems, in which the water is sprayed on the soil; and drip systems, in which the water is distributed through plastic tubes with small holes through which the water drips on or into the soil.

New equipment and the new technology have enabled farmers to increase the ratio of crops produced to irrigation water delivered, and further improvements are possible.

Various procedures for increasing the supply of water for agriculture are technologically feasible. Reuse of water from

municipal sources and from irrigation return flows is widely practiced at present. Reuse of treated water from municipal, industrial and electrical generation sources is expected to account for a small, increasing proportion of the supply of water to agriculture in the future. Desalination of brackish water is too expensive for practical use at present, and cloud seeding requires further development before it will be ready for general use.

Removal of "non-beneficial" vegetation that has high water requirements, snow management, run-off management and changing the landscape to direct water to limited areas are other procedures that have some practical use.

Many possibilities exist for conserving existing supplies of water for irrigation, but the savings from individual techniques generally are small. Realizing the potential use would be difficult in practice.

The institutional development in irrigation is extensive. Some 35 federal programs and 10 separate agencies provide some type of assistance for irrigation. Most states have an impressive array of agencies relating to water resources.

Local agencies consist of water districts and conservancy districts which are established to form a service, usually that of supplying water for various uses. Many different kinds of

organizations, governmental and otherwise, deliver water to farmers.

In water law, there are doctrines of water capture and use. According to the "Riparian Doctrine," the owner of private land along a stream has the right to use the water provided that the use does not interfere unreasonably with the rights of persons who own other parts of the stream or with the rights of adjacent owners.

According to the "Prior Appropriation Doctrine," a "water right" is required by diverting water from a water course for a beneficial use. The first person to appropriate the water and put it to a reasonable and beneficial use has a right superior to any later appropriators.

In the western states, water laws generally are based upon the doctrine of prior appropriation. Some eastern states have established a permit system for managing their water resources, and others are considering it. The permit system is essentially a modified appropriation doctrine.

Control of ground water utilization has been difficult. Various states have adopted one or more of four different doctrines: absolute ownership of water under the land; reasonable use, which recognizes the right of all of the resources; correlative rights, in which the landowner must correlate his
(continued on page 32)

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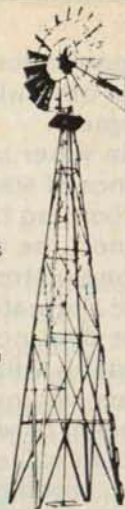
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Legislative Review

(continued from page 7)

used to pay the \$820 million accumulated deficit and expiring by 1986. The remaining 1.5% increase will drop to not more than 1.25% in 1984 and .5% in 1986. There are actually two income tax rate increases. One is 1.5%, the other is .25%. The total is 1.75% which added to the present 4.6% tax rate totals 6.35% for 1983. In 1984 the 1.5% drops to 1.25% and to .5% in 1985 and thereafter. So the total rate will drop to 6.17% in 1984 and to 5.35% in 1985.

The second part of the rate increase, .25% which is to be used to eliminate the accumulated cash deficit of over \$800 million, will automatically expire by 1986. This will bring the total tax rate down to 5.1% or .5% above the present 4.6%. Further reductions could result if unemployment rates drop in the state. For example, if unemployment drops to 6.5% the tax rate drops to the present 4.6%. The tax rate could continue to drop if unemployment goes lower.

Budget Cuts — In addition to increasing the income tax revenue, the governor has ordered additional cuts of \$225 million in the present year's budget. The cuts could also extend into the 1983-84 budget. Some \$97.8 million of the total cuts are "deferrals." Cuts include a \$69.5 million additional cut in social services of which \$60 million is deferred; K-12 school, \$25 million of which \$15 million is deferred; local governments, \$15 million of which \$10 million is deferred. The DNR will be cut \$4.2 million; MSU (including the Ag Experiment Station and Extension), \$5.7 million; Department of Labor, \$6 million; Department of Commerce, \$4.6 mil-

lion; State Police, \$5 million; Department of State, \$1.2 million; and DMB, \$4.1 million.

Some department cuts are less than expected, including the Department of Agriculture, \$1.7 million. This is \$400,000 less than the original \$2.1 million proposed due to the appropriations committee reinstating \$400,000 to city race tracks. Cuts within the department will include: SCS, \$150,000; Animal Diagnostic Center, \$87,000; gypsy moth, \$114,000; Pontiac stadium, \$50,000; city race tracks \$200,000 (was \$600,000); horserace revenue programs \$550,000 (fair premiums, county fair improvements, breed awards, etc); FFA, \$14,000; laboratory division, \$62,000; animal health, \$7,300. Various other program cuts within the department will extend into the 1983-84 budget. The above are only a few of the cuts. About 25 boards and agencies will also be eliminated by statute.

Wine Rules — FB staff successfully testified in support of rules that would prevent volume discounting by the major wineries, most of whom are from outside the state, such as Gallo of California. Michigan grape growers and wineries would have been at a serious disadvantage.

Marketing Bargaining Board (P.A. 344) — This continues to be a major issue as processors and others seem to be conducting a vicious campaign. A Senate concurrent resolution is expected to be introduced to study P.A. 344. The House Agriculture Committee already has a subcommittee to study how to increase processing facilities in Michigan. The study will include P.A. 344.



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This issue has also appeared in at least two major studies with reference to processor claims but no chance for producer response. The Michigan Supreme Court, by a vote of 6 to 0, has upheld the constitutionality of the law. However, the processor groups have chosen to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Transportation — The increased federal gas tax became effective April 1. The states are guaranteed at least 85% return of the monies collected within the state. This is important to Michigan as in previous federal highway law, Michigan received as little as 60% return. However, one provision requires 10% of the work be given to minority contractors. This is not likely to be possible as it has never been able to reach more than 4.5% in Michigan. States that do not conform can lose all federal road monies.

Another major concern is the growing number of lawsuits against the department, presently numbering 400, totaling over \$500 million. Judgments have totaled over \$24 million in the past three years.

Grain Dealers Amendments — S.B. 55 and S.B. 56 (Sen. Nick Smith, et al) would amend the Grain Dealers Act to create a "statutory lien" on the grain assets of a dealer in favor of the farmer providing he or she has written evidence of storage or sale. The bills further provide that in case of bankruptcy, farmers with stored grain would have first priority against the grain assets. Farmers with written evidence of sale of grain would have second priority against the grain assets of a dealer.

Farm Bureau supports the concept of the legislation, however, there is a question whether state law would be effective against the federal law, which controls bankruptcies. Various lending institutions have expressed opposition. The Department of Agriculture is studying the proposal to determine the effect on the Grain Dealers Act, which was passed last year.

H.B. 4319 (Rep. Spaniola) has been introduced to create a Michigan grain dealers public warehouse insurance fund. Elevators or other grain dealers could apply for membership in the fund, grain would be insured at 80% of its value, funding would be one fourth of one cent per bushel. This proposal will need study and could also create problems. The new Grain Dealers Act already provides much of this protection.

Agricultural Commission

— H.B. 4027 and H.B. 4057 have not received any action so far. It is not known whether the governor expects to push direct appointments of the department heads of agriculture, natural resources, corrections and civil rights. As reported in previous articles, such a change would be a step backward to the political spoils system.

P.A. 116 Transfer — H.B. 4232, which would transfer P.A. 116 administration to the Department of Agriculture, has passed the House and is now in the Senate. This bill was introduced because DNR staff, in testimony to a House appropriations subcommittee, recommended eliminating P.A. 116 administration as one of the \$4.5 million cuts required for the department. Since that time, the DNR commission, which makes policy for the DNR, has unanimously passed

an official policy designating highest priority for P.A. 116.

Final passage of 4232 could cause problems. The bill allows the transfer of present personnel, however, the present expert staff may not elect to transfer. It will be a serious blow to the continued good service farmers have had. Training a new staff to be competent in the very complex P.A. 116 law would take 12 to 18 months. New applications from farmers for 1983 are breaking records; over 4,000 year-to-date.

The legislation also splits the land resource programs, some of which are included in the P.A. 116 law. The cost of transferring the P.A. 116 program to MDA has been estimated to be between \$20,000 and \$40,000.

Lansing legislative topics are reviewed by Robert E. Smith, senior legislative counsel.

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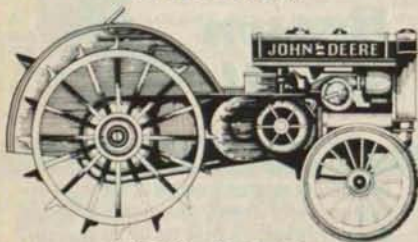
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Agrinomic Update

(continued from page 27)

compares to last year's record crop of 8.3 billion bushels. Assuming that PIK compensation is 2 billion bushels, this will result in a 7.5 to 8 billion bushel supply available to the market for 1983-84. This will be sufficient to meet demand, but will also significantly reduce stocks. Farm gate prices should range from \$2.70 to \$3.10, up 30 cents from earlier forecasts.

Soybeans

Soybeans were not included in the acreage reduction programs. However, soybean prices have benefited from the bullish PIK sign-up as non-compliers are expected to increase corn plantings over soybeans. This could result in a reduction of 8 to 12% in soybean plantings this year. We anticipate that soybean prices will increase faster relative to corn prices, which will encourage greater bean plantings this spring. Soybean prices should average from \$5.90 to \$6.50 per bushel this year.

Wheat

As with corn, wheat producer sign-up in the acreage reduction program was large, with 36% of the national crop to be idled. However, 40% of the overall participation is enrolled in RAP only. These producers can drop out of the program with little penalty.

The bullish grain markets could easily pull half of these RAP-only compliers out of the program. If so, overall plantings could total 63 million acres for harvest. While this will be down 20% from last year, it would still produce a 2.3 billion bushel crop.

This size crop combined with the PIK entitlements of 600-700 million bushels will result in more than sufficient supplies of

wheat to the market. In addition, both Canada and Australia have indicated that their wheat plantings and production will increase this year.

Price outlook for 1983-84 is \$3.40 to \$3.90 per bushel.

Discussion Topic

(continued from page 29)

use with others; and the doctrine of prior appropriation, in which the ground water is the property of the state subject to appropriation.

The statutes establishing the legal basis for water rights in the west were enacted when the demand for water was much less than it is now. Rights to utilize water for irrigation were granted to prospective users to give them the security of continued use to induce investment for stability and profitability. Continued development of the west has resulted in increased demand for water.

Water allocation problems consequently have become important. One of the problems has been that there is limited economic incentive to invest in conservation practices and structures. This had led to less emphasis on water conservation on farms, in households and in factories than might otherwise be expected.

As the competition for water intensifies, more attention will be devoted to devising new mechanisms for allocating water among competing uses and to modify existing mechanisms. For the most part, institutional barriers have inhibited transfers of water.

Results of some studies suggest that the current environment requires mechanisms which facilitate the transfer or reallocation of water among competing uses. The fundamental change required to facilitate transfer or reallocation is a

(continued on page 34)

Morel Madness

(continued from page 22)

• Do not experiment on yourself or other living things. If a mushroom is not known to be edible, do not eat it and do not feed it to any other creature.

• Avoid eating wild mushrooms if you know you are allergic to other fungi. You may have a serious allergic reaction to mushrooms that someone else could eat with no ill effects.

• Whenever you're in doubt — about your identification, about the quality of the mushrooms you have gathered or about the source of the "flu bug" that coincidentally struck you after a mess of mushrooms — *do not eat the mushrooms*. It may save your life.

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To order the following Extension bulletins, send the appropriate payment, the bulletin number and your name and address to: Extension Bulletin Office, P.O. Box 231, East Lansing, Mich. 48824.

• "May is Morel Month in Michigan," E-614, 25 cents.

• "Mushrooms Grow on Stumps," E-924, 75 cents.

• "Wood Waste Makes Wonderful Mushrooms," E-925, 60 cents.

• "Best of the Boletes," E-926, 60 cents.

• "Don't Pick Poison When Gathering Mushrooms for Food in Michigan," E-1080, 75 cents.

• "Mushrooms from the Forest Floor," E-1271, 50 cents.

• "Collecting Grassland Mushrooms for Food," E-1272, 50 cents.

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These dishes and more will be offered by communities throughout the state with festivals saluting Michigan's abun-

dant agricultural industry and the many commodities produced within the state's borders.

Kicking off Michigan's 1983 commodity promotions were maple syrup festivals in Vermontville and Shepard in late April. Throughout the summer and fall, Michigan residents can participate in a variety of commodity festivals. Below are the dates, festivals and locations which were reported to the Michigan Travel Bureau.

May 1-7	Blossomtime Festival	Benton Harbor St. Joseph
May 7	Mushroom Festival	Harrison
May 8-14	Mushroom Festival	Mesick
May 14	Mushroom Festival	Lewiston
June 3-5	Apple Festival	Royal Oak
June 10-12	National Asparagus Festival	Hart Shelby
June 17-19	Strawberry Festival	Elton
June 24-26	Sugar Festival	Sebewaing
July 3-9	National Cherry Festival	Traverse City
July 8-10	Pickle Festival	Linwood
July 13-17	Blueberry Festival	South Haven
July 14-17	Corn Festival	Auburn
July 15-16	Strawberry Festival	Chassell
July 28-31	Potato Festival	Munger
August 19-21	Melon Festival	Howell
Sept. 2-5	Peach Festival	Romeo
Sept. 8-11	Wine and Harvest Festival	Paw Paw Kalamazoo
Sept. 8-11	Potato Festival	Edmore
Sept. 9-11	Potato Festival	Posen
Sept. 23-25	Four Flags Apple Festival	Niles

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Legislative Leaders Get Involved

(continued from page 11)

"Farm Bureau delegates at annual meetings have long supported cutting the size of government rather than increasing it," he said. "Even though we have heard a lot about our present administration cutting out programs, the facts are that government has continued to grow. All they have been able to do is slow down the growth."

Smith said that members in Farm Bureau determined the policies that supported the three-phase tax cut and indexing of income schedules to prevent "bracket creep" due to inflation. He said that Farm Bureau members would continue to support that policy of tax relief in their organizational and legislative contacts.

In a related issue, Smith expressed concern over proposals to freeze the inheritance tax exemption at last year's level of \$275,000. The issue was among the most frequently discussed



Members of the MFB board's Legislative Committee met with Jonathon Vipond, deputy assistant of public liaison to the president while in Washington. They asked Vipond to convey to Reagan MFB's support of his tax cut and attempts to reduce the size of government.

by the seminar participants as having an impact on the future of the family farm. Legislation passed in 1981 called for phased in increases in the exemption level to \$600,000 by 1985.



Bob Rathje of Huron County and Betty Laurie of Tuscola County were among the Farm Bureau members in congressional district 8 who visited Roger Szemraj, aide to Rep. Bob Traxler.

The Michigan Farm Bureau members made effective use of their contacts in Washington, D.C., to urge support for a health insurance premium deduction for the self-employed under IRS rules. The policy, which was adopted by AFBF delegates in Dallas this January, originated among Michigan Farm Bureau members in the policy development process.

The inequity of the current situation was brought to the attention of the lawmakers as seminar participants explained that self-employed persons must pay for health care insurance with dollars from their taxable income, while employee benefit packages often include health insurance at little or no cost to the employee and are non-taxable. To correct this inequity, Farm Bureau is supporting measures to allow an IRS deduction for the self-employed or to make employee benefit packages a part of the wage earner's taxable income.

The 1983 Washington Legislative Seminar was the 23rd annual grassroots lobbying effort by Farm Bureau members in the nation's capital. The seminar is sponsored each year by the Michigan Farm Bureau Women.

Discussion Topic

(continued from page 32)

system of laws or rules allowing voluntary exchange of water rights while protecting the interest of third parties. In agriculture, a commonly expressed argument against relaxing the institutional barriers that inhibit transfer of water rights is that higher valued uses would take too much of the water now used for agriculture.

In the future, the agricultural industry may be held more closely accountable for the way it uses water than it has in the past. Agriculture may have to expend more effort to justify its claims to water, particularly under scarcity conditions, and may have greater responsibility for the environmental impacts of the water it uses and returns to the system.

A bill (H.B. 4198) has been introduced into the Michigan Legislature, which would provide farmers with the right to necessary water for the production of crops and other agricultural products, provided that the use of such water will be within good management practices. The bill also provides that the legislation cannot interfere with other state and federal water legislation. The bill looks similar to the Right-to-Farm bill, however, it is a complex issue and perhaps will require much consideration before final passage.

Discussion Questions

- To whom does the fresh underground water belong?
- Should restrictions be placed on the amount of fresh water a household can use?
- Should Michigan share its water supply with other states?
- Should there be a limit placed on the amount of water that can be used for irrigation?

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