



Rural Living

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

OCTOBER 1987

Inside: Special Section —

Animal Agriculture Update



WHILE YOU'RE TAKING CARE OF THIS COUNTRY...

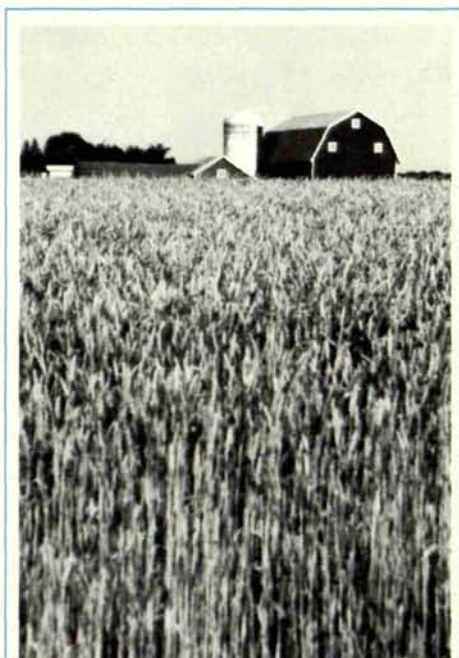
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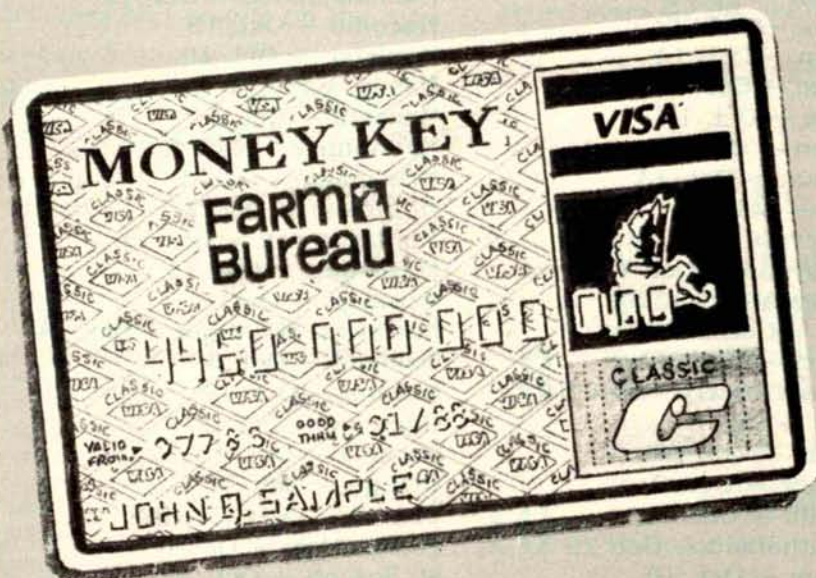


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call 1 (800) 292-2639, ask for ext. 537 or 538

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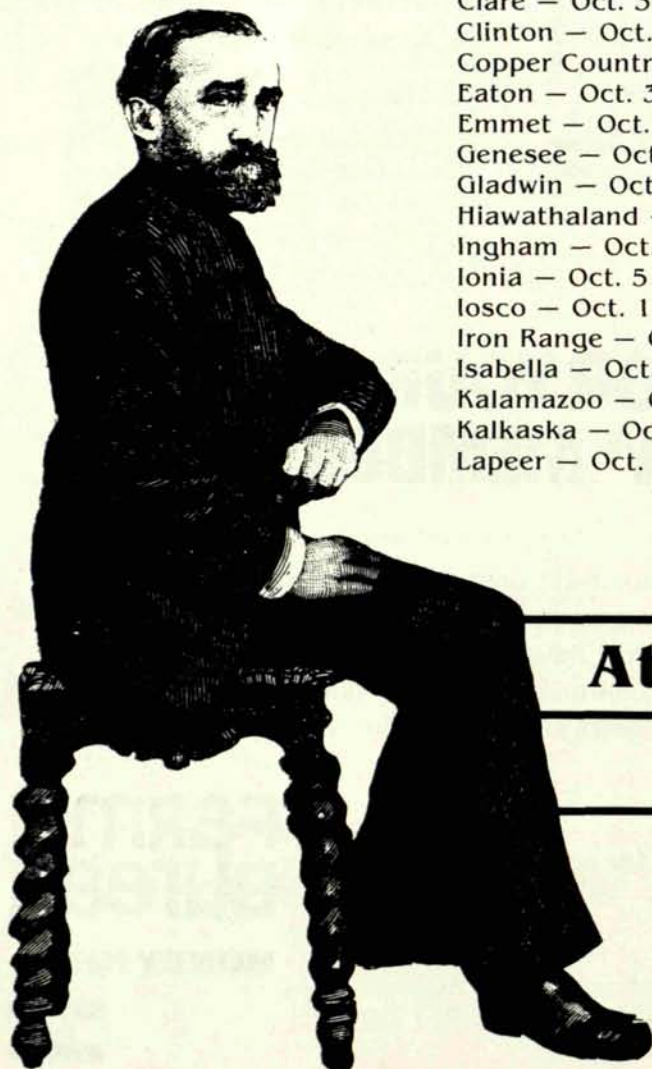
Contact your county Farm Bureau office for an application.

Farm Bureau

MONEY KEY



Good Ideas Get Better When They're Shared



Alcona — Oct. 26	Livingston — Oct. 21
Allegan — Oct. 8	Mackinac-Luce — Oct. 12
Alpena — Oct. 22	Macomb — Oct. 15
Antrim — Oct. 14	Manistee — Oct. 19
Arenac — Oct. 12	Mason — Oct. 6
Benzie — Oct. 12	Mecosta — Oct. 5
Berrien — Oct. 30	Menominee — Oct. 8
Calhoun — Oct. 13	Missaukee — Oct. 3
Cass — Oct. 5	Montcalm — Oct. 22
Charlevoix — Oct. 10	Montmorency — Oct. 21
Cheboygan — Oct. 15	Muskegon — Oct. 15
Chippewa — Oct. 20	Newaygo — Oct. 8
Clare — Oct. 3	Northwest Michigan — Oct. 14
Clinton — Oct. 17	Oakland — Oct. 8
Copper Country — Oct. 10	Oceana — Oct. 19
Eaton — Oct. 3	Ogemaw — Oct. 29
Emmet — Oct. 26	Osceola — Oct. 20
Genesee — Oct. 6	Otsego — Oct. 27
Gladwin — Oct. 6	Ottawa — Oct. 15
Hiawathaland — Oct. 29	Presque Isle — Oct. 6
Ingham — Oct. 10	St. Joseph — Oct. 31
Ionia — Oct. 5	Van Buren — Oct. 22
Iosco — Oct. 14	Washtenaw — Oct. 7
Iron Range — Oct. 18	Wayne — Oct. 6
Isabella — Oct. 14	Wexford — Oct. 13
Kalamazoo — Oct. 6	
Kalkaska — Oct. 21	
Lapeer — Oct. 8	

Counties not listed
have already held their
1987 annual meeting

Attend Your County Annual Meeting

*Contact your county Farm Bureau
secretary for more information*

RuralLiving

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

A Publication of the Michigan Farm Bureau



About the Cover

Rural scenes in Autumn create picture perfect views like this one throughout Michigan.

Tune in to the "Farm Bureau Review"

Hear the latest information on Farm Bureau organizational activities and events on the weekly 5-minute "Farm Bureau Review" radio show aired on these stations:

STATION	AIR TIME
WATZ, Alpena	6:20 a.m. Sat
WABJ, Adrian	12:27 p.m. Sat
WPAG, Ann Arbor	6:20 a.m. Sat
WLEW, Bad Axe	.
WHFB, Benton Harbor	6:20 a.m. Sat
WBRN, Big Rapids	.
WKYO, Caro	6:20 a.m. Sat
WTVB, Coldwater	12:55 p.m. Tues
WDOW, Dowagiac	6:20 a.m. Sat
WZXM, Gaylord	.
WPLB, Greenville	.
WCSR, Hillsdale	6:20 a.m. Sat
WHTC, Holland	12:15 p.m. Sat
WKZO, Kalamazoo	.
WKLA, Ludington	.
WSMA, Marine City	6:20 a.m. Sat
WDMJ, Marquette	7:17 a.m. Sat
WCEN, Mt Pleasant	6:20 a.m. Sat
WOAP, Owosso	6:20 a.m. Sat
WSGW, Saginaw	5:05-6 a.m. Sat
WMKC, St. Ignace	.
WMLM, St. Louis	6:30 a.m. Sat
WMIC, Sandusky	6:20 a.m. Sat
WKJC, Tawas City	6:20 a.m. Sat
WTCM, Traverse City	6:30 a.m. Sat
WBMB, West Branch	6:20 a.m. Sat

*Contact the station for day and time of airing.

A new Michigan Farm Bureau information service to enhance the activities of county Farm Bureaus and Community Action Groups.

Contact your local station. Let them know you appreciate their airing of the "Farm Bureau Review"!

GET THE LATEST SCOOP ON
YOUR ORGANIZATION...

In This Issue

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- 10** **America & Me** FBIG's 19th annual essay contest encourages Michigan youth to explore their roles in America's future with the 1987-88 theme "What the Future of America Holds for Me."
- 12** **Farm Tour Held in Tuscola County** Laurie Acres in Tuscola County was just one of the farm visits scheduled by CES personnel who hosted ANR Dean Dr. James Anderson and CES Director Wally Moline, Sept. 2.

Columns

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Rural Living is Published Monthly: on the first day, by the Michigan Farm Bureau Information and Public Relations Division, except during July and August when a combined issue is published on July 15. Publication and editorial offices at 7373 West Saginaw Highway, Lansing, Mich. 48917, Post Office Box 30960 (zip 48909); phone 517-323-7000, extension 510.

Subscriptions: \$1.50 per year to members, included in annual dues. \$3.00 per year non-members in Michigan, \$5.00 per year non-members out of state. Publication No. 345040. Established Jan. 13, 1923 as *Michigan Farm News*, name changed to *Michigan Farm News Rural Living* Dec. 1, 1981. Third-class postage paid at Lansing, Michigan, and at additional mailing offices.

Editorial: Connie Turbin, Editor and Business Manager; Donna Wilber, Contributing Editor; Marcia Ditchie, Associate Editor; Kimberly Marshall, Associate Editor and Production Manager.

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President's Message

Preparing for Our Future

Policy development time gives us as farmers and Farm Bureau members the opportunity to review our organization and our industry and to have input into the direction we want the Farm Bureau and agriculture to take in the future.

My observations of policy development discussions held thus far, make it clear to me that Farm Bureau members this year are especially concerned about the economic condition of our industry and how we as farmers can make an adequate living from the business of farming.

Traveling around Michigan, it is clear to see that the best opportunity for farmers to increase their net farm income is by further development of "value-added" products.

The "value-added" commodity that is most obvious for expansion in our state is the animal agriculture industry.

Michigan has a successful, large and diversified fruit industry. But, fruit production is regulated by a limited amount of productive locations. In addition, there has to be some concern over market saturation when you look at this year's huge fruit crop and the kind of expanded production that is taking place in other parts of the country.

Grain production has other problems besides overproduction. Michigan farmers are really too far north to consistently get competitive yields. In addition, we face a transportation disadvantage when compared to the corn belt because of our location away from the main flow of grain.

But, luckily, we have some great advantages and untapped resources when it comes to livestock production.

Our land and climate are excellent for grazing.

We can produce a very good forage crop that is outstanding for livestock.

In addition, our farms are located close to some of the greatest concentrations of population in our country...a great benefit when it comes to transportation and marketing.


There is a tremendous opportunity for tapping a source of additional farm income in our state. But the key to unlocking that potential is finding an equitable solution to the problem of livestock waste management.

If we as farmers fail to develop a cost-effective, environmentally acceptable method of handling this problem, there will be rules imposed upon us...rules that could very well limit the expansion of animal agriculture.

The question is simple. Will we expand animal agriculture, and the income opportunities it offers, or will we have limits that prohibit the potential of livestock production?

The answer is up to us. We must work closely with our land grant university to develop our waste management options and alternatives. This would allow us to work with consumers to find responsible solutions to this problem that will permit everyone to live and work together effectively.

I urge you to give close consideration to this issue during your policy discussions this fall. The alternatives you develop will be crucial to the future of your industry.



*Jack Laurie, President
Michigan Farm Bureau*



Seeds

■ Laurie Farms was among the Tuscola County farms visited by Dr. James Anderson, dean of the MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, when he toured area farms on Sept. 2. (See the contents page to locate related article.)

■ MFB President Jack Laurie was in the audience as District 6 Young Farmers competed in the district round of the Discussion Meet on Sept. 4. The topic question was "Should under-developed countries receive U.S. aid to help establish their agricultural economies?"

■ During September President Laurie was scheduled to attend county FB annual meetings in Huron, Monroe, St. Clair, and Barry counties.

■ President Laurie welcomed the recently appointed members of the MFB Promotion and Education Committee to FB Center in Lansing, Sept. 25. Committee members met to review the role of the committee.

Lawmakers Face Major Issues in Fall Sessions

Washington

■ **FIFRA Modifications** — AFBF is urging Congress to take action to stimulate competition in the agricultural chemical industry and make farm chemicals less costly.

Members of the House and Senate agriculture committees working on modifications to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) will be urged to change the law to allow a chemical company to manufacture "generic" chemicals without compensating another company for its research and development of the chemical.

Under current law, a non-research chemical company must compensate the basic research companies for environmental, health and safety data when seeking to register a generic version of their pesticides. Current law requires such compensation for five years following expiration of a patent.

In cases where generic pesticides have entered the market, prices have fallen an average of 20 percent. For example, when Atrazine went off patent in the mid-1970s, the price fell from about \$2.75 to \$2 per pound.

Many more generic chemicals would be made available at lower prices if the data compensation requirements in FIFRA were repealed. During the next five years 21 pesticide patents will expire. These products represent about 45 percent of all pesticides in use today. Estimated savings to farmers would be between \$400 to \$500 million.

AFBF will also urge lawmakers to extend the patent term for products delayed in EPA health and safety processes.

■ **Feed Grain Recommendations** — AFBF has recommended reduced acreage of feed grains next year and 5 percent cuts

in price support loan levels as provided in the 1985 Farm Bill with the expectation that such provisions could result in a reduction of carryout stocks of grain. The organization also recommended continuation of advance deficiency payments in 1988 at the same level used in 1987, to offer recourse loans on corn silage on a grain equivalent basis and to increase the rate of payment for storage of crops in the farmer-owned reserve or emergency extended loan programs. Based on USDA's own figures, there is justification of an increase of at least 10 cents a year from the current storage rate of 26.5 cents per bushel.

■ **Farm Credit System Reorganization** — In early September, directors of the Farm Credit System worked out an alternative to the Stenholm reorganization plan for FCS which was attached to the bill passed by the House Agriculture Committee.

The FCS directors' proposal is as follows:

- Immediate merger of Federal Land Banks (FLB) and Federal Intermediate Credit Banks (FICB) in districts receiving federal financial assistance.
- Within six months, stockholders in the other districts not receiving federal financial assistance would vote whether or not they wanted to merge the FLB and FICB in their district.
- In districts where banks are merged, stockholders would vote within one year whether or not they wanted to merge their FLBs and Production Credit Associations (PCAs). Receiving federal financial assistance is not contingent on these mergers, however.
- Within 18 months, voting by stockholders would take place on merging the present 12 farm credit districts into no more than six.

Members of the AFBF Board of Directors identified four concerns regarding the Stenholm plan passed

by the House Agriculture Committee:

- FCS legislation should from the outset allow for a method of funding which avoids the yearly appropriations process.
- Funding the FCS should not come from farm programs.
- FCS reorganization should be done in an orderly and timely manner and not disruptive of adequate sources of credit.
- AFBF opposes inclusion of mandatory mediation and federal government cost-sharing of mediation programs. □

Lansing

■ **The Legislature returned to Lansing for the fall session on Sept. 22** — Major issues on the Legislative agenda include: property tax reduction for schools and school finance; consideration of the governor's veto of budget items; product liability reform; 65 mph speed limit; traffic safety issues; highway and roads formula and numerous bills left over from the session that recessed in early July.

Property tax and school finance is the major issue for the fall session. As reported in previous issues of *Rural Living*, dozens of bills have been introduced by various representatives and senators. One example of the importance of this issue to farmers is that one bill would eliminate the present sales tax exemption for agricultural imports (seeds, feeds, fertilizer, machinery, chemicals, equipment, etc.).

The most recent legislative proposal has just been released by the House Republican Task Force on Property Tax and School Finance Reform. This Republican Task Force was composed of Reps. Mike Nye, Paul Waitner (co-chairs) William Bryant, Joanne Emmons, Dan Gilmer, Susan Grimes Munsell, and Glen Oxender.

(continued on page 21)

New Teaching Series Celebrates Our Agricultural Heritage

By Karen Pace and Kimberly Marshall

Agriculture may be one of Michigan's largest industries, but few people are aware of the state's history as a leader in agricultural innovation and research. This fall, through the cooperative efforts of several agencies, young people in schools around the state will have the chance to explore many of Michigan's agricultural product contributions.

"Ag Science in a Kid's World" is a 12-part series that was developed by specialists from Michigan Farm Bureau and the Michigan Cooperative Extension Service (CES) and the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) for third and fourth grade students. The teaching and learning series is being distributed in schools across Michigan through the Ag in the Classroom program by FB volun-

teers who are trained to present it to classes.

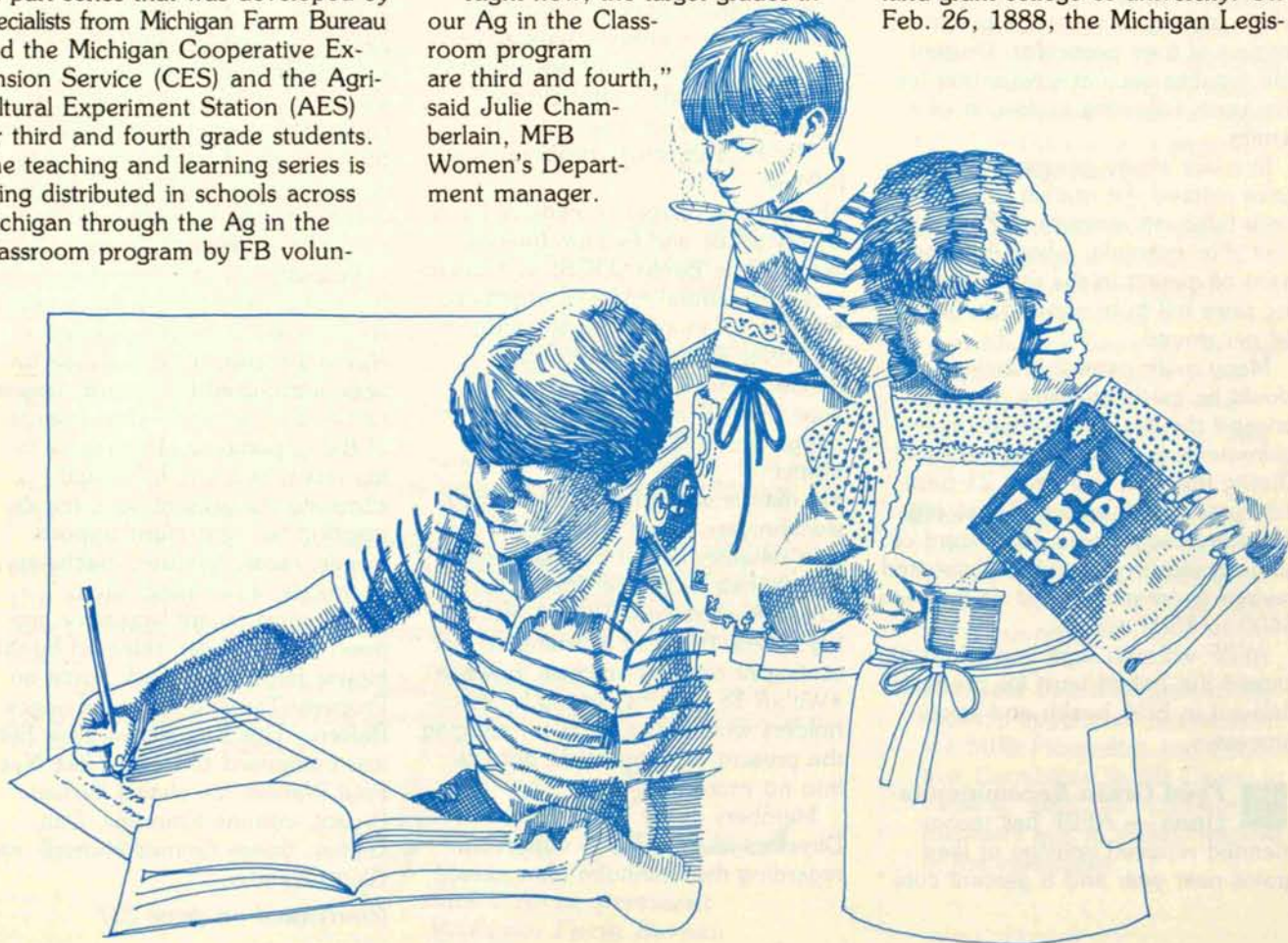
A training conference for Ag in the Classroom participants is held annually in the fall. It draws over 100 volunteers interested in fostering a positive awareness of agriculture and how food is produced. This year, the "Ag Science in a Kid's World" series made its debut at the conference held in Mt. Pleasant on Sept. 15.

"Right now, the target grades in our Ag in the Classroom program are third and fourth," said Julie Chamberlain, MFB Women's Department manager.

"Our long term goal is to have students at grade levels K-12 learn more about farming and agriculture."

The "Ag Science in a Kid's World" series of lessons was created in honor of the centennial anniversary of the signing of the Hatch Act and the 1888 creation of the Michigan AES.

The Hatch Act, passed by Congress in 1887, provided for agricultural research units at each state land-grant college or university. On Feb. 26, 1888, the Michigan Legis-



ature approved the development of a Michigan AES to be based at what was then Michigan Agriculture College and is now Michigan State University.

Today, there are 14 Experiment Station units located throughout the state where MSU scientists are carrying out research studies on subjects ranging from growing pines to growing apples, and speeding up cattle growth to slowing down erosion.

"Many youngsters, especially those in urban areas, don't know where their food comes from," said Jane Taylor, 4-H extension associate. "This series shows them not only how their food originates on farms, but also how farmers learn more efficient farming methods from the Cooperative Extension Service and the Agricultural Experiment Station."

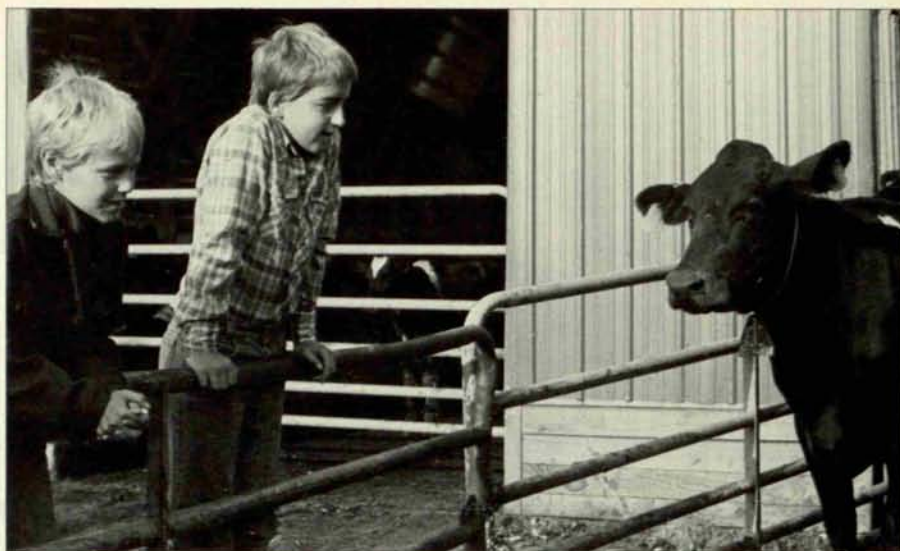
Each of the 12 lessons focuses on a different aspect of Michigan agricultural research in the past or present, including sugar beet processing, honey production and use, milk and dairy products, and genetic research.

There is also an accompanying board game that helps youngsters trace the progress of early innovators and ideas, a four-color poster that can be hung in the classroom, and a set of scratch-and-sniff stickers for such Michigan farm products as cherries and blueberries.

Lessons are made up of interesting information about the subject, a related activity such as a word search or crossword puzzle, and one science experience. For example, the dairy lesson discusses the Michigan AES's contribution of frozen whipping cream to American freezers and features a science experience that allows youngsters to make their own cottage cheese.

"Our goal is to train 100 volunteers who will visit 1,000 classrooms and reach 30,000 youngsters," Jane said. "FB volunteers routinely visit elementary schools to speak about their part in agricultural production and sometimes bring calves or chicks for children to see. We're just expanding a system that is already established." □

Karen Pace is the information coordinator for Michigan 4-H.



"Our long term goal is to have students at grade levels K-12 learn more about farming and agriculture."



America & Me

Farm Bureau Insurance Group Kicks Off 19th Annual Essay Contest

By Carrie Thorn

The 19th annual America & Me Essay Contest will begin later this month with students from more than 600 Michigan schools expected to participate.

Sponsored since 1968 by Farm Bureau Insurance Group, the essay contest encourages Michigan young people to explore their roles in America's future. The topic for this year is "What the Future of America Holds for Me," and more than 6,000 eighth graders from around the state are expected to submit essays in the contest, to be held from Oct. 26 to Nov. 13.

A mailing early this month will invite eighth grade classes from all Michigan junior high and middle schools to participate in the contest. FBIG agents coordinate the contest in their local schools, and judging is done in the home office in Lansing. Questions about the essay contest should be addressed to local FBIG agents.

Contest awards are presented on both the local and statewide levels. First, second and third place winners are chosen from each participating school and the three top essayists are awarded embossed honor certificates. In addition, each school

I know someday I will make a difference. I know that my small voice is important because without it, America is missing a member of its family. Knowing you are important and knowing you can make a difference is what America is all about.

Landi Lowell
Meachum Junior High School
Millington

receives a plaque engraved with the name of the school's first place winner that will remain on permanent display in the school so that the names of future winners can be added.

Once the school-level judging is completed, all first place school winners are entered into the statewide judging. The best ten entries from this group become the statewide winners in the essay contest. A panel of finalist judges — including Gov. James Blanchard, Lt. Gov. Martha Griffiths, U.S. Rep. Bob Carr, and Lansing-area broadcast personality Howard Lancour — ranks the top ten essays, from first through tenth place. Then, late next spring, FBIG will bring the top ten statewide winners to Lansing for an awards day at the State Capitol and an awards banquet, where the young winners will learn which of the top ten places they have been awarded and receive savings bonds ranging in value from \$500 to \$1,000.

The America & Me Essay Contest, in its 19 years of existence, has earned praise from students, educators and newspaper columnists. The Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge has honored the program with national awards 11 times. FBIG is proud to again offer this educational program to Michigan schools.

People contribute to America's future in many ways. They do this by being aware of problems and then getting involved. Then they look for solutions to the problems. America isn't great because of uninvolved people. America is great because people care and get involved.

Mary Kay Ecken
Caro Junior High School
Caro

A booklet containing the top ten winning essays from the 1986-87 America & Me Contest is available from FBIG.

The booklet, "America & Me: Reflections on America," also contains excerpts from some of the other best entries in the 18th annual contest, which ended last May.

Persons interested in receiving complimentary copies of the essay contest booklet should address requests to: Essay Contest Booklet, Communications Department, Farm Bureau Insurance Group, P.O. 30400, Lansing, Michigan 48933. □

Carrie Thorn is the communications coordinator for the Farm Bureau Insurance Group.



Rebecca Rushlow, who authored the first place essay in the 1986-87 contest received a \$1,000 savings bond and a plaque from FBIG Executive Vice President Bob Wiseman during the awards luncheon held in May.

**First Place Essay
18th Annual America & Me Essay Contest**

**HOW I CAN CONTRIBUTE TO
AMERICA'S FUTURE**

America began with dreams and in many ways they materialized. We, the young people, the future of America, must keep these dreams alive and maybe someday fulfill them. It does not take just one individual to fulfill these dreams but many. I will try my best to help my fellow Americans in any way I can. I may never see these dreams come true but as one man said, "To accomplish great things we must not only dream but also act; not only believe but also plan."

In the future, I plan on choosing teaching as my profession because I feel it would give me the opportunity to work with the nation's young people. I feel the object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives, and as for myself, to teach is to learn twice.

To be worthy of my fine heritage as an American, I must always be mindful of my individual responsibility for my fellow men and women. Fortunately, our country has always been blessed with people who understand that the needs and strengths of our families, neighborhoods and communities are interwoven. In a free society, I as an individual cannot always make the difference but the nation is made up of many individuals who make America what it is.

I have always believed that this land was set aside for those who had a special love of faith, freedom and peace. These are the strengths that make me believe more than ever before that the future is not something to fear. Today's problems can be tomorrow's triumphs. If we continue to work together mindful of our proud history and the blessing God has showered upon beloved America, we can accomplish anything.

I plan to live my life with the knowledge that in the beginning there was, in the American mind, an awareness that life is complicated, serious, and full of dreams that are frail. I will put my time and energy into making these dreams come alive...and I am proud to be part of America's future.

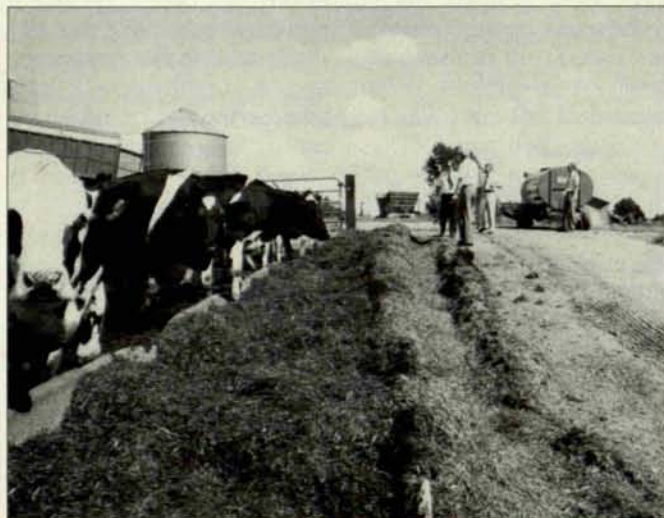
*Rebecca Rushlow
Saline Middle School
Saline*

Farm Tour Held in Tuscola County



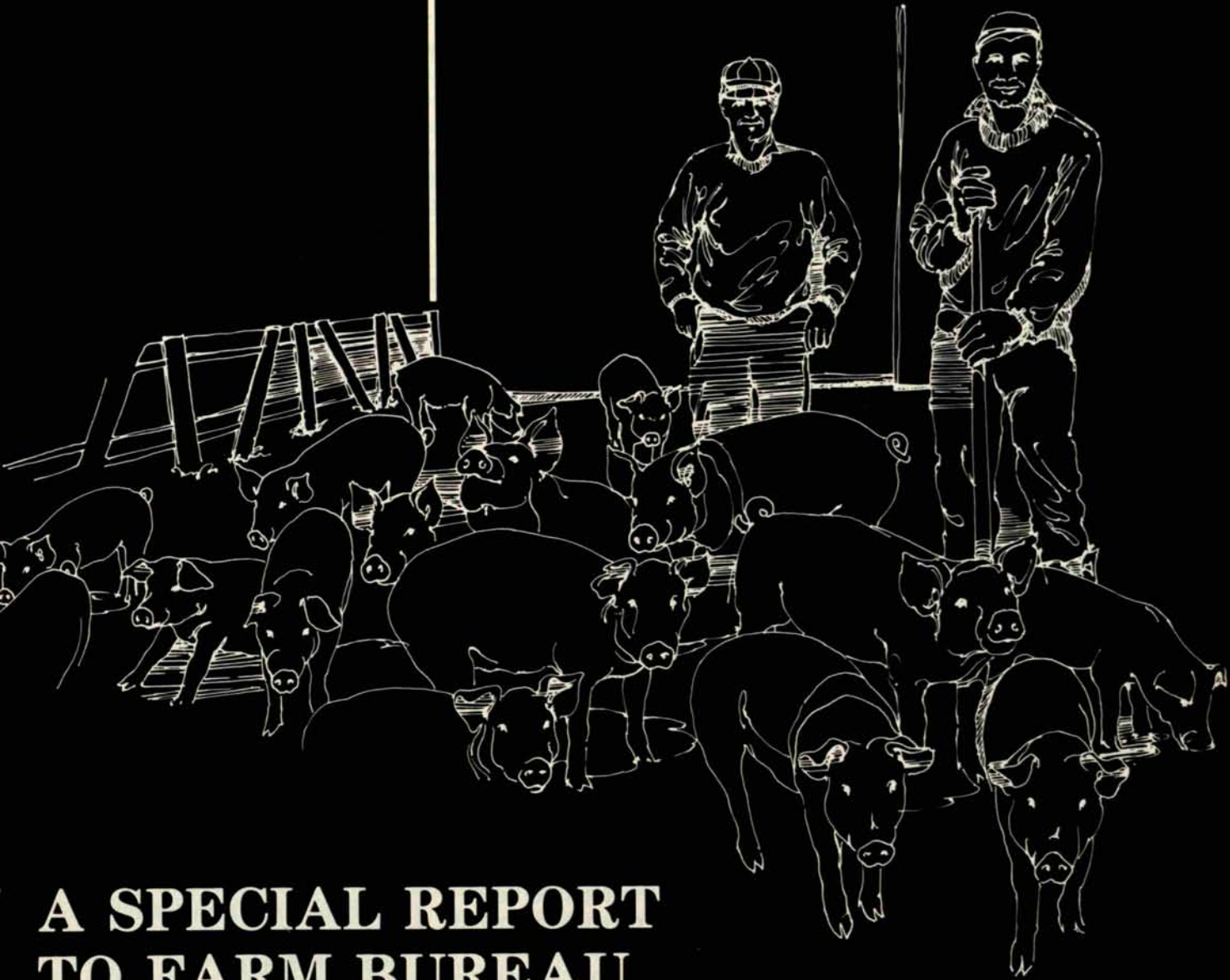
MFB President Jack Laurie's farm was just one of the stops on the Tuscola County CES farm tour. The tour was set up for MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Dean James Anderson and CES Director Wally Moline to view first-hand all four program areas of Extension and the Tuscola County office staff in action. One of the programs observed by the dean was for displaced farmers.

Business owners and the people they have hired through the displaced farmers program had the opportunity to talk with the dean about the importance of this program. Said one former farmer, "When you go to the MESC you're just another person without a job." It was through the displaced farmers program that he was able to find employment with an agricultural chemical fertilizer firm. He has done so well with the firm, that other outlets are now requesting people from the displaced farmers program.



Farm Bureau

ANIMAL AGRICULTURE UPDATE



**A SPECIAL REPORT
TO FARM BUREAU
MEMBERS IN MICHIGAN**

Report Prompts Discussion

The "Preliminary Report of the Animal Waste Resource Committee," recently released by the Michigan Department of Agriculture, is currently the most talked about publication in the state's farm community. Some say it is also the most misunderstood.

Just what is this publication that's causing so much consternation in the country? It is a preliminary report — with the accent on preliminary. It is a working document, a vehicle to stimulate discussion on an issue that will not go away if it's ignored and to gain input for solutions to problems that do exist.

What is it not? It is not a final report. It is not law. Discussion meetings and public hearings are on the agenda before a final report is drafted. The Commission on Agriculture must approve the final report before it goes to the Legislature.

The final "product" will impact the future direction of Michigan agriculture, so all farmers — not just livestock and poultry producers — should play a key role in making sure that direction is best for their industry.

Request a copy of the report, study it carefully, and be prepared for the discussion meetings scheduled for December. Copies are available, upon request, by writing MDA, Environmental Division, P.O. Box 30017, Lansing, Mich. 48909, or calling 517-373-2620.

Discussion Meetings

Six discussion meetings in various parts of the state will provide you with an opportunity to ask questions about the report and get the answers. Resource people from MDA, the Department of Natural Resources, Cooperative Extension Service, and AWRC members will be there to make sure you do get the answers.

Mark your calendars now and plan to participate in one of these meetings: Dec. 8, Kalamazoo; Dec. 9, Manchester; Dec. 10, St. Johns; Dec. 15, Marlette; Dec. 16, Lake City; and Dec. 17, Escanaba. For information on meeting sites and times, call the MDA, 517-373-2620.

Public Hearings

You've done your homework — read the report, participated in the discussion meetings, and gotten answers to your questions. Now is the time for your valuable input. MDA will conduct public hearings in late March and early April. It is at these public hearings that you can deliver your well-researched, carefully prepared statements addressing specific areas of concern to you and proposing alternatives. A public comment period will coincide with the public hearings to provide an opportunity to submit written comments.

MFB Hosts Meeting of Livestock Interests

MFB President Jack Laurie invited representatives of the state's animal agriculture industry to FB Center Sept. 11 to review the preliminary report of the MDA's Animal Waste Resource Committee. Officials from MDA and MSU also participated in the meeting.

"We felt it was necessary to get together with those folks representing the livestock and poultry commodity organizations to discuss what their impression of the report was, how they analyzed it, and the direction they felt it was leading us, and to discuss what direction we should take as a total industry in working with the report in the future," Laurie said.

Laurie said the group felt that the legislative portion of the report contained little new material that wasn't already being considered within the industry, such as revisions to the Right to Farm Act to clarify "generally accepted" management practices. It is the technical areas, he said, that is causing concern in the agricultural community.

"We are concerned with those technical areas involving setback, facility construction, and areas that each individual farmer would be concerned with as he develops his livestock manure management facility.

"We intend to address the areas that are addressed in the preliminary report and we intend to input this material into the report in the form of a recommendation at the time of the public hearings," he said.

Farm Bureau Policy Development

Focus on Animal Agriculture

By Marcia Ditchie

Farm Bureau's policy development process will be vital in the coming weeks as the organization addresses the animal agriculture issue.

"Every year we start our policy development process without any restrictions or preconceived direction as to where we should go," said MFB President Jack Laurie. "We ask our members what policies they want to govern their organization during the coming year."

Laurie explained that an idea that is surfaced in the county is scrutinized many times before it becomes organizational policy.

"There are about seven opportunities to evaluate an idea and to challenge its ability to lead the organization in the proper direction before it becomes policy. This process starts at the county level and can, ultimately, proceed to the national level. That's a unique way we have in our organization to ensure that those policies which finally survive all these tests are the ones that the members really believe in and support.

"Legislators know that the policy presented to them has been debated and met several tests and represents the thinking of the membership of Farm Bureau. It's a credible policy and legislators put a good deal of emphasis on its importance," Laurie said.

"This is a tremendously important issue to livestock farmers," said Wayne Wood, MFB vice president and chairperson of the state Policy Development Committee. "Livestock agriculture in

Michigan is being challenged once again and its main challenge is to find the most efficient and effective use of livestock by-products.

"As the state's largest farm organization, Farm Bureau needs the direction of its members so that we can continue to uphold the credibility we have with the Legislature, the Michigan Department of Agriculture and to work with the university and other agencies," said Wood.

Laurie added that this particular issue will have a dramatic impact on the entire livestock industry.

"The whole area of environmental concerns will undoubtedly be the number one issue in 1988 all through the industry."

"The future of the livestock industry in this state will hinge upon the livestock issue," said Laurie. "Do we have a growing, successful livestock industry?" he asked, "or do we in effect stop the industry at the point it is today, or even possibly step backwards?"

"As we analyze the total industry, we feel there is a lot of opportunity for growth in agriculture in this state, but it basically revolves around the growth of the livestock industry," said Laurie.

"We can probably increase the value of our agriculture products in Michigan by as much as 50 percent if we develop the type of environment that lets the livestock industry grow and meet the

needs that can be generated for the state's livestock producers. It's critical to the future of all of agriculture," said Laurie.

Why FB Needs Policy

"Livestock environmental questions are coming up practically daily and we will need strong policy developed by our members as a foundation to allow the leadership of Farm Bureau to take a position on those questions.

"The whole area of environmental concerns will undoubtedly be the number one issue in 1988 all through the industry. I look for it to be the main topic of discussion at the state annual meeting in December. This is so critical to our future that I'm encouraging the counties to make this the number one item of discussion," Laurie said. "This issue not only affects the livestock sector, it affects us all."

Discussion on this issue at the state annual meeting will not only give the organization policy upon which to act in the coming year, but will also prepare members for a series of discussion meetings and public hearings that will follow the annual meeting.

"As an organization, we need to accept the challenge of informing our members of the seriousness of this issue and to allow them to tell us what our policy should be," said Wood. "We need to prepare our members to participate in the discussion meetings on this issue in December and to testify at the public hearings in March and April."

Addressing the Issue in Public Forums and on the Farm

By Connie Turbin

Concern over handling of livestock and poultry by-products has emerged as one of the most critical policy and regulatory issues in the state. Unfortunately, this complex question is a long way from being resolved. The need for agriculture to be involved in the development of public policy cannot be overemphasized. In the coming months, producers will have many opportunities to obtain additional information, evaluate the economic effects, present their personal viewpoints, and impact the final development of standards.

Much has already been done to encourage involvement by FB members. Through FB representation on the the Animal Waste Resource Committee, information articles in the FB publication *Rural Living*, discussion by FB Community Action Groups, meetings with Michigan livestock and poultry groups, and regional meetings in September with FB leaders to discuss the issue, FB has acted to increase agriculture's awareness and involvement in the issue. Still ahead is the all-important FB policy-setting session at the organization's annual meeting, Dec. 1-4.

However, farmers in every segment of production agriculture, as representatives of their industry in the community and as individuals, can play an important role in demonstrating agriculture's commitment to maintaining air and water quality.

The first step in this farmer by farmer awareness effort is to evaluate the routine management practices with regard to the potential impact on air and water quality. Why? The primary concern is for the health and safety of the farm family and to act responsibly in protecting groundwater quality. Another very real consideration is that in the long run all of agriculture will be called upon to give an accounting of its stewardship of the land and water resources.

Of course, proper handling of manure from livestock and poultry operations will continue to be a central issue.

What can individual producers do to improve management of animal by-products? According to Dr. Maynard Hogberg, chairperson of MSU's Animal Science Department, there are number of "size neutral" practices which can help reduce odor nuisance in handling manure. Most are just common sense thinking and good housekeeping practices, he said. Hogberg suggested, for example, that manure spreading be done in the morning with incorporation as soon as possible and paying attention to wind direction. Soil injection, knifing in or discing to follow up broadcast of manure are recommended practices. The principle, he said, whether in storing manure or for field application is to reduce exposure to the air.

Relatively simple, but effective, management practices such as

soil testing to determine nitrogen needs for desired yields and crops planning will provide nutrients at optimum time and rate for plant uptake. Testing and planning are important components in a management plan that makes efficient use of the nutrients available in manure and protects the environment.

"There are quite a few recommendations of this type listed in the AWRC preliminary report which can help to reduce odors," he pointed out.

For larger operations where the collection and storage of manure is necessary, Hogberg cites any concrete, steel or glass-lined storage facility, or the "environetics" rubberized bag as effective management systems for protecting water quality. With regard to reducing the odors associated with manure collection and storage, he recommends covering the storage unit to reduce the amount of air moving over the surface.

The first step in this farmer by farmer awareness effort is to evaluate the routine management practices with regard to the potential impact on air and water quality.

Effective? Yes, but not 100%. Costly? Certainly. Nevertheless, Hogberg contends that "anytime you get to the point in your operation where you have to store manure, a system of this type has to be included as a cost of production."

Producers, he said, need not necessarily bear the cost of manure storage installations alone. Programs such as the Agricultural Conservation Program administered by the Soil Conservation Service may provide technical assistance and cost sharing to the farm operator. Hogberg feels that such public funding should continue to be available and expanded. "This issue of water and air quality affects everyone and it is appropriate that some portion of the cost to agricultural operations be financed by public dollars," he said.

He also advised producers to familiarize themselves with the existing state and federal regulations which govern the storage or discharge of animal by products. "Basically, for any facility which directly discharges into streams, or facilities with over 1,000 animal units there are currently federal and state requirements to obtain a discharge permit," Hogberg said. He added that the current

laws are "pretty nebulous" and stressed that there does need to be some clear cut definitions in the law.

"Agriculture cannot continue to be pulled into court to answer challenges to animal agriculture. The costs are prohibitive and eventually the industry will lose out," Hogberg cautions.

Studies and research for new farm management technologies offer alternatives for the future. According to Hogberg, Michigan is certainly among the leading states in addressing the issue in both public policy and research.

"California is doing some very important work with regard to balancing agricultural interests, residential and tourism considerations in that state," he said.

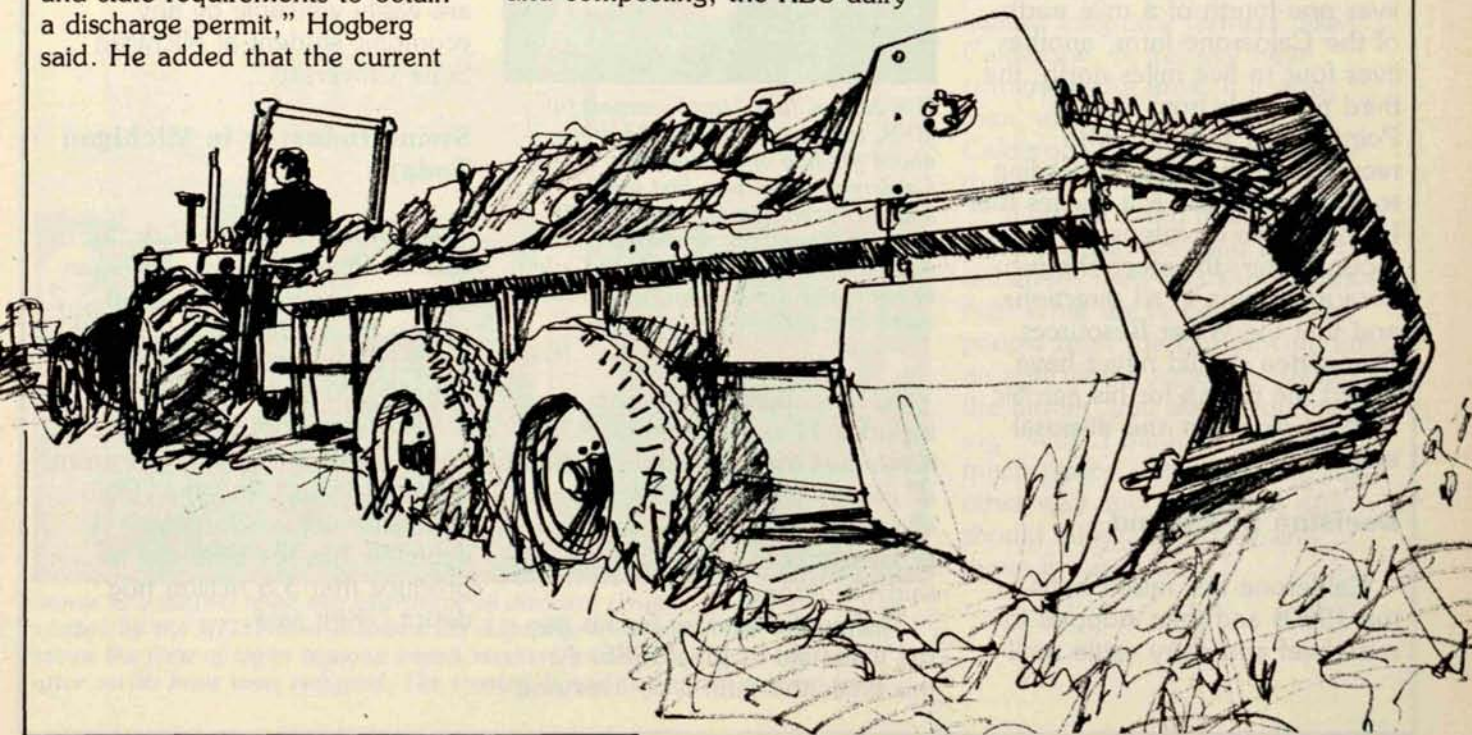
Hogberg pointed with pride to the work being done by MSU at the Kellogg Biological Station near Battle Creek. "I am not aware of any other state that is conducting a project with the wholistic focus of maintaining the environment and an agricultural operation," he said.

The KBS project is a dairy farm with a nearby lake. Using a system of liquid-solid separation and composting, the KBS dairy

farm is managing the manure with little or no odor. Lake monitoring verifies that the farm is not adversely affecting water quality.

Researchers in Michigan and around the country are also interested in the management of animal by-products employed by the Japanese. Hogberg relates that hog operations in Japan are very near major population centers, but they have been able to greatly reduce odors associated with animal agriculture — by as much as 95%-99%. The Japanese hog producers mechanically scrape and run a continuous conveyor belt below slatted floors in their facilities. They also utilize liquid-solid separation and composting.

At present there are no major breakthroughs in this research area, but Hogberg said there is great potential for the future through the continued advances in agricultural science, microbiology, biotechnology and genetic engineering. "We may soon see the day that we can prevent odors through altering the bacteria, or by changing feed components."



One Farmer's Experience

By Kimberly Marshall

For 39 years Tony Calderone has been farming an area of Jackson County that was in agriculture for well over 50 years before he arrived. His farm is in an area 12 miles east of Jackson and five miles from Grass Lake. To his knowledge, the land has been zoned agricultural ever since it's been zoned.

Currently, Calderone owns and operates a 10,000 head hog operation and plans to continue farming in Jackson County, which is why he enrolled his farm in Public Act 116, the state's Farmland and Open Space Preservation program. He has over \$150,000 invested in pollution control and pollution monitoring devices for his liquid manure system.

Despite Calderone's efforts to run a modern hog operation, he has had a lawsuit filed against him by three people. One person lives one-fourth of a mile north of the Calderone farm, another lives four to five miles north, the third person is from Grosse Pointe (near Detroit), who recreates in the area. According to Calderone, the suit alleges that his operation threatens the groundwater; threatens the fish, flora and fauna in all directions; and that the Water Resources Committee should never have issued the permit for his aerobic manure digestion and disposal system.

Decision to Expand

Calderone first raised hogs in the 1950s and then stopped to raise beef and dairy cattle until

four years ago, when he decided to raise hogs again. He installed aerators and separators when he reinstated the hog operation. In 1985, he decided to double his production to 10,000 and submitted plans for expansion of his operation, which included building a lagoon transfer system and double-lined lagoon.



Ron Nelson (left), legal counsel for MFB, talks with Tony Calderone about his hog operation. The Calderone farm was just one of several farms visited by the MFB Natural Resources Advisory Committee, including President Jack Laurie, to view and discuss manure management and utilization.

"(The pollution control system) includes 11 monitoring wells and it requires a considerable amount of money each month for scientific monitoring so that we are positive that we don't pollute," said Calderone.

The public hearing for his permit was held in May 1986. At this time, the man who lives one-

fourth of a mile north of Calderone first voiced his objection to the operation. Calderone said the man did not communicate with him again. After construction of the lagoon started in July 1986, Calderone said he was notified that a lawsuit had been filed against him by this man and two others who were unknown to him.

"I had all the permits that I knew of before I expanded the operation," said Calderone. These permits included driveway, septic, well and monitoring well. "I did everything in the order that I was supposed to. We've complied with every rule that we know of.

"We don't have animal waste. We have liquid fertilizer, which is a natural resource. On this operation here, our liquid fertilizer from hogs is worth approximately \$100,000 a year...figures that are easily verifiable by any economic student at Michigan State University."

Swine Industry in Michigan Today

According to Kevin Kirk, MFB commodities specialist, Michigan processors annually slaughter 5.2 million hogs. But, Michigan only produces 1.7 million market hogs annually.

"That leaves Michigan importing 3.5 million hogs a year from Canada, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and other areas. Our state definitely has the potential to produce that 3.5 million hog deficit," Kirk said.

"We have the feed supply, the infrastructure, and we certainly have the land, that could produce the three million plus hogs every year right here in Michigan. We would keep that money in the state and if you looked at all the jobs that would be created peripherally, it would have a significant impact on Michigan's economy," said Calderone.

"With the automobile industry diminishing every year, and it looks like that trend is going to continue, it seems like a horrible waste of all of our natural resources not to produce the hogs right here in Michigan."

According to the latest Michigan Department of Agriculture figures, Michigan is ranked 13th in the nation for pork production. The industry annually grosses over \$178 million. Detroit also has one of the largest pork packing firms in the country. Frederick and Herrods' has the capacity to handle 18,000 hogs a day, but they are receiving less than 10,000 a day.

"By diminishing the production of hogs in the state, we not only lose the business of hog production, and the peripheral jobs that



MFB Natural Resources Advisory Committee toured Kellogg Biological Station and met with specialists to discuss methods of maximum utilization of manure fertilizer to enhance profits and protect the environment.

it creates, but we are also going to lose the pork packing business, which is going to further punish our job numbers in the state. I think it's that simple," Calderone said.

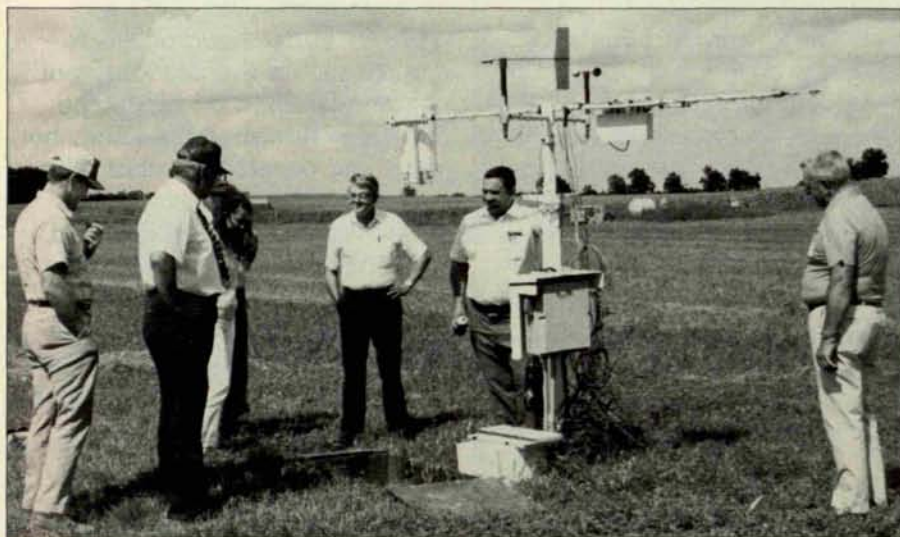
A Look Ahead

Calderone is only one of many farmers who are looking at the

future of Michigan agriculture. That future depends on expansion in the area of animal agriculture.

With the current migration of urban dwellers to rural areas and the problem of urban misconceptions about production agriculture, it is easy to see why conflicts are rising. Instead of trying to understand and make adjustments, lawsuits are filed against long-time farmers, like Calderone, by relative newcomers to the area. It is also, then, easy to understand Calderone's attitude now about these new-comers:

"If you're living in an agricultural zone, and you are unhappy, then you should move out. What we've got now are people from the city moving into an agricultural zone and saying to the farmer 'you should quit farming.' Well, I think it's just as much justice to turn around the other way and say, okay, you should take your house and move it out of here."



Sands is a 22,000 head hog operation in Jackson County, near Parma, also visited by the MFB Natural Resources Advisory Committee. The committee views the first of three lagoons which receives and treats liquid manure after solids have been removed. The treated liquid is applied to crop land.

Good Neighbor Policy Pays Dividend

No matter what revisions to Michigan's Right to Farm Act are made or what new regulations are promulgated as a result of current efforts to address environmental concerns, you can't legislate nor enforce a "good neighbor" policy. Yet MFB Legislative Counsel Ron Nelson believes the age-old philosophy would go a long way toward heading off potential problems between farmers and their non-farm neighbors.

"I know of many farmers who have found that being good neighbors pays off in dividends of understanding and good-will," Nelson said. "One opens his farm for a day to his neighbors, has a pig roast, and takes the kids for a hay ride. Another invites all the members of his church to the farm for a hot dog roast. One raises corn for his non-farm neighbors, and some present their neighbors with a ham or even half a hog at Christmas time.

Being good neighbors can also be fun, according to Karen and Bob Graham, Clinton County dairy farmers. They held a number of neighborhood barn dances before the economy put the annual affair on hold. The Grahams furnished the band, hot dogs and beverages; other folks brought in finger foods — "no forks was the rule," Karen said.

"I think it has helped relationships," Bob said. "A lot of people look around the farm while they're here for the evening, and learn something about the operation."

The Grahams plan to have another neighborhood barn dance next August to celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of Bob's parents. "We have lots of new neighbors, so it should be fun," Karen said.

The Impact of Land Use and Zoning

Many factors, including the changing landscape, have contributed to the water and air quality issues facing rural Michigan. The development of larger farming operations with concentrations of animals and poultry has been a factor. Another factor is the growing number of residents in rural areas.

New residents to the rural area expecting a pristine environment and natural surroundings, are often offended by odors emanating from livestock operations. They may also express concern regarding water quality.

In some cases, the conflicts arise within the agricultural community itself, which are damaging to the total agriculture sector. Operations have been challenged by neighboring farmers who feel that the enterprise is too large, not properly located or managed, or different from the traditional agriculture in the area.

The question of property rights is a very serious issue. The public policy challenge is to balance the rights of individual property owners and farmers to protect the investments of both parties and allow the opportunity for a return on their investment through sale of the property or production from the property.

Several townships have started developing zoning ordinances which would place severe restrictions on the expansion and, in some cases, even the existence of livestock and poultry operations. Theoretically, the ordinances are being proposed to protect rural residents, however, they may be placing potentially severe and intolerable restrictions on a viable agriculture in the community.

Land use and zoning can be an important factor in protecting our citizens and natural resources, such as ground water. With proper regard for soil type and aquifers, adequate planning can aid in the protection of these ground water resources.

The development of buffer areas, i.e., an area of land separating the high density farm operations and the residential areas, is extremely important. In fact, some of the proposed local zoning ordinances speak to the size of operation, either establishing absolute maximums for the entire township or setting distance relationships to other residences.

Agriculture has an opportunity and a responsibility to review local ordinances, land use planning and zoning proposals to evaluate their impact not only on their own operation, but for all agricultural producers in that area.

Prepared by Ron Nelson, legislative counsel for the Michigan Farm Bureau.

Traverse City Captures World's Largest Cherry Pie Title

By Phil Calvert

The world's largest cherry pie was baked and served in Michigan, July 25, in downtown Traverse City. By capturing the title away from neighboring Charlevoix, which has held the title since 1976, the Traverse City project took its place as the single largest promotional event ever for Michigan's cherry industry.

Working with state and local officials to organize the culinary feat, organizers set the date to coincide with the National Governor's Conference in Traverse City. The event was also planned as a one of the Michigan Sesquicentennial activities. Thousands of people were on hand for the celebration and to enjoy a serving of the world's largest cherry pie.

After the Guinness staff has reviewed and accepted the documentation, Traverse City's achievement will be listed as a new record in next year's edition of the Guinness Book of World Records. The book will record the pie at 28,330 pounds, measuring 18 feet across and 26 inches deep. The Traverse City Maritime Commission sent documentation in the form of pictures and data to the "Guinness" staff as confirmation.

The recipe for a record-breaking pie calls for record-breaking quantities in the ingredients list. Nine tons of Michigan cherries led the list of ingredients, which also included 7,478 pounds of sugar, 1,081 pounds of flour, 855 pounds of corn starch and 703 pounds of shortening.

Sponsorship for the world's record event was provided by the Michigan Cherry Committee (MCC), representing over 2,000 growers, and Chef Pierre, Inc., a Traverse City-based food manufacturer.

For some time, Traverse City growers and representatives of Chef Pierre discussed the undertaking as a promotional event for the cherry industry and the Traverse City area. Grower Bob Underwood, of Underwood Orchards on the Old Mission Peninsula, was an enthusiastic promoter. "I wanted to see the title of 'World's Largest Cherry Pie' moved to Traverse City because it is the Cherry Capitol of the World," he said.

(continued on page 22)



Thousands of people gathered in Traverse City to witness and sample the world's largest cherry pie.

Country Almanac

October

- | | | | |
|----------|--|-----------|---|
| Oct. | County Farm Bureau Annual Meetings. See page 4 for listing. | Oct. 4 | Apple Festival, Belding. |
| Oct.1 | District 3 Young Farmer District Discussion Meet, 7:30 p.m., Weber's Inn, Ann Arbor. | Oct. 9 | District 10 Young Farmer District Discussion Meet, 7 p.m., Hidden Valley Resort, Gaylord. |
| Oct. 2-4 | Pumpkinfest, South Lyon. | Oct. 9-10 | Pumpkin Festival, Bessemer. |
| Oct. 3-4 | Sorghum Fest, Three Oaks. | Oct. 9-12 | Apple Fest, Bangor. |
| | | Oct. 18 | Apple Fest, Port Huron. |

Coming Up

- | | | | |
|----------|--|------------|---|
| Nov.9-11 | MFB State Policy Development Committee Meeting, Farm Bureau Center, Lansing. | Dec. 10 | Discussion Meeting on MDA Animal Waste Resource Committee Recommendations, St. Johns. |
| Nov. 10 | District 4 Young Farmer District Discussion Meet, Middleville Inn, Middleville. | Dec. 10-11 | MFB/FFA Producers Forum, Hilton Inn, Lansing. |
| Dec. 1-4 | MFB Annual Meeting, Grand Plaza Hotel and Grand Center, Grand Rapids. | Dec. 15 | Discussion Meeting on MDA Animal Waste Resource Committee Recommendations, Marlette. |
| Dec. 8 | Discussion Meeting on MDA Animal Waste Resource Committee Recommendations, Plainwell. | Dec. 15-16 | New Presidents Conference. |
| Dec. 9 | Discussion Meeting on MDA Animal Waste Resource Committee Recommendations, Manchester. | Dec. 16 | Discussion Meeting on MDA Animal Waste Resource Committee Recommendations, Lake City. |
| | | Dec. 17 | Discussion Meeting on MDA Animal Waste Resource Committee Recommendations, Escanaba. |



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State Promotion and Education Committee Members Named

■ The MFB Board of Directors appointed a 22-member Promotion and Education Committee to lead a new statewide network designed to promote the agricultural industry, create linkages between tourism and agriculture, and build a better understanding with the non-farm public.

The new state committee and the committees that are being appointed in each county FB in Michigan will be the first in the United States, and reflect the organization's recognition of the changing lifestyles in agriculture.

The concept of a Promotion and Education Committee originated with a group of 12 women appointed in 1986 by the MFB Board of Directors to study the future of Michigan Women's Committees. A survey conducted for this study revealed that more women were working off the farm or were taking on more farm chores than in the past. The women surveyed said they would like to be involved in promoting agriculture, but could not shoulder all the responsibilities of carrying out the projects. They also expressed a desire to work on FB projects with their spouses to increase their time together.

Voting delegates to the MFB annual meeting last December accepted the recommendations of the study committee to establish the Promotion and Education Committee and dissolve the

Women's Committee on Dec. 1, 1987.

County promotion and education committees will assess what the specific needs in their area are and then select projects that will address those particular needs.

Appointed to the MFB State Promotion and Education Committee for one-year terms were: Alice Happel, St. Joseph County (Dist. 1); Mark Reister, Hillsdale County (Dist. 2); Joanne Darling, Monroe County (Dist. 3); Lorna Wilson, Barry County (Dist. 4); Janet Lyon, Ingham County (Dist. 5); Paul Swartzendruber, Huron County (Dist. 6); Elaine Gingrich, Osceola County (Dist. 7); Julie Schwab, Bay County (Dist. 8); Dennis Switalski, Manistee County (Dist. 9); Gert Rubingh, Antrim County (Dist. 10); Marty Pokela, Hiawathaland (Dist. 11).

Appointed to the committee for two-year terms were: Neal Nitz, Berrien County (Dist. 1); Janice Sanford, Jackson County (Dist. 2); Holly Ann Porter, Washtenaw County (Dist. 3); Beth Finkbeiner, Kent County (Dist. 4); Gwen Nash, Clinton County (Dist. 5); Robin Falker, Macomb County (Dist. 6); Sally Thomsen, Montcalm County (Dist. 7); Mark Neitzke, Gratiot County (Dist. 8); Cheryl Kobernik, Benzie County (Dist. 9); Peter Smith, Montmorency County (Dist. 10); Rebecca Clark, Mac-Luce (Dist. 11). □

FB Nurseryman Grows State's Best Christmas Tree

■ A seven-foot tall Colorado Blue Spruce grown by Villas Mohrland, an Allegan County FB member, was named best in the state by the Michigan Christmas Tree Association.

More than 400 growers voted on 70 entries. Characteristics considered in the selection were tree color, symmetry, straightness, and fullness.

Selection as top grower gives Mohrland the opportunity to present two of his trees to Gov. Blanchard for his office and residence. Mohrland will also send a tree as Michigan's entry in

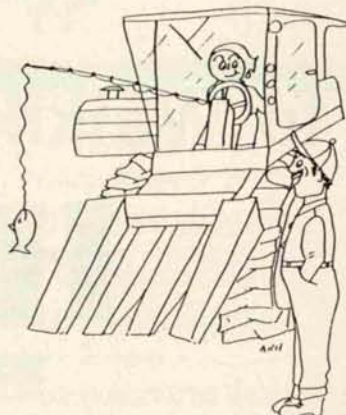
the Christmas Tree Association's national contest next August.

Christmas is a year-round business for 700 Michigan farmers who grow Christmas trees. According to the most recent Michigan Department of Agriculture figures, Michigan is the nation's largest grower of plantation Christmas trees with an annual value of \$30 million. Every year, Michigan ships approximately four million trees, some as far away as Hawaii.

Mohrland is the owner of Badger Evergreen Nursery in Allegan. □

FARMETTE

By Andrea Hofmeister



"Let me guess, it's too wet to combine?"

CAGs Can Win MACMA Ham

■ The first 100 CAGs who have all their members, whose names appear on their set up sheets, paid as 1988 members by Nov. 13, 1987, will win a ham for the entire group to enjoy. Each ham weighs approximately five pounds and is a \$12 value.

The hams will be delivered to the county drop point with the rest of the MACMA fall sale products.

Details and the incentive form will be included in the October CAG newsletter. □

RURAL RASCALS



Connie, age 3, and Jennie, age 1, daughters of Cheboygan County FB members Tony and Denise Hand, make good use of this tractor tire after daddy could no longer use it in the field.

Cherry Market Update

■ An early spring in 1987 allowed a near-ideal blossom period and development of a relatively large red tart cherry crop. According to the USDA June preharvest estimate, a near-record tart cherry crop of 280 million pounds was forecast in Michigan. Including the production estimates for New York, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Utah, Colorado and Oregon the national production forecast was 354.2 million pounds.

Unfortunately, a severe wind storm swept through northwestern Michigan on July 20 — in the middle of harvest — causing significant losses. Despite the wind storm losses, harvested production this year is probably higher than the previous five-year annual average of

190 million pounds for Michigan and 250 million pounds nationally. When that's added to the 1986 carryover of 55.9 million pounds, a burdensome supply weighs on the cherry market.

Commercial demand last year was approximately 227 million pounds. When that's balanced against supply, one can quickly see why market prices have fallen dramatically and have not yet stabilized. In fact, there's little prospect that returns will cover growers' variable cost of production of red tart cherries.

Loss of Federal Marketing Order

Another stabilizing force has been eliminated from the cherry market

due to the defeat of the federal marketing order for red tart cherries in the 1986 national referendum. Although a majority of Michigan growers and processors voted for continuing the marketing order, those in other cherry-producing states did not. The impact of this defeat was illustrated when the Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association (MACMA) estimated that the loss of the federal marketing order will cost growers \$35-40 million in 1987 due to the relatively inelastic demand in the cherry market.

Federal marketing orders for fruits, vegetables and specialty crops are

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Agrinomic Update

(continued from previous page)

authorized under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1937, as amended. These orders were established to maintain orderly marketing conditions for agricultural producers. Certain restrictions on the quality and/or quantity of products that can be marketed are authorized by these orders. The restrictions vary by order, but they can include quality regulations, quantity regulations or market support activities such as research, promotion or market information programs.

During the 1970s, consumers and others began criticizing these orders because of their effect on food prices. This criticism resulted in an extensive review of the federal marketing order program by the Reagan Administration's Task Force on Regulatory Relief. The task force

found both positive and negative economic effects. One area was the use of "reserve pools," which was an important market stabilizing feature of the old red tart cherry order.

From 1971 to 1986, the federal cherry marketing order No. 930 was a valuable, self-help marketing tool for cherry producers. Without it, there is no formal method to stabilize the market supply of cherries, nor structure to increase utilization in both the domestic and export markets.

The Future Plan

This fall and winter, MFB, the Cooperative Extension Service, MACMA and others in the industry will work together to obtain input from cherry growers and processors on possible provisions for a new, improved marketing plan to include a "new" federal red tart cherry

marketing order. For the new proposal to be adopted it must be approved by two-thirds of the growers and a simple majority by volume of production or two-thirds of the volume of production and a simple majority of growers. However, other areas need to be addressed aside from managing the supply of cherries. Market development and promotion efforts should be encouraged to further stimulate demand. Finally, a price discovery process on a national basis needs to be developed as part of this "new, improved" marketing plan. □

Agrinomic Update was prepared by Robert Craig, manager of the MFB Commodity Activities and Research Department.

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tact the American Heart Association for more information on healthy habits worth encouraging in those you love.

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"You Said It"

Here are some comments and suggestions received from Community Action Groups after their discussion of the Right to Farm Update which appeared in the July-August issue of *Rural Living* magazine:

- Better farm management is the best protection against nuisance suits.
- Provisions of Right to Farm should be more defined and include all farms regardless of size of herd or farm.
- Create buffer zones between farms and housing developments.
- Have more zoning control relative to housing plats vs. farms.
- Farmers have to do a "careful" job of waste management.
- All regulations add to production costs.
- Existing regulations are about right but there is a need to enforce current ones.
- People who are farming and have been farming need protection from nuisance suits.
- Farmers should have more input into the development of these proposals.

In November

Ag Tourism

Farmers are searching for creative ways to diversify their income producing activities. This discussion topic will focus on some of the challenges and opportunities in the ag tourism industry.

East Moline Group



Members of the East Moline CAG pictured on the steps of FB Center, April 9, 1983.

East Moline Group Celebrates 29th Anniversary

In the early days of 1958, an ambitious FB member, Tinus Vander-

Discussion Topic

Farmowners Insurance

■ Are you a Michigan farmer? Do you have a quality farming operation? If you answered yes to both questions, you'll be hearing from Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company of Michigan over the next year. With the support of your Michigan Farm Bureau Board of Directors, FB Mutual is reasserting its grassroots strength as Michigan's largest farm insurer. The positive results will benefit MFB members, Michigan farmers and MFB.

How It All Started

The beginnings were humble. Back in the late '40s, Michigan farmers felt they were paying too much for auto insurance options. In 1949, using shoe boxes as filing cabinets, FB Mutual began serving the auto insurance needs of Michigan farmers.

It didn't take long for the company to add fire coverages, then additional lines protecting farmers

Woude, invited a few new members and several prospective members to his home. Eleven families met at VanderWoude's home in Allegan County on Feb. 24, 1958. The plan was to form at least one new community discussion group, but in time the result was three groups.

Group member Bill DeVries reports that the years have brought fun and good fellowship and understanding of neighbors, even as they worked together for solutions to local problems.

The group celebrated their 25th anniversary in April 1983 with all of the original 11 families represented. The celebration included a tour of the FB offices in Lansing, luncheon, and a tour of the state capitol guided by State Senator Ed Fredricks.

against a variety of property and casualty risks. In 1960, FB Mutual gained national attention as the first insurance company to package a wide variety of farm insurance options into one policy, a Farmowners insurance policy. This spirit of innovation and commitment to the Michigan farmer has made FB Mutual Michigan's largest farm insurer by far.

Now, the insurance company has launched a new effort to enhance their special Farmowners product, to deliver the type of service the farmer wants, and to provide the level of support necessary for a highly skilled and knowledgeable sales force. FB Mutual wants to continue increasing its share of the farm market—especially in larger, more complex operations. The greater the share of the market, the better the product, and the more service the company can provide to MFB members.

(continued on next page)

Discussion Topic

(continued from previous page)

Research Provides Ideas

The effort to increase service to Michigan farmers began in June of last year. It began at the beginning—with research. As Gary Keefer, director of marketing research for the Farm Bureau Insurance Group explains, "We can't make effective product and service decisions from an ivory tower. Talking with customers, agents, and prospective customers provides the real life information we need to expand our market share and better serve the FB member."

Last June, the Marketing Division research team selected several focus groups representing various areas of Michigan and different types of farming operations. Some farmers were insured with FB Mutual, the rest were not. A professional interviewer guided participants through a number of knowledge and awareness

questions about Farmowners insurance, agent and home office service, product satisfaction and pricing.

Farmers Make Suggestions

These focus group interviews revealed that real opportunity existed for FB Mutual to increase its share of the farmowners market. But it was also apparent that the company would have to earn the new business and the right to retain current business. The market place is competitive, and just like the farmer's way of life, you have to work for what you get.

Michigan farmers made some other strong points. Marcia Merando, marketing research manager, identified these key points: "The most important relationship in the insurance business is between the farmer and the farmer's agent. Service and communication from the home office is another important ingredient. If the farmer has confidence in his insurance agent and is pleased with company service, that farmer is far less likely to leave because of temporary pricing differences. The farmer also wants to be sure that his insurance company is saving money wisely wherever it can, especially in fraud discovery and prevention."

Pilot Project Underway

All of this information formed the next process in enhancing FB Mutual's Farmowners insurance program: development of the Farmowners pilot project which began early in 1987 and will be completed before mid-1988. Gary Keefer explains, "Before introducing sweeping product changes or client services, we felt it was absolutely necessary to establish a pilot project. We selected 12 of our very best Farmowners sales and service agents with excellent farm experience. They represent various types of farming risks from orchard to dairy. We are currently working with agents, clients and prospective clients to clearly identify how we can enhance our Farmowners product, increase our service, better support our agents and communicate more effectively."

This valuable pilot project could well lead to product and pricing changes by 1989. But, other changes have already occurred. The home office underwriting areas have enriched working relationships with agents. A Farmowners newsletter is being tested through the pilot agents with policyholders and non-policyholders. This coming January, agents and clients alike will be surveyed to see how the publication can be improved. In 1986, a Special Investigative Unit (SIU) was established as part of the property and casualty company's Claims Division. This unit has had tremendous success in identifying, directing and controlling fraudulent claims.

Success Has Positive Impact

The success of this resurgence in FB Mutual's Farmowners insurance program has obvious positive implications in the view of both your MFB Board of Directors, as well as the operating officers of Farm Bureau Insurance Group. MFB membership represents the core of the best and brightest farmers in Michigan. By working and learning with them, FB Mutual will not only provide special service to membership, it will also help increase MFB attractiveness to non-members. As the insurance company increases its market share, it strengthens MFB, and in the process, strengthens the future of farming in Michigan. That's a win-win situation which presents a rare opportunity for increased success and membership growth. □

Discussion Questions

As an extension of the continuing research program, your comments, ideas, concerns, and positive experience concerning Farmowners insurance are very important.

- How many of you in your discussion group have had FB Mutual Farmowners Insurance?
- If you are a FB Mutual policyholder, what are the positive aspects of your relationship with your agent and FB Mutual?
- From your point of view, where do you see opportunities for improvement - either by the agent or by the company?



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Legislative Review

(continued from page 7)

Their proposal recommends major restructuring of both the taxation and distribution systems which support the K-12 public school system. It would be presented to the voters at the November 1988 general election. The proposal includes:

- Terminate all K-12 school operations property tax millage (but not debt). Includes both voter-approved and allocated.
- Replace with an "8+8" property tax (total 16 mills). Eight mills would be collected and retained locally for school operations. Another eight mills would be collected locally and transmitted to a new State Account For Education (SAFE) trust fund. Present State Aid Fund revenues would also be placed in SAFE (sales taxes, lottery and others).
- School districts would receive basic grants of \$2,750 per pupil from the SAFE trust fund which would replace the present school aid fund.
- Property tax for school operation would be cut \$1.77 billion.
- Increase the present sales and use tax from the present 4 percent to 6 percent to replace the lost revenue.
- Permit voters in a school district to approve up to four mills more for local school enrichment.
- Instead of the extra millage, voters could approve up to 0.5 percent of personal income tax to be collected by the state and returned to the district.
- Establish a uniform system of state aid to all districts to put an end to the "in formula" and "out-of-formula" issue.
- Make payments from the General Fund for teacher retirement, Social Security, and categorical aid which funds special school services.

The present average of property tax for school operation is 32 mills (highest is 45 mills, others are much less).

As with any of the proposals, there are many details to be considered and many questions to be asked.

The School Finance Commission, which has been working since last February, has made a complete

study of this complex issue and is expected to have a report by late September or early October.

The key points in that proposal are expected to include:

- Cut school operating property taxes nearly 40 percent (\$1.3 billion).
- Replace with 2 percent sales and use tax increase.
- Cut the present 50 mill constitutional limit on all property taxes to 38 mills.
- Limit school operating taxes to 18 mills on residential and agricultural property. Allow increase up to four mills by vote.
- Statewide uniform 23 mill property tax on all industrial, commercial and utility property. This proposal, like most others, would require voter approval. Other provisions include quality education programs, creation of an Education Trust Fund and numerous other details.

■ **Transportation** — A second major issue for the fall session is on funding for state and local roads and other forms of transportation.

The expiration date on transportation legislation has been delayed four times. Several studies have been made, one by the Infrastructure Task Force made up of various interests including agriculture, represented by MFB. Another study for the Legislature was conducted by a consulting firm and a special joint House-Senate legislative committee. These studies, and others, are in addition to the ongoing road needs studies reported every four years.

The legislative package of highway bills presently includes:

- No change in the present funding formula (state 39.1 percent, counties 39.1 percent, cities and villages 21.8 percent, these are percentages of the fund after 10 percent is taken for comprehensive transportation).
- A revenue increase for the transportation fund (\$9.7 million). This results from increasing fees on driver's licenses (double), commercial registration fees, trailer and snowmobile fees, and \$25 for all truck diesel stickers.

• Creation of an Economic Development Fund (\$75 million) from transportation fund, auto-related sales tax and certain federal monies.

Twenty-five percent of the fund would go to counties with less than 400,000 population for economic development for certain types of industry.

Rural primary road projects would receive about 10 percent average increase from the fund.

- Local options would permit various local fees, including vehicle registration and drivers license fees.
- A new snow formula (based on a 14-year revenue study) and a railroad crossing upgrading program are included.

■ **Field Sanitation Standards** — On Sept. 8, the Michigan Occupational Health Standards Commission approved field sanitation standards that will now be sent for legislative approval.

Comments were received from the public at a hearing on July 7, when 125 farmers, growers, and agricultural representatives urged the commission to adopt the federal standards instead of the more restrictive rules they were considering.

For the most part, the commission did not deviate from their proposed rules, and made only a few concessions to agriculture's interests.

Organized labor, state agencies (i.e., the departments of social services and civil rights), and migrant advocate groups strongly recommended the rules apply to every employee. FB's position supported the new federal standard which only requires compliance by employers of 11 or more employees. The federal rule was designed to apply to most growers who use a large amount of labor and eliminates the need for many exceptions because of unusual circumstances among the smaller farm operators.

Provisions for sanitary facilities have always been made to farm laborers, either by utilizing facilities provided for this purpose, the farmer's home facilities, or providing transportation to the sanitary facilities. There are also facilities provided in the migrant labor camps.

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Legislative Review

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However, these new rules apply to the broader range of agricultural labor and does not just apply to migrant labor.

The commission did make changes to bring some provisions into compliance with the federal standards. Employees of livestock operations were exempted. Other changes regarding the quantity and temperature of available drinking water were made by adopting the less stringent federal language.

In addition to applying the new rules to include every farm employer regardless of the number of employees, the commission also kept such stipulations as requiring employers to post mandatory information about the standards in Spanish and/or the employees' native language. This rule affects all employers engaged in the production of food, fiber or other agricultural products such as seed, seedlings, plants, or parts of plants.

FB will continue to oppose these more restrictive Michigan rules as they now move into the legislative arena. □

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

World's Largest Cherry Pie

(continued from page 13)

"The purpose of this project," MCC Promotion Manager Chuck McCallum explained "was to break the existing record set in Charlevoix in 1976 and broadly communicate the fact that we have a strong supply of cherries, both now and in the foreseeable future."

Chef Pierre provided the technical expertise in preparing the pie dough and filling. Rod Wells, director of engineering, and Jack Ohlie, vice president of engineering for Chef Pierre, began planning the technical aspects back in April. According to Wells, the commercial pie maker's experience is in baking eight and ten

inch pies, so the huge proportions of the record breaking pie presented some special challenges.

Foremost among the challenges was constructing an oven large enough to house the pie and producing enough heat to bake it. The Jacklin Steel Supply Company of Traverse City helped fabricate and assemble the oven, which was 24 feet in diameter and six feet high. Design for the two burners which fueled the oven was contributed by the Joe M. Day Company of Saginaw. Burner capacity was a whopping 3 million BTU's per hour.

Chef Pierre's engineers were also charged with obtaining a pie pan which would fit and support the thousands of pounds of dough and cherry filling. Jacklin Steel and Northern Steel Specialties responded to the challenge by donating the material and resources for constructing the stainless steel pie pan.

At 6 a.m., July 25, Chef Pierre employees were already at work lining the pie pan with dough in preparation for the nearly 14 tons of cherry pie filling. The top crust, applied in 15 inch strips, was in place around 10 a.m. The finishing touch by Chef Pierre workers was to spray an 25% egg wash over the crust to promote browning. A crane operator from Elmer's Crane and Dozer of Traverse City took over to carefully lift the top off the oven, set the pie into the oven, and replace the top.

At 10:15 a.m., the bakers set their watches for the two hour baking time. Meanwhile, local talent entertained the huge crowd.

At 12:30 p.m., the crane hoisted the pie from the oven. The official cutting of the pie took place at 1 p.m. Participating in the ceremony were Paul Kindinger, director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture; Donald Gregory, MCC chairperson; Dave Grey, president of Chef Pierre; and Cindy Pleva, National Cherry Queen.

Chef Pierre set up a serving line. Over 75,000 four-ounce servings were given to the visitors and guests throughout the day. By 9:30 p.m. the pie was completely consumed.

Local festivities and entertainment were coordinated by representatives from the Center for Business and Industry of Northwestern Michigan

College. Paul Jacobs, one of the coordinators, proclaimed the day "an overwhelming success, primarily because of the great cooperation of all of the contributing organizations. Their time, money, equipment, and efforts were appreciated as they made this a super event for the cherry industry."

We effectively proclaimed that there is an ample supply of Michigan cherries readily available.

MCC Chairperson Don Gregory added, "The event was picked up by news media on state, national and international levels, including England, France and Japan, making this the most widely recognized promotion by the Michigan Cherry Committee ever. We effectively proclaimed that there is an ample supply of Michigan cherries readily available."

Other business contributors included: Actron Steel, Atlas Trucking and Leasing, Bay State Milling, C&H Maintenance, Concrete Services, CTM Associates, Fabri-Cal, Grand Traverse Construction Company, Holcomb Masonry, Michigan Sugar, Nottke Trucking, Peninsula Asphalt, Sawyer Fruits, Traverse City Record-Eagle, Traverse Outdoor Maintenance, and Weyerhaeuser Corporation.

"It was an extraordinary success," concludes McCallum. "I'm looking forward to the next issue of the Guinness Book of World Records to see Michigan's new pie record." □

Phil Calvert is assistant promotion manager for the Michigan Cherry Committee.

Farm Bureau Market Place

CLASSIFIED AD POLICY

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• All other advertisers pay 50 cents per word for one insertion and 45 cents per word for two or more consecutive insertions of the same ad.

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FOR SALE: 1,000 solid core exterior doors. 1-3/4 x 36" x 80" to 84". 10 for \$100. Jerry Flynn, 1106 E. Carleton Road, Adrian, Phone 517-263-4972. (10-4t-20p)

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