



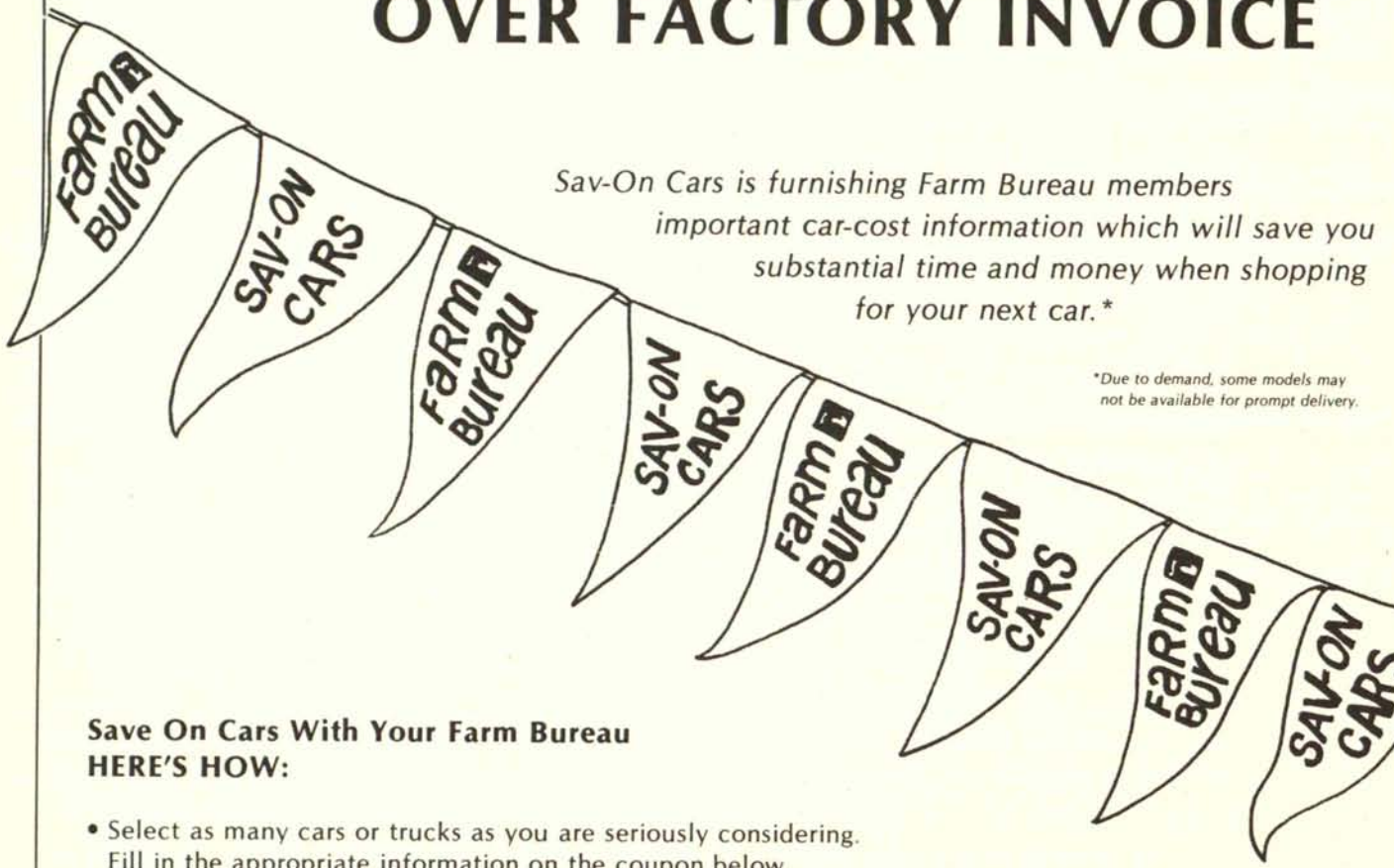
Rural Living

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

MAY 1987

Inside: Washington Legislative Seminar

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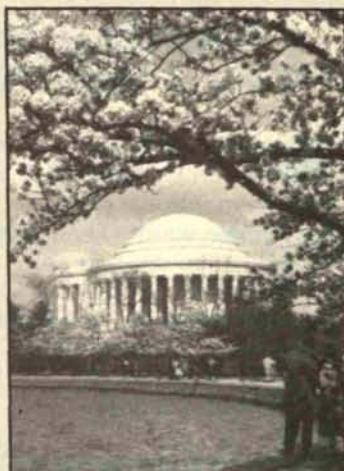
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Rural Living

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

A Publication of the Michigan Farm Bureau



About the Cover

Washington's famous cherry blossoms were in full bloom to greet the MFB Washington Legislative Seminar participants.

In This Issue

- 7** **Farmers' Special Interests Receive Warm Reception in Washington** MFB Legislative Leaders made the rounds of Washington offices to present their grassroots policy message.
- 10** **MFB Takes the Lead with New Promotion and Education Plan** Other FB states are watching with interest as MFB launches a new committee effort to promote agriculture understanding.
- 13** **Asparagus Marketing Plan Makes a Fresh Start** Michigan growers are implementing a promotion campaign to boost fresh market sales.

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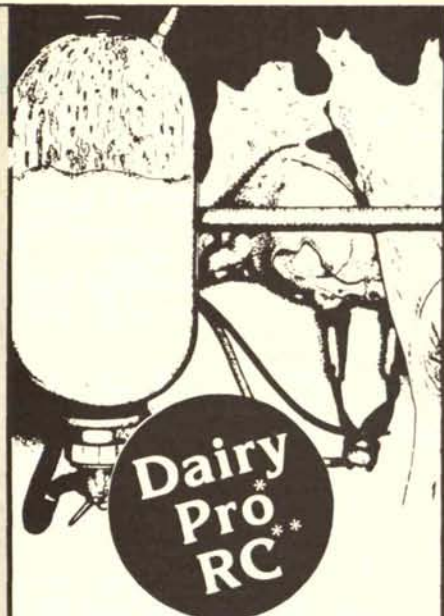
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Officers: Michigan Farm Bureau President, Jack Laurie, Cass City; Vice President, Wayne Wood, Marlette; Administrative Director, Charles Burkett; Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer, Tom Parker; Secretary, William S. Wilkinson.

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FD-8702-1

Legislative Review

Washington

■ **Minimum Wage** — Identical bills (H.R. 1834 and S. 387) have been introduced in the House and Senate which would increase the federal minimum wage from the present \$3.35 per hour to \$4.65 per hour by 1990. The hourly minimum would be increased to \$3.85 on Jan. 1, 1988; \$4.25 on Jan. 1, 1989, and to \$4.65 in 1990.

■ **Agricultural Marketing Orders** — The Senate has tabled an amendment that would allow the Federal Trade Commission to investigate and regulate agricultural marketing orders. Since 1981, only USDA has been authorized to investigate and analyze the marketing orders. The amendment would eliminate language that prohibits FTC's oversight of marketing orders, thus inviting action by those who have voiced opposition to federal marketing orders and agricultural marketing exemptions for cooperatives granted under the Capper-Volstead Act.

■ **Farm Credit System** — At an early April hearing of the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation, Credit, and Rural Development, a spokesperson for the U.S. General Accounting Office outlined a plan to rescue the FCS. Central to the proposal is the creation of a new "federal control board" which would virtually have total control over the entire system. The board would have full authority to approve or reject:

- Operating and business plans
- Changes in management structure
- Accounting practices
- Determinations and plans of the Capital Corporation
- Hiring, firing and salaries of senior officials
- Investment plans

The Farm Credit Administration, the Farm Credit Capital Corporation, and the Farm Credit System Funding

Corporation would be subordinate and accountable to the federal control board.

The proposal is not consistent with current AFBF policy concerning FCS centralization/decentralization. □

Lansing

■ **Highway Legislation** — A ten bill package (S.B. 150 - 159) has been introduced and is currently in hearings. Key provisions include:

- No change in state gas tax (15 cents per gallon).
- No change in present transportation revenue formula for state (39.1%), county (39.1%), cities and towns (21.8%).

• Creates a Transportation Economic Development Authority funded by revenue from increased vehicle title transfer fees.

• Continues 90/10 provision, i.e., 90% of all state highway revenue must be spent on maintenance of existing highways.

• Changes the snow fund formula from one based on snow accumulation to using historical distribution patterns.

• Raises vehicle title transfer fee from \$2 to \$10.

• Cuts truck diesel fuel sticker fees and increases the registration fees.

• Permits local governments to levy local gas taxes by vote of the electorate: up to five cents per gallon for counties or combinations over 600,000 population, and two cents per gallon if the population is under 600,000.

• Allows local vehicle registration fees up to \$10, real estate transfer fees up to \$10 per transfer, or up to \$3 per thousand of value.

• Allows counties to form charter taxing authorities which can levy up to five mills property tax for five years for road improvements. Requires a vote. Also allows "impact fees" on new developments.

The above are key provisions, however, there are many others such as permitting bonding, creating a

transportation research council, etc. Details of the final proposal will, no doubt, be changed.

Two other bills (now part of S.B. 151 and S.B. 156) would create a Critical Road Fund of \$18 million annually to help maintain the northern Michigan road system essential to forestry and agriculture.

The introduction of this package marks the beginning of a very controversial transportation issue. As it unfolds, there will be numerous other bills or proposals in the House along with the various opinions of several transportation groups.

■ **Tax Exemptions** — H.B. 4073 would require that all exemptions be reconsidered every five years beginning in 1988. Exemptions, in one form or another, represent \$8.7 billion. FB has attended the subcommittee meetings. Agricultural exemptions have had some discussion.

■ **Tax Reform and School Finance** — Several ideas and programs are surfacing but nothing will be done until the Michigan School Finance Study is completed in Sept. or Nov. FB is represented on the 40-member study commission.

■ **Grain Insurance** — Three bills have been introduced dealing with a proposed grain insurance fund. H.B. 4198 would provide for an insurance on grain dealers. The concept is similar to H.B. 4203 and H.B. 4205 to provide protection for farmers.

All three bills have been sent to the House Agriculture Subcommittee with the intent of drafting the concept into a single bill. Reps. Spaniola and Randall, the respective bill sponsors, have agreed that a referendum is important.

A fourth bill (H.B. 4204) introduced by Rep. Randall would place a statutory lien on grain sold or in storage if the farmer has written evidence of ownership. The concept

(continued on page 19)

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ORDER DEADLINE: May 6, 1987

DELIVERY: Week of May 18, 1987

Quantity		Price	Total
FRESH MICHIGAN ASPARAGUS			
_____	Asparagus 20 lb. fancy hydro-cooled spears	\$17.95	_____
_____	Asparagus 10 lb. fancy hydro-cooled spears	\$10.90	_____

Quantity		Price	Total
FROZEN FRUIT			
_____	Strawberries Whole, 30 lbs. 4 parts fruit, 1 part sugar	\$24.80	_____
_____	Red Raspberries IQF, 10 lb. Individual Quick Frozen	\$19.75	_____
_____	Apple Slices IQF, 10 lb. (citric acid, Vitamin C)	\$6.75	_____
_____	Pineapple Chunks 30 lb. bush rippened, sweet, 6/5 lb. bags	\$32.80	_____
_____	Blackberries Marion, 30 lb. Individually Quick Frozen Bulk	\$38.50	_____

Quantity		Price	Total
FLORIDA CITRUS			
_____	Grapefruit Seedless 4/5 bushel	\$12.75	_____
_____	Oranges Valencia 4/5 bushel	\$12.75	_____
_____	Grapefruit Sections No Sugar 24/16 oz. cans	\$22.35	_____
_____	Grapefruit Juice 48/6 oz. cans Ready to drink	\$14.85	_____

Quantity		Price	Total
FLORIDA AND MICHIGAN FROZEN JUICE CONCENTRATES			
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_____	Grapefruit Juice Conc. 5 to 1 24/6 oz. cans Florida	\$18.95 per case	_____
_____	Lemonade Conc. 4 to 1 24/12 oz. cans Florida	\$16.20 per case	_____
_____	Grape Juice Conc. 3 to 1 24/12 oz. cans Michigan	\$25.95 per case	_____
_____	Apple Cider Conc. 5 to 1 12/12 oz. cans Michigan	\$13.75 per case	_____
_____	Peanuts Jumbo Skinless 20 oz. vac. pack can, Florida	\$2.75 per can	_____
_____	Popcorn Indiana 5 lb. bag	\$2.30 per bag	_____

Quantity		Price	Total
MICHIGAN MEATS			
_____	Bratwurst 6 lb. Precooked pork and beef Ready to grill	\$12.90	_____
_____	Lemon Bratwurst 6 lb. Precooked veal, pork, lemon and chive, a Munich, Germany white- wurst recipe very mild, ready to grill	\$15.00	_____
_____	So-Long Hot Dogs 12/1 lb. vac. packs	\$15.90	_____
_____	Ham (Peet's) MACMA Vintage 4/4 lb. average hams per case	\$2.10 per lb.	_____
_____	Bacon thick cut 12/1 lb., vac. packs	\$21.00	_____
_____	Hickory Stick 4 lb. Summer Sausage	\$10.75	_____

Quantity		Price	Total
WISCONSIN CHEESE — AA GRADE			
_____	Sharp Cheddar 4/1 lb. pkgs., vac pack	\$12.00	_____
_____	Medium Cheddar 4/1 lb. pkgs., vac pack	\$12.00	_____
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_____	Monterey Jack 4/1 lb. pkgs., vac pack	\$11.50	_____
_____	Sharp Cheddar Spread 6/1 lb. tubs	\$15.00	_____
_____	Nacho Spread 6/1 lb. tubs	\$15.00	_____
_____	Variety Spread 6/1 lb. tubs 2 Sharp, 2 Wine, 2 Swiss Almond	\$15.50	_____

Quantity		Price	Total
HOBIE'S SOUP			
_____	Cheddar Broccoli 12/8 oz. cups	\$12.00	_____
_____	Navy Bean With Ham 12/8 oz. cups	\$12.00	_____
_____	TOTAL UNITS	TOTAL \$	_____

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1987 FROZEN FRUIT SALE

Order Deadline: Wednesday, Aug. 26
Delivery: September 16 through 25

1987 HOLIDAY CITRUS SALE

Order Deadline: Wednesday, Nov. 18
Delivery: Week of December 7



Congressmen Need Patience to Deal with Trade Issues

You learn to appreciate the value of patience when you're waiting in the rain for a taxi in Washington, D.C., as we did several times when we were there in early April for the annual Washington Legislative Seminar. If you keep a steady post at the edge of the sidewalk, a taxi will pick you up sooner or later.

Some of the congressmen and aides that we talked with in Washington could benefit from some lessons in patience, particularly when it comes to international trade issues. Nearly everyone was complaining about the balance of trade deficit and pointing to the need to do something . . . anything . . . about it.

Some kind of trade legislation is a sure bet this year, John Datt, director of the American Farm Bureau Federation Washington office, told us. What concerns Datt and other Capitol Hill observers is that the bills being discussed teeter on the line between helping and hurting farmers. Help for one segment of the economy, he said, could result in retaliation against U.S. agriculture. For example, trade retaliation against Japanese microchip dumping could void years of negotiations with the Japanese to open their markets to our agricultural products, or worse, launch a trade war.

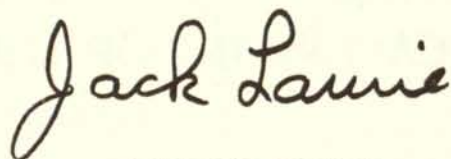
Ironically, the proposed trade bills may be behind the times. The trade deficit appears to have bottomed out and trade statistics, adjusted for the current inflation rate, show that our balance of trade may even be improving. Although the drop in the value of the dollar is not having a dramatic effect on farm trade, the change is beginning to be reflected in trade statistics.

The crucial point we tried to communicate to our congressmen is that we can't allow ourselves to be discouraged by a lack of short term results when we have a sound strategy that will pay off in the long run. That strategy, in line with Farm Bureau policy, is to stick to the course set by the 1985 Farm Bill. Using lower grain prices to help us regain our overseas markets will pay off.

Agricultural Economist Norm Rask of Ohio State University has calculated that lower priced U.S. grain is pushing down food prices in developing countries, making meat more affordable, and fueling demand for feed grains. He estimates, however, that it will take two years or more for these changes to work their way through the system.

That's where agriculture's traditional patience should come into play. Farmers just don't scoop the seed out of the ground because the corn hasn't grown up overnight. Now is the time to avoid destructive, quick-fixes in our present farm law.

It may be raining now, but believe me, there's a taxi just around the corner.



Jack Laurie, President
Michigan Farm Bureau



Seeds

- President Laurie led county FB Legislative Leaders on the organization's annual Washington Legislative Seminar, March 31-April 3.
- President Laurie and former MFB President Elton Smith paired up for the National Commission on Dairy Policy Hearing in Hudson, Wis., April 6-7. Laurie is a member of the national commission. Smith presented testimony regarding future dairy policy.
- April 8-10, President Laurie toured MFB's Upper Peninsula and North regions for membership meetings with county leaders and to make farm visits.
- Dr. James Anderson, dean of the MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, extended an invitation to President Laurie to address ANR department chairpersons on April 20.
- At the invitation of MDA Director Paul Kindinger, President Laurie attended a dinner April 22 to host a group of Belgian agricultural journalists during their tour of Michigan.

Farmers' Special Interests Receive Warm Reception in Washington

By Donna Wilber

Washington, D.C. was dressed in its finest to receive the 130 state and county legislative leaders and their assistants who were in the nation's capital for MFB's 27th annual grassroots lobbying mission, March 31-April 3. Cherry and magnolia trees in full bloom decorated the city's historic sites and raised the spirits of the weary travelers, many of whom had delayed and bumpy flights caused by spring blizzards.

Temperatures remained cool for the duration of their stay, but the reception they received from their congressmen, USDA and White House officials was warm. Nearly everywhere they went, it seemed, they found positive reinforcement for Farm Bureau's positions on the priority issues they had brought to Washington to "sell."

Activities began Tuesday afternoon with a legislative briefing by John Datt, AFBF's Washington office director, and workshops to prepare them for the mission ahead. Datt told the Michigan farmers that the organization will seek technical corrections in the Tax Reform Act to raise the deduction from 25% of a self-employed taxpayer's health insurance premium to 50%.

"We hope to get this change as well as remove the restriction that the self-employed cannot take the deduction unless they provide health insurance for their employees. It's doubtful that many self-employed taxpayers, especially farmers, can afford to furnish health insurance coverage to employees," he said.

Congressmen Saluted for Flood Disaster Assistance

During a breakfast meeting with Michigan's U.S. representatives, MFB President Jack Laurie saluted them for their bipartisan efforts in providing assistance to the state's flood-stricken farmers last fall.



"On behalf of Farm Bureau and all the people of Michigan, thank you for the activities that went on here in this city after we suffered the disaster," Laurie said. "We came here with a group representing agriculture across mid-Michigan looking to our elected leaders for assistance in solv-

ing what turned out to be more than just a farm problem — it was a people problem.

"We suggested that to keep the economy of mid-Michigan intact, we needed help. The Michigan delegation went to work, forgot party lines, and really addressed the situation

(continued on next page)



Rep. Howard Wolpe (center) discusses policy with Mark Smuts (left), District 5 director, and Ed Cagney (right), Young Farmer representative on the MFB Board, during a breakfast meeting.

(continued from page 7)

that was so crucial. In the course of a few days, you put together the type of relief program that was effective," he said.

In their congressional district discussions, legislative leaders found good support for their efforts to gain equitable tax treatment by being allowed to deduct the cost of their health insurance as a business expense. Congressman Bob Carr (D-6th District) gave them more than just a sympathetic ear. That same day, he introduced a bill to allow farmers and other self-employed people to deduct 100% of the cost of their health insurance premiums as a business expense on their federal tax returns. The bill, H.R. 1892, has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Following the breakfast, legislative leaders headed for congressional offices to meet with their representatives or aides for further discussions on their four priority issues — agricultural credit, international trade, tax reform concerns, support for the 1985 Farm Bill and opposition to the proposed "Family Farm Act."

USDA Secretary Lyng Calls for Better Rules of Trade

The farmers of this nation can't compete with the treasuries of other countries, USDA Secretary Richard Lyng told the Michigan group during a meeting at the USDA Wednesday afternoon. Competitors of U.S. agricultural producers are getting their share of the world market "plus our share" because of subsidies, he said.



USDA Secretary Richard Lyng received a special certificate of appreciation from Antrim County FB for his membership there.

"What we really need are better rules of trade for agriculture. We need to tell the Japanese, for example, that we want the same access to your markets that you have to ours," he said. He told the group that efforts are underway to develop a plan for international agricultural trade, but admitted, "it won't be easy."

Lyng predicted that despite efforts to make major changes in the 1985 Farm Bill, it will remain "pretty much as last year's." The strength of those who don't want changes appears to outweigh any other efforts, he said.

Lyng was presented with a special certificate of appreciation from Antrim County FB president Dean Veliquette for his membership in the organization.

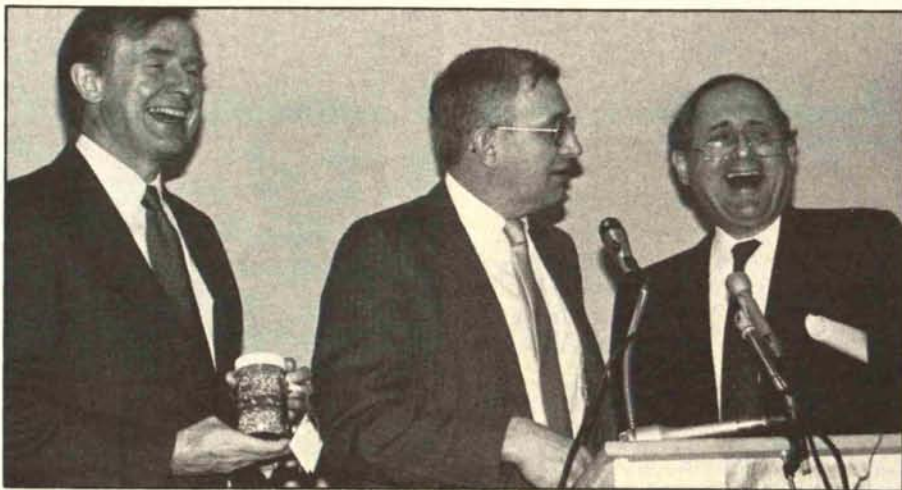
Senators Get Good Reviews

The Thursday morning breakfast with Michigan's two senators received good reviews from the group. Both addressed the priority issues on the legislative leaders' agendas.

Sen. Carl Levin told the leaders that the "burden of proof" to make changes in the 1985 Farm Bill rests with those who are calling for those changes.

"We passed a farm bill in 1985. It wasn't a perfect farm bill, but it was the best we could do at that time," he said. "We ought to let that farm bill work. It's a five-year farm bill and that means a little bit of stability in your lives for a change.

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MFB President Jack Laurie (center) presented "grabber" mugs to Senators Don Riegle (left) and Carl Levin (right). Laurie informed the senators that "foreign apple juice will leak through the bottom of the mugs and mess up your clothes."



Bill Brewer (left), Clare County Legislative Leader, presented Rep. Bill Schuette with a "grabber" mug during a breakfast meeting.



Alan Tracy, special assistant to President Reagan for Agricultural Trade and Food Assistance, spoke to the group in the Old Executive Office Building. Vice President Bush was scheduled to attend, but was called to accompany Reagan to Capitol Hill to support the veto of the Transportation Bill.

(continued from page 8)

"I am leary about making any changes in the bill and people who suggest changes, as far as I'm concerned, have a very heavy burden of proof that the farm bill is not working and that there is something better. That burden of proof hasn't yet been carried and I doubt that it can be.

"I am very determined that, if nothing else, the people who have strived and struggled and strained to make a go on the land be given a chance under a stable system to succeed. You deserve no less than that," he said.

Sen. Levin praised MFB's leadership in the flood assistance efforts last fall. "It was Farm Bureau that provided the glue," he said. "The farm community of Michigan pulled together and we were able to do in the Senate what we thought was impossible." Levin said that Sen. Don Riegle deserved the "lion's share" of the credit in the Congress and that Farm Bureau deserved the "lion's share" of the credit outside of Congress for the successful effort.

Sen. Riegle told the group that if the U.S. had a tough trade strategy, American agriculture would be the number one beneficiary. "If we can get a fair shake in foreign markets with our agricultural export products, we can sell billions and billions of dollars worth of output that today we

(continued on page 20)

Stoneman Believes Trip Builds Stronger Relationships

By Kimberly Marshall

There was a special person accompanying the 130 Michigan farmer contingent on their trip to Washington D.C. in April, Outstanding Young Farm Woman Karen Stoneman.

Karen, of Gratiot County, was awarded the trip after winning the Outstanding Young Farm Woman contest at state annual meeting. While in Washington, she attended all the same meetings the legislative leaders did.

"Our visit really helped to build up a good trust with the congressmen from the individual standpoint and, of course, every visit that Farm Bureau has builds a stronger relationship," Karen said. "It's great if you can come here by yourself, but coming with a group you just have that much more influence talking to (congressmen) than even back in the district."

Karen is a co-host of the Farm and Garden Show, a half-hour program televised once a week on WNEM, Saginaw. It is an interview-agricultural subject show. Karen planned to inform people in her area about the Washington Legislative Seminar activities through the show.

"I did an interview with MFB President Jack Laurie, which will air on the Farm and Garden Show, and, basically, give an overview of what our members did in Washington.

"Every chance I get, I will inform people about what we did in Washington and what issues are of most importance right now and I'll try to give them the type of feeling that we got from the senators and representatives that we talked to," Karen said.

Karen is in the district represented by Bill Schuette in the U.S. House of Representatives.

"I got a real good feeling from visiting Schuette and that if I was to call him now, I think our opinions would matter, would get some action, and that they would really help," Karen said. "Because I have a better feeling, I'm going to be inclined to write more letters and have

more phone calls, than if I had not had the chance to talk to him and meet him on several occasions.



Karen Stoneman interviews MFB President Jack Laurie for the Farm and Garden Show, televised by WNEM, Saginaw.

"I really gained a better understanding of how important our voice is to both senators and representatives. I got the feeling that our viewpoints really do matter to them, and I think that they listen."

Karen and several others had the opportunity to sit in on the first Senate vote for the veto override on the controversial Highway Bill. She also attended an Agriculture Committee meeting.

"It gives you appreciation of what they have to go through to get anything passed," Karen said. "It really gives you a better understanding of what they mean when they say they have to go through a lot of red tape. When you actually see it happening, it really makes an impression."

Karen, who was accompanied by her husband Dave, wanted to thank FB for the opportunity to attend the Washington Legislative Seminar.

"I'd be real anxious to come back again because I feel that we do accomplish a lot when we come out here and it's really helped me to understand the political workings of Washington better," Karen said. "I think it's a worthwhile seminar and something that definitely should be continued." □

MFB Takes the Lead with New Promotion and Education Plan

By Marcia Ditchie

The eyes of the Farm Bureau nation are cast upon Michigan as MFB ends a long tradition of women's committees and begins implementation of promotion and education committees on the state and county levels.

The transition is a result of action which began at the 1985 MFB annual meeting where delegates directed the MFB board to appoint a group to study the Women's Committee function and structure.

The study committee was composed of one woman from each of the 11 FB districts and the 1986 State Women's Committee chairperson. The committee conducted an in-depth study over a four and one-half month period to determine whether the current women's program was functioning in the best way possible to serve members, the organization and the agriculture industry. The past and present structures of the Women's Committee were reviewed, including participation, attitudes, the changing role of women in society and future trends.

At the 1986 MFB annual meeting last December, voting delegates approved the study committee's recommendations which called for the creation of a Promotion and Education Committee. The goal of the new committee is to be responsible for developing and carrying out projects and programs for all of the members and various age groups of MFB, including, but not limited to, health and safety, leadership training, agriculture in the classroom, current issues, commodity promotions and consumer education.

The concept of the new committee is winning acceptance in the counties as more information is disseminated, according to Julie Chamberlain, manager of the MFB Women's Department and education coordinator,

who, along with other MFB staff members, is managing the development of the new committee.



Wilda Craig takes Harry Dusseau's blood pressure at the Adrian Mall during Agriculture Awareness Days in March. Dusseau, chairperson of the Lenawee County Commission, was on hand to present FB President Marc Brown with an Ag Day Proclamation.

"There are a lot of members who are very enthusiastic about what can be accomplished by this committee. It can focus on many FB activities in the county and reach out to non-farmers for a better understanding of agriculture," she said.

"We have members who have excellent ideas for what they would like to see this committee do. It's just a matter of getting people together and deciding what they want. We want everyone to be a part of the Promotion and Education Committee because it's a Farm Bureau activity and the success of Farm Bureau is through people and their participation."

Activities for a committee of this nature are unlimited, especially in the area of ag tourism.

"Can you envision a time when there would be farm tours all across the state where people from urban areas such as Chicago or Cleveland

could come to Michigan and visit cherry orchards, dairy farms or vegetable operations and really see the mechanics of the agricultural industry?" Chamberlain asked. "The state committee will decide what projects and activities will receive priority. When you start a new committee, you can dream anything and then you have to decide what's possible and practical."

In addition to ag tourism, other program opportunities immediately available for the Promotion and Education Committee include promoting Michigan produce using a "seal of quality," ag in the classroom, mall displays, health issues in rural areas, and ag understanding activities such as rural-urban dinners.



Farm tours for all ages will be among the new committee activities.

This new committee is not a name change for the MFB Women's Committee. It is an entirely new committee with broader responsibilities and greater opportunities for service and involvement in the total FB organization. The committee will be made up

of men and women who are interested in working on programs and activities that relate to promotion and education. There may be activities carried on by the Women's Committee that will fit into the promotion and education category. Those programs that do not fit should be evaluated and reassigned.

"Each county will decide how they want their committee to function and what they want it to do," said Chamberlain.

County Farm Bureaus should now be in the process of looking at their bylaws and making the necessary changes to create a Promotion and Education Committee. The Women's Committee will function as usual until Dec. 1, 1987 when it will cease to exist.

"County boards should look at the composition of the committee and how it will be created," Chamberlain said, "which could include a five to nine member committee with ad hoc groups to help accomplish projects determined by the committee and the board. Counties should also be determining a nominee for the state committee to be submitted to MFB President Jack Laurie by Aug. 1."

President Laurie will recommend 22 nominees (two from each district) for approval by the MFB Board at its Aug. 26-27 meeting. The committee will have an organizational meeting in September. A chairperson will be selected, who will be seated on the MFB Board after the December state annual meeting. In future years, the chairperson should be elected at the committee's annual reorganization meeting, which is recommended to be held in conjunction with the MFB annual meeting.

Other state FBs view the change with great interest.

"At a meeting earlier this year at the AFBF offices in Park Ridge, an AFBF staff member said that Michigan is considered a leader across the country and other state Farm Bureaus will be watching to see how this concept works," said Chamberlain. "We have to rise to the occasion and be very forward thinking and demonstrate to the rest of the nation that we have a good idea and that it's going to work for us. If they choose to follow our footsteps, that's great." □

FB Volunteers: Doing What Must Be Done

By Connie Turbin

There is more than a dash of appeal in the whimsical claims made by Garrison Keillor, humorist and host of the popular PBS radio show "The Prairie Home Companion," that powdermilk biscuits "give shy persons the strength to stand up and do what must be done." The product and the promise are, of course, fictitious. Too bad.

If a batch of old-fashioned powdermilk biscuits was the recipe for motivating and involving more volunteers, community and organizational leaders would abandon the boardroom for the kitchen.

According to June Mason-Kenfield, executive director of the Greater Lansing Voluntary Action Center, attracting and motivating volunteers relies on a "scratch" recipe that can't be packaged.

"A lot of what's best in volunteer leadership is based on developing good human relationships," Mason-Kenfield says. She offers these hints for volunteer leaders:

- Define what parts of the program or project can be successfully delegated to volunteers. Be willing to share those responsibilities.
- Give a clear description of the volunteer activity.
- Explain your expectations for performance, i.e., goals, time required, progress reports, deadlines or completion dates.
- Explain how the volunteer's contribution will be important to the success of the project.
- Discuss with the volunteer his or her reasons for becoming involved, and what areas of the project are most interesting to him or her.
- Be prepared to provide or obtain training if appropriate.
- Take time during the volunteer activity/involvement to get to know the volunteer, i.e., be available to answer questions, provide praise and recognition, be willing to listen to concerns.

Mason-Kenfield, whose non-profit agency recruits volunteers for more than 200 organizations in the Greater

Lansing area, admits that attracting a corps of volunteers poses real challenges even for professional volunteer managers.

"We publicize volunteer opportunities by word of mouth, and by advertising with television, radio and print media. Although it isn't practical in every instance, individual contacts to recruit volunteers are effective," she says.

She cites good long-range planning as one of the most important aspects of successfully managing and maintaining volunteer programs. "Planning is important because then everyone involved knows what is to be accomplished during the next year or six months. The group can also start assigning duties and reporting dates right from the beginning," she says.

Planning also gives volunteer organizations a "competitive edge." That's important because competition from work, family, social activities, and other community service activities is so keen. Advance planning shows potential volunteers that the project is well organized. It is easier for the volunteer to see where he or she can contribute.

Mason-Kenfield, who has presented volunteerism workshops for Farm Bureau leadership conferences, offers these general observations about volunteer successes and challenges in the organization. "Farm Bureau is really an integral part of their volunteers' lifestyle and livelihood. By being an active and involved part of it, members can see that they are improving conditions for their families, their community and their industry. As volunteers in the Farm Bureau, they see results in their own lives.

"In addition, the Farm Bureau does a really fine job of offering conferences and seminars to promote personal growth and skills development. It is apparent that the organization appreciates the contributions of volunteers through their efforts to promote volunteer recognition, such as encouraging local observance of National Volunteer Week, April 26-May 2." □

Country Almanac

May

- | | | | |
|----------------|---|------------------|--|
| May 1-3 | Blossomtime Festival, Benton Harbor/St. Joseph. | May 9-10 | National Mushroom Hunting Championship, Boyne City. |
| May 3 | Easter Flower Show, Belle Isle, Detroit. | May 13-16 | Holland Tulip Time Festival, Holland. |
| May 3-9 | Mushroom Festival, Mesick. | May 14 | Michigan Association of Farmer Cooperatives Legal Tax & Accounting Seminar, Radisson Hotel, Lansing. |
| May 6 | MACMA Spring Sale (fresh asparagus) order deadline. | May 16-23 | Michigan Week. |
| May 9 | Michigan Beef Cook-Off, Westwood Mall, Jackson. | May 17 | Flower Day I, Eastern Market, Detroit. |
| May 9 | Morel Mushroom Festival, Lewiston. | | |

Coming Up

- | | | | |
|-------------------|---|-------------------|---|
| June 11-13 | National Asparagus Festival, Shelby/Hart. | July 10-11 | Strawberry Festival, Chassell. |
| June 14 | Flower Day II, Eastern Market, Detroit. | July 15-19 | National Blueberry Festival, South Haven. |
| June 15 | SesquiTrain '87 leaves Capitol steps for 14-day, 150 mile birthday party. | July 16-18 | Dairy Festival, Elsie. |
| June 19-21 | Strawberry Festival, Belleville. | July 21-23 | Ag Expo, MSU. |
| June 22-26 | Young People's Citizenship Seminar, Olivet College, Olivet. | Aug. 8-9 | Mint Festival, St. Johns. |
| June 26-28 | National Pickle Festival, Linwood Bicentennial Park, Linwood. | Aug. 14-16 | Blueberry Festival, Montrose. |
| July 4 | International Cherry Pit Spitting Championship, Tree-Mendus Fruit Farm, Eau Claire. | Aug. 18-23 | Upper Peninsula State Fair, Escanaba. |
| July 5-11 | National Cherry Festival, Traverse City. | Aug. 20 | MFB Statewide Policy Development Conference, Lansing. |
| | | Aug. 26 | MACMA Frozen Fruit Sale order deadline. |
| | | Aug. 28 | Michigan State Fair, state fairgrounds, Detroit. |
| | | Sept. 7 | |



Asparagus Marketing Plan Makes Fresh Start

By Connie Turbin

Long before the first tender stalk of Michigan asparagus was snapped this spring, Michigan's asparagus industry was preparing for a new, aggressive marketing campaign that would thrust Michigan into the national fresh market competition.

The Michigan Asparagus Advisory Board, the decision-making body for the Michigan Asparagus Promotion Committee, met in March to hear recommendations for a marketing and promotion plan geared to boosting the market share for the Michigan crop. At that meeting, members of the board voted unanimously to accept the recommendations of its new agency, Maxwell Advertising of Kalamazoo.

The presentation by agency representative Bill Goodrich and Asparagus Committee promotions manager Chuck McCallum, was the culmination of extensive market analysis

and creative development begun last fall.

That's when McCallum and Goodrich initiated a comprehensive market analysis of everything from current production and consumption patterns to the effect of hybrid development on future market opportunities.

The study revealed, for example, that fresh market sales of asparagus have been skyrocketing. Sales of the fresh product have jumped 48%. That signalled a major change in marketing strategy. Currently 80% of Michigan's asparagus yield goes to processed product; just 20% into fresh sales.

"It was clear that if we didn't make some inroads into the fresh market, Michigan would be at a competitive disadvantage in the future," said Goodrich.

Pre-harvest efforts by McCallum resulted in an agreement with a large eastern shipper to move fresh Michigan asparagus into markets all along the eastern seaboard. That agree-

ment has the potential of moving three-quarters of a million pounds of product in a new market, reported McCallum.

On the promotion side, the agency's role is to support that marketing opportunity with new, graphically attractive materials and consumer promotions.

"We developed a completely new graphic approach — one that can hold its own with advertising by any major commodity group or co-op such as Sunkist, Dole or Florida oranges," said Goodrich.

The agency's first recommendation was to update the product logo to clearly identify Michigan asparagus. New point of purchase and advertising materials include advertising slicks in black and white and full-color, color posters, nutrition/recipe brochures, and in-store materials.

Goodrich said the campaign will position the Michigan product to compete successfully in about 20 new major metropolitan markets. "Promotion materials play an important part in getting into those markets. The materials help shippers get access to the retailer because they can show the food store chains that Michigan asparagus people will support their product."

In-store promotions are both efficient and effective, according to Goodrich. "Eighty percent of the purchase decisions — the final brand decision and the final product decision — are actually made in the store. Our program builds on that by getting these materials placed where the decision will be made."

The agency has developed a marketing promotion that will be introduced in 14 newspapers in Michigan, Chicago and Pennsylvania. "We're placing an attractive, four-color Michigan asparagus insert

(continued on page 20)



Photo courtesy American Dairy Association.



Rural Rascals Joe and Stephen Kovacic inspect the train-shaped cake Joe, age 8, entered in a Boy Scout cake competition. Joe earned first place in the "Best Use of Theme" category for "Michigan Products Right on Track." They are the sons of Mike and Marge Kovacic, Clinton County.

CAG Members Offered

AgriVisor Discount

Community Action Group members in the AgriVisor radio FM-broadcast area (southern two-thirds of the lower peninsula) are being offered one free month of the AgriVisor Marketing Service with a new one year subscription. The cost to new subscribers through the "Community Action Group Advantage" offer is just \$429, instead of \$468. New CAG subscribers also receive the monthly marketing newsletter and free registration at the AgriVisor marketing seminars. The CAG Advantage will be available through June 1, 1987. For more information about AgriVisor's CAG Advantage, Call MFB AgriCom/AgriVisor, 517-323-7000, ext. 547. □

Ag Contributions to Michigan Highlighted

A slide/tape presentation has been produced for county FB leaders to use during Michigan's Sesquicentennial year at Rotary, Lions, church and other civic organization meetings. The slide/tape highlights the contributions agriculture has made to the growth of the state. To reserve the production, contact the MFB Information Division in Lansing. Call 517-323-7000, extension 516. □

Farmland Protection Zoning Guide Available

The American Farmland Trust has released a 64-page publication for local planners entitled, "Planning and Zoning for Farmland Protection: A Community Based Approach." The guidebook is intended to identify purposes for protecting farmlands, assist local governments in identifying high quality agricultural lands, and assist in developing and implementing defensible and equitable farmland protection programs. Alternative agricultural zoning techniques are described and sample zoning ordinances are provided.

The guidebook is the result of a one year cooperative effort by the American Farmland Trust, Michigan Farm Bureau, Michigan State University, Michigan Society of Planning Officials, Michigan Townships Association and several professional planners.

Copies are available for \$5.00 from the American Farmland Trust, Midwest Regional Office, 1405 S. Harrison Road, #318, East Lansing, MI 48823. □

Michigan Cooks Prepare for Beef Cook-Off

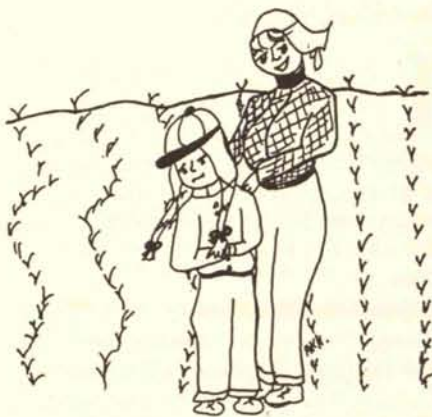
What's the secret to creating a prize winning recipe? A simple, great tasting entry! Amateur chefs and just plain good cooks from around the state who have entered the Michigan Beef Cook-Off will be hoping they have that special ingredient.

Nine finalists will compete for the opportunity to represent Michigan in the National Beef Cook-Off at Sun Valley, Idaho. The Michigan winner will receive \$200, plus an expense paid trip for two to the host city.

The Michigan Beef Cook-Off will be held May 9 at the Westwood Mall in Jackson. The Michigan Cattle Women, who sponsor the contest in cooperation with the Michigan Beef Industry Commission, invite the public to attend. □

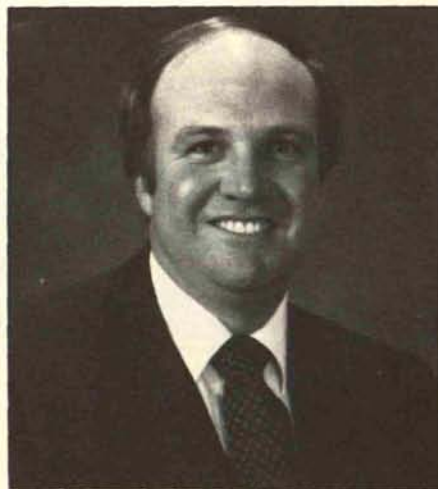
FARMETTE

By Andrea Hofmeister
Tuscola County



"Sure, the corn rows you planted are a little crooked. Don't worry. The cultivator will straighten them out!"

Conklin Named MFB's AgriPac Chairperson



David Conklin

Dave Conklin is the new chairperson of MFB's Political Action Committee. Conklin, a Shiawassee County dairy farmer, also serves as Third Member of the MFB Executive Committee. Other AgriPac Committee members for 1987 include Faye Adam, Calvin Ellens, Sally Knopf, Bob Gregory, L.C. Scramlin, Joanne Steff, Tom Guthrie and Bob Thompson. □

Blossom Queens Visit Diverse Farms

When southwest Michigan decorates for the Blossomtime Festival, Mother Nature hasn't always cooperated by providing warm, sunny days and a profusion of delicate, fragrant blossoms.

"We've celebrated festival time despite the unpredictability of Michigan spring weather. Don't rain on my parade is more than a cliché for us," says Leslie Leitz, Berrien County Farm Bureau information chairperson. She has served as publicity chairperson for the annual Blossom Queens Farm Tour since 1984.

Foul weather or fair, the farm tour has been a part of the week-long festival events for four years. The tour is the joint annual project of the Berrien, Cass and Van Buren county Farm Bureaus. The 1987 tour was held April 18.

"We were looking for a way to focus attention on the broad agricultural base of the area. As farmers in Southwest Michigan, we wanted to share our pride in the diversity of our agricultural enterprises," says Leslie. "That's how the idea of the farm tour developed."

Blossomtime Queens representing communities in the area were chosen to be the special guests for the tour. The young women are predominantly "city gals," who are unfamiliar with agriculture.

"We just have a lot of fun. We're showing off some of the area's finest farms and the girls seem to appreciate a festival day that allows them to trade their crowns and gowns for Farm Bureau caps and jeans," Leslie says.

This year the Blossom Queens gathered at the Berrien County Farm Bureau Office for a continental breakfast and a presentation by Chris Dahlke of Dal-Key's Honey Farm in Sodus. Chris described beekeeping, honey production and processing and explained the importance of bees to the fruit and vegetable industry.

The first farm stop on the tour was Lemon Creek Fruit Farm and Win-

ery. The farm has been owned by the Lemon family since 1855. Current owners are Robert Lemon II and his brothers, Jeff and Tim. They raise 150 acres of raspberries, sweet cherries, peaches, nectarines, plums, pears, apples, table grapes and wine grapes. The winery was established in 1984. Using only their own wine grapes, the Lemon Creek Winery has won fourteen awards including three gold medals.

After a toast to the Blossomtime season with sparkling, non-alcoholic fruit juice, each queen received a commemorative "special label" bottle of the sparkling fruit juice.

In rural Marcellus, the queens toured the MacKenzie Farms. Innovation is evident on this third generation, Cass County farm where they raise grains, cattle and hogs. The queens toured the facilities which include half-round shelters, and auto-

matic systems for feeding, climate control, waste disposal and more.

After an "All Michigan" luncheon, the queens toured Hilltop Nurseries in Van Buren County. The farm includes packing house and storage, fruit tree nursery, research and development areas, and computerized apple grading and catalogue mail order for the nursery. Three generations are involved in the farm.

Touring the farms was fun, but sampling the Michigan products in the Taste of Michigan baskets prepared for each queen was delicious. Products for the baskets and funding for the tour were donated by area farmers and ag-businesses.

"Support for the project has been tremendous. It's a real cooperative activity because without help from the farm community, our individual organizations could not make it possible." Leslie says. □



The jewel in the crown of the Blossom Queens' Farm Tour. That is how some have described the annual livestock visit. This year, the queens toured the Don McKenzie farm in Marcellus. Theresa Hudzinski, Miss Sodus (left), and DeAnna Herbert, Miss Paw Paw (right), cuddle some baby pigs born the day before the farm visit, April 18.

Safemark Rolls in Spring Sales Record

Wear testing safemark automobile tires isn't in Bob Harms' job description as Safemark general manager, but if the more than 20,000 road miles he's logged since December are any indication, the product performs up to its quality claims.

More importantly, the miles are paying off in a test of the program's ability to attract and serve Farm Bureau members through its statewide dealer network. "We've had good success in attracting new dealers since October of last year," said Harms, who took over duties as Safemark general manager Dec. 1,

1986. By April, the program had added 11 Safemark outlets with an overall goal of 14 new dealers by July 1987.

But it's dollar signs that give the best indication of the program's comeback. Safemark sales through the dealer network for March 1987 climbed to \$50,000 for the first time since April 1984. An additional \$14,000 in March sales was carried over for delivery in April.

Harms attributes a large part of the renewal in sales to increased contacts with dealers and efforts to strengthen the links between the county FB and the local Safemark dealer. He has

developed a committee guidebook that offers a suggested year long agenda for dealer support, advertising, member promotion and working with the county FB board of directors. The guidebook was introduced at a series of regional meetings.

Innovative promotions such as the President's Discount Sale in counties without Safemark outlets are creating interest in the program among the county's leadership. "Based on the high degree of customer satisfaction and low product adjustment rates (just 3% for tires and 4% on batteries), I feel very confident that this type of promotion will create positive awareness of the product among this key group of county leaders," said Harms.

Building product awareness and emphasizing member service is the cornerstone of the effort. Despite a small staff and a heavy schedule of dealer visits, Harms has set up Safemark product displays at nearly every major FB event. He also encourages county committees and dealers to use displays at county meetings and in the dealer's showroom.

Sales are growing and so is Harms' satisfaction with the program's ability to contribute to the scope of FB member benefits. "Safemark's member only program offers the kind of products and service that will help attract and maintain memberships. I know it's working because dealers are calling me to replenish their supply of membership applications. That's the kind of member awareness and dealer involvement we've been working for since the program began." □

NOW... GO RADIAL
IN REAR TRACTOR TIRES

UP TO 21% MORE TRACTION*

10% Tillage Time Savings*

Because you don't waste time with slippage.

Belts of Aramid

Pound for pound stronger than steel with high resistance to puncture.

Nylon Cord Body Piles

For strength, flexibility and long-life durability.

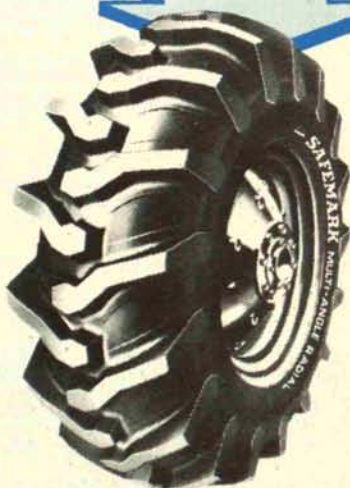
Smooth, Easy Ride

Efficient traction with less soil compaction.



THE SAFEMARK MARGIN:

QUALITY • SERVICE • DEPENDABILITY • ECONOMY



*Compared to our bias tire in ground testing in San Angelo, Texas.

TOP VALUE BUY FOR FARM BUREAU MEMBERS

Navy Bean Market and Bean Contract Situation

Commentary by
Robert G. Craig, Manager
 Commodity Activities & Research
 Michigan Farm Bureau

In a normal year, Michigan is the nation's top producer of dry edible beans. In fact, Michigan navy beans usually represent one-half of the navy bean production in North America.

As we all know, 1986 was not a normal year. Commercial Weather Service meteorologist John McMurray recently told me that, statistically, the same storm system and floods should not occur in the same place again for 350 years! Let's hope not!

Current Navy Bean Market Situation

Even with the specter of a weather disaster statistically confined to a future century, some serious challenges have blown in to cloud the 1987 market.

Figure 1 shows a supply-demand balance sheet from 1984 to the present. Michigan's weather disaster last fall caused almost a 65% shortfall in navy bean harvest.

Navy bean prices bottomed out last fall at \$13 per cwt. If the crop had been harvested, I think the price was probably headed down to near \$10. Instead, the grower price has jumped all the way to \$40-\$42 for generic quality beans and that has been the market top. For No. 1 navies, the grower price has traded over \$60 in Minnesota and North Dakota (MIN/DAK).

A few days prior to the March 31 "Planting Intentions" report by USDA, the old crop navy grower price was taken off the board at most elevators across the state. Two conditions appear to be responsible for the "no bid" situation.

First of all, the high cost to canners reduced demand for pea beans in a variety of consumer products. This reduced demand was reflected by the

dealer price dropping from the high \$60s in December, down to \$46-\$48 by the end of March. Most beans have been brought in.

Second, the USDA Crop Report was a key one. Most traders wanted to wait on the sidelines and not be in a risky position. The March 31 report was for all dry bean varieties and, as expected, it was a bearish report. For the United States, USDA indicated that farmer planting intentions for 1987 were 1,838,800 acres compared to 1,673,800 acres planted in 1986. This is a 9.9% increase and

coincided with our MFB AgriCom forecast back in mid-January.

A look at the report information for Minnesota and North Dakota, two states which compete directly with Michigan navy beans, shows a significant increase (16%) in planting intentions. If that type of an increase goes into navies for all of North America, then we will become even more bearish than the 10% figure assumes.

(continued on page 20)

FIGURE 1

NORTH AMERICAN NAVY BEAN PRODUCTION

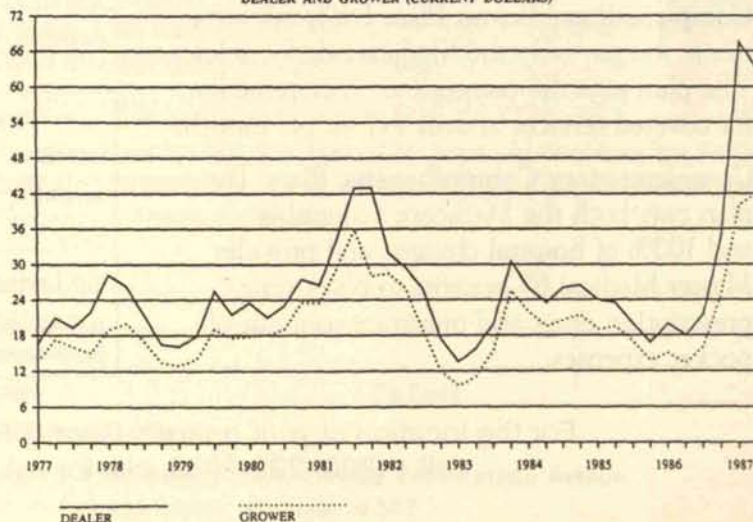
	1984	1985a	1986b	1986c	1987
Beginning Stocks	650	500	400	400	0
Production	5966	7065	8641	4415	?
(Total)	(6616)	(7565)	(9041)	(4815)	?
Disappearance, CWT, 1000					
Domestic	3916	4300	4282	3033	?
Exports	2200	2865	2500	1512	?
(Total)	(6116)	(7165)	(6787)	(4815)	?
Ending Stocks	500	400	2254	0	?
Ending Stocks as %Disappearance	8.2%	5.6%	33.2%	0.0%	?

- a Export, domestic use, and ending stocks are estimated
 b Production est. based on USDA September Report
 c USDA December Reports

FIGURE 2

MICHIGAN NAVY BEAN PRICES 1977-1987

DEALER AND GROWER (CURRENT DOLLARS)





WHEN YOU REACH 65—

A lot of you have been in Farm Bureau from the start. With good reason. Farm Bureau has always been looking out for your best interest. And we're not going to stop—especially now that you're looking for ways to fill the many gaps somebody left in Medicare coverage.

Looking for the best deal for you—that's our job. And we've got three health insurance programs for you, depending on where you live and your insurance needs. Take a good look at the way Farm Bureau keeps you covered—taking over wherever Medicare leaves off.

Complementary Econo Plan: For hospitalizations, you pay only the Medicare deductibles. The plan pays the coinsurance requirements for covered services at only \$17.80 per month.

Complementary Comprehensive Plan: The plan pays both the Medicare deductible and 100% of hospital charges, and provides Master Medical 65 benefits to cover your prescription drugs and minimize your out-of-pocket expenses.



STAY WITH THE ONE YOU'VE TRUSTED FOR OVER 40 YEARS.

Group Medicare Plus: HMO convenience in the newest of health care plans for seniors. No deductibles to worry about, and for as little as \$21 per month. Check with your county secretary regarding the availability of a Farm Bureau Medicare Plus group plan for your area.

For More Information: Contact the Farm Bureau secretary in your county to find out more about how Farm Bureau is working hard to keep insuring Michigan's farming community—just like we always have. Or fill out the coupon below and

mail it to: Michigan Farm Bureau, Member Services Dept., P.O. Box 30960, Lansing, MI 48909.

PLEASE SEND ME INFORMATION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

ZIP PHONE () _____

Number eligible for Medicare _____



Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

RL

Farm Bureau

For the location of your nearest County Farm Bureau Office call 1 (800) 292-2639, ask for ext. 537 or 538

Legislative Review

(continued from page 4)

was suggested several years ago and may have merit if details can be worked out.

Emergency Farm Disaster

Loan — S.B. 81 has gone through several drafts and currently is being considered in the House in the form of S.B. 81 (H2). The bill provides for technical amendments to the original law, and increases the funding to \$210 million, adding \$10 million for grain dealers. It is anticipated that additional amendments will be offered and the \$10 million will be available for ag related businesses.

Oversized Farm Equipment

H.B. 4054 (Rep. Randall) had one hearing in the House Transportation Committee. The concept is in line with FB policy to allow road movement of oversized farm equipment. Currently the law restricts on-road farm equipment width to 15'6" during daylight and 9' after dark. The bill received some opposition, but will be considered when the differences are worked out. A meeting has been held with State Police to arrive at some agreement.

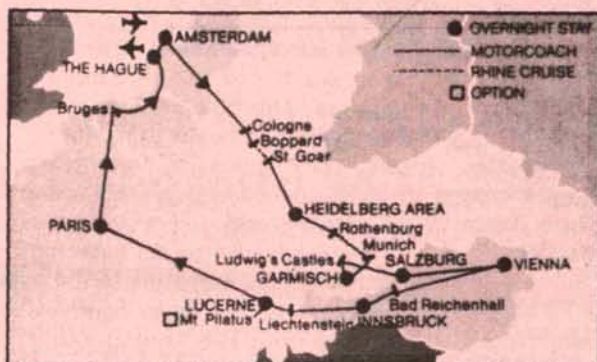
Pesticide Control Act

— Efforts are underway by Rep. Stabenow to rewrite the Pesticide Control Act. The current draft is more restrictive and also more encompassing than the existing law. Additional meetings are anticipated and there has been input from a wide range of interest groups. A meeting was held with staff from the governor's office to discuss the revised version. Stabenow is expected to introduce the revised version shortly after the Easter recess. FB has suggested several clarifying amendments.

Right-To-Know

— H.B. 4229 would extend the state prohibition against county "right-to-know" ordinances which expired April 1, to December 31, 1988. FB supports the extension.

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



FARM BUREAU Continental

The FARM BUREAU CONTINENTAL TOUR, scheduled to depart July 11 and return July 25, is a totally escorted European travel vacation designed for Michigan Farm Bureau members only. Convenient departures are planned from Lansing and Grand Rapids.

The FARM BUREAU TRAVEL SERVICE has limited the size of this tour, so you'll share the memories of your summer in Europe with a small group of fellow travelers.

Call one of our experienced travel consultants, Mary Beth or Joyce, using the Farm Bureau Travel Service toll-free line, or clip the request form below to receive the FARM BUREAU CONTINENTAL tour brochure.

Holland • Germany •
Austria • Liechtenstein •
Switzerland • France •
Belgium

July 11-July 25, 1987
Call toll-free:
1-800-331-1729
In Grand Rapids, call
452-9556

SIGHTSEEING HIGHLIGHTS

- SALZBURG — Visit Mozart's birthplace, Franciscan's Church and St. Peter's Cemetery.
- VIENNA — Visit Schoenbrunn Palace.
- PARIS — Visit Notre Dame Cathedral.
- AMSTERDAM — Orientation sightseeing includes a canal cruise by glass-topped motorlaunch.
- PLUS — scenic Rhine cruise Boppard/St. Goar, visit to King Ludwig's castle at Linderhof and panoramic views of Heidelberg.

Please rush me the full-color information brochure describing the FARM BUREAU CONTINENTAL tour to Holland, Germany, Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, France and Belgium.

Name _____
Address _____
City/ Town _____
State _____ Zip Code _____
MFB Membership # _____

Mail to: Farm Bureau Travel Service, 2421 Eastern Avenue,
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49507.

Agrinomic Update

(continued from page 17)

Market Outlook for 1987

What's our outlook for new crop navy beans? A 10% acreage increase is probable throughout North America to a total of approximately 775,000 acres.

With a normal yield of 13 bags per acre, the result is a potential record production of 10 million cwt. Obviously, we won't know officially until the August 11 USDA "Planted Acres by Variety" report and the fall harvest, but all of us in the bean industry (growers, elevators, dealers, and canners) need to examine that bumper crop prospect.

Basic economics says that high prices (and profit potential) during this past winter will lead to increased production this growing season. We have a real challenge to regain lost markets and market share.

In Figure 2 we see that the last time the grower price hit \$40 in Michigan was in May 1981, but 1982 may be a more appropriate price chart pattern.

In February 1982, the price was \$28.75 per cwt, and with about a 9 million bag crop, the price declined to \$9.50 in December 1982.

Marketing history lessons should be learned and appropriate marketing tools used, including both cash sales and forward contracts. In fact, if \$15 or better new crop contracts are available, growers ought to seriously consider them!

New Crop Navy Bean Contract Situation

As of mid-April canners had not offered contracts to Michigan dealers. With only a few exceptions, elevators do not have new crop navy contracts available to Michigan growers in the traditional bean areas. There have been some limited, trial offers to a few selected growers by Berger and Company in the Thumb area at \$14 or \$15 per bag, with and without "Act of God" clauses and acreage contracts. Also, for a few days in January, B & W Co-op in Breckenridge offered \$17 per bag contracts. The last exception is a new effort by Campbell's Soup Company offering \$19 per bag acreage contracts directly to growers in southeastern Michigan (Monroe and Lenawee

counties). This will likely involve only 5,000-10,000 acres of beans, but it is outside the traditional bean growing area. This new venture by Campbell's with pea beans is similar to what their Napoleon, Ohio, plant management has done with other vegetable crops.

Hundreds of growers have negotiated with their elevators to roll over last year's unfilled bean contracts and fill them from 1987 production. Thus, many growers have some of their navy beans already "marketed." Most do not and that is a concern to Michigan's dry bean industry as we enter spring planting season.

Out in Minnesota and North Dakota, \$14-\$15 contracts have been offered to growers since late February. Obviously, the natural disaster of last fall continues to make problems for Michigan growers and the entire dry bean industry.

Joint MFB/MBC Task Force

In a cooperative effort to study current problems in the Michigan dry bean industry, and provide leadership for mapping out a new strategy for the industry's future, Michigan Farm Bureau and the Michigan Bean Commission formed a joint task force. □

Fresh Start

(continued from page 13)

among brand name products in Sunday supplements, offering a free recipe book in exchange for any three purchase tags bearing the Michigan asparagus logo," he said.

Budget for the marketing campaign is modest compared to promotion dollars spent on "brand" products and by other national commodity groups, but Goodrich believes that research and planning will prove to be the competitive edge for the Michigan asparagus industry.

"I don't believe that such an in depth (asparagus) marketing analysis has been done for Michigan or anywhere else in the past. California and Washington have been active, but it's not really clear whether they have been basing their promotions on market analysis.

"The real test of our plan's effectiveness will be in increased sales and market penetration for Michigan asparagus," he said. □

Washington

(continued from page 9)

can't sell," he said. "We're not going to get that opportunity if we don't get fair trade ground rules. We need a tough trade strategy."

Riegle said he supports some form of federal assistance to the Farm Credit System.

"The Farm Credit System has absorbed some real body blows the last few years and it hasn't fully recovered. It holds the largest share of agricultural debt and has been most severely affected by the depression in agriculture in states such as Nebraska and Iowa. We're fortunate that Michigan's farm credit banks have remained relatively healthy due to our diversified agricultural base, but I don't think that means we're immune to the problems we see continuing across the agricultural base in our country as a whole. I do support some form of federal assistance to the Farm Credit System. I don't see where we have much choice," he said.

Riegle said he has "serious reservations" about the Harkin/Gephardt farm bill proposal. "I don't feel comfortable with the idea of mandatory production controls on farmers, nor do I really agree with the notion of taking upwards of 50% of our farmland out of production. The bill would also affect exports in a way that might not be positive for our farmers," he said.

President Jack Laurie, in his presentation of grabber mugs filled with Michigan commodities to the senators, took advantage of the opportunity to push policy.

"These mugs are to be used to drink apple juice produced only from domestically grown apples," he said. "Reconstituted foreign apple juice will leak through the bottom of the mugs and mess up your clothes. The only way you can tell whether or not it's domestically produced apple juice or foreign concentrate is that we finalize the requirement that foreign concentrate be labeled as to the specific country of origin."

To which Sen. Levin replied, "It's nice to be mugged by the Farm Bureau!" □

"You Said It"

Here's how Community Action Group members responded after discussion of the February topic, "The Elton R. Smith Chair":

- Community Action Group members responded affirmatively (90%) when asked if FB would benefit from this chair.

CAG members cited benefits from this chair as assistance in future problem-solving pertaining to Michigan agriculture and formulating policy to meet the changing needs of today's agriculture.

- When asked how agriculture might benefit from the Elton R. Smith Chair, CAG members said: finding more uses for the commodities we grow; there would be someone with expertise to work on agricultural problems, public relations and to coordinate procedures; specialization in agricultural needs; new developments for agricultural products and managing supplies to other countries; better food distribution on local, national and international levels; opportunity to influence youth through the Chair's teaching; and improve the image of agriculture to the general public.

- CAG members suggested that some of the research areas could include: how to eliminate our surplus, get better prices on farm products and keep our manufacturing here at home; marketing imports/exports; food quality; and how to apply new agricultural technology.

In June

Farm Credit Update

Farm credit is crucial to the economic health of agriculture. This topic will cover some of the controversies surrounding the Farm Credit System and the recommendations of the AFBF Farm Credit Study Committee.

Tomwasee Group to Celebrate 20 Year Anniversary

■ Jean Compton, secretary of the Tomwasee Community Action Group in Saginaw County, reports that the group began meeting in the summer of 1967. She and her husband Clifton hosted an organizing meeting at their home in Freeland. Farmers from Tittabawassee and Thomas Townships were invited.

Members who joined at that first meeting were Dick (deceased) and Marion Hughes, Paul and Bonnie Vasold, Tom and Kay Aspin, Jerry and Jan Fowler, Don Turner, Shirley (deceased) and Ivan Sparks, and Clifton and Jean Compton. Members combined the two township names to form "Tom-wasee." The first officers were Clifton Compton, Tom Aspin, and Jan Fowler.

Over the years, Jean says, many members of the Tomwasee group have served as officials in their respective townships, "so we get first hand information on ideas and problems."

The group has also fostered three county FB presidents: Clifton Compton, Ivan Sparks, and Paul Vasold. Members are actively involved in many county FB committees.

Current group members are Clifton and Jean Compton, Bob and Marilyn DuCharme, Dorothy Erskine, Marion Hughes, Dick and Fran Hunter, Dean and Joyce Murphy, Ivan and Marilyn Sparks, Duane and Clarice Vasold, Paul and Bonnie Vasold.

In addition to monthly meetings, the members annually plan a summer family outing and a Christmas dinner party. □

Discussion Topic

A Showcase for Agriculture

■ Michigan's Sesquicentennial provides farmers with an unique opportunity to "showcase" their industry and gain broad public appreciation for its contributions to the state and to the lives of its citizens.

When the 18-month-long birthday celebration was kicked off last June at the state capital, agriculture was very much in evidence. Thousands of people enjoyed a taste of "A Michigan Family Sampler" as commodity groups peddled their wares during this once-in-a-lifetime event. A display of farm machinery dating back to the 1800s, a steam engine log sawing demonstration, pens of farm animals that city children could actually touch, old-time country music, transportation in the form of horse-drawn carriages, and a floral Sesquicentennial logo in front of the capitol building, called attention to

Michigan's diverse agricultural industry.

A favorite of the crowds that lined the route for "150 Years of Michigan on Parade" was a float sponsored by the Michigan Department of Agriculture. It was a huge reproduction of a market basket overflowing with life-like models of Michigan fruits, vegetables, grains, milk, wine and many other commodities produced by the state's farmers. It was drawn by a six-horse performance hitch, owned by Robert Vickrey of Memphis in St. Clair County, that some viewers said rivalled the famous Budweiser Clydesdales.

All in all, it was a proud day for members of Michigan's agricultural industry.

For the 1987 festival season, a tentative schedule of 18 agriculture-oriented and six Sesquicentennial (continued on next page)



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Discussion Topic

(continued from previous page)

parades has been set for the float's appearance. MDA is currently in the process of inviting organizations and individuals to support the agricultural float through contributions.

Michigan SesquiTrain '87

Michigan's horse industry is an important part of the state's agriculture and it will be highlighted during the MDA-sponsored SesquiTrain '87.

Wagoneers will assemble in Lansing on June 14 and leave the capitol the following morning. The wagon train's encampment stops include Charlotte, Olivet, Marshall, Albion, Jackson, Munith, Pinckney, Brighton, Fowlerville, and Williamston, with a return to Lansing on June 27. Every evening will be filled with historic observances, displays, and local entertainment.

County Farm Bureaus along the SesquiTrain route will be furnishing hay to feed the horses, but there are ways for Community Action Groups throughout the state to be involved in the activity. Birthday greetings, each with room for signatures, are available free of charge from Michigan Farm Bureau's Information & Public Relations Division, P.O. Box 30960, Lansing, Mich. 48909. These 150th birthday greeting messages, signed by members of your group, will be delivered by wagon train to the governor and later placed in the archives to become a part of Michigan's history.

The Michigan Sesquicentennial Commission's agriculture subcommittee, headed by Montcalm County FB leader Charles Mulholland, is planning to publish a booklet highlighting 150 people from agriculture and agribusiness who have made significant contributions to the industry. Farm organizations, county Cooperative Extension Service offices, and county Sesquicentennial coordinators are being asked to nominate people who deserve to be part of this special publication.

Ideas for Local Activities

County fairs and commodity festivals provide excellent opportunities for farmers to spotlight their

industry during this Sesquicentennial year. For example, at last year's fair, the Arenac County FB featured a photo portrayal of "The Way It Was Down on the Farm" using a collection of photos from local families dating back to 1910.

In a book called "Michigan Agriculture 1800-1980," published by the Michigan Grain & Agri-Dealers Association, it is recorded that in August of 1939, a Michigan Farm Bureau picnic sponsored by Saginaw, Bay and Tuscola counties attracted 3,000 people. The program included a drawing for a free tractor, open to FB members in good standing only. There were children's games, a pony race, community singing, tug-of-war, horse pulling and tractor pulling contests. A similar activity, sponsored by the Community Action Groups in neighboring counties, might renew some of the neighborhood spirit that once was so prevalent in farm communities.

Other activities that Community Action Groups might spearhead include:

- Write the history of your Community Action Group.
- Offer to help publish a special Sesquicentennial edition of your county newsletter and include reminiscences from your older members.
- Sponsor a quilt contest.
- Organize a tour of centennial farms in your community.
- Sponsor a "Farmers Day" at your county fairgrounds, with produce and craft booths, and a farm animal display for youngsters.

The scope of activities to highlight agriculture and your proud heritage is unlimited. Sharing your pride can be fun for you as well as educational for those who may not know the leading role that agriculture played during Michigan's first 150 years.

Discussion Questions/Activities

- List other projects/activities that Community Action Groups might be involved in to celebrate Michigan's Sesquicentennial.
- What Sesquicentennial activities have been planned in your community? Do these activities include agriculture?
- What value do you see in Farm Bureau being involved in Sesquicentennial activities?

Farm Bureau Market Place

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