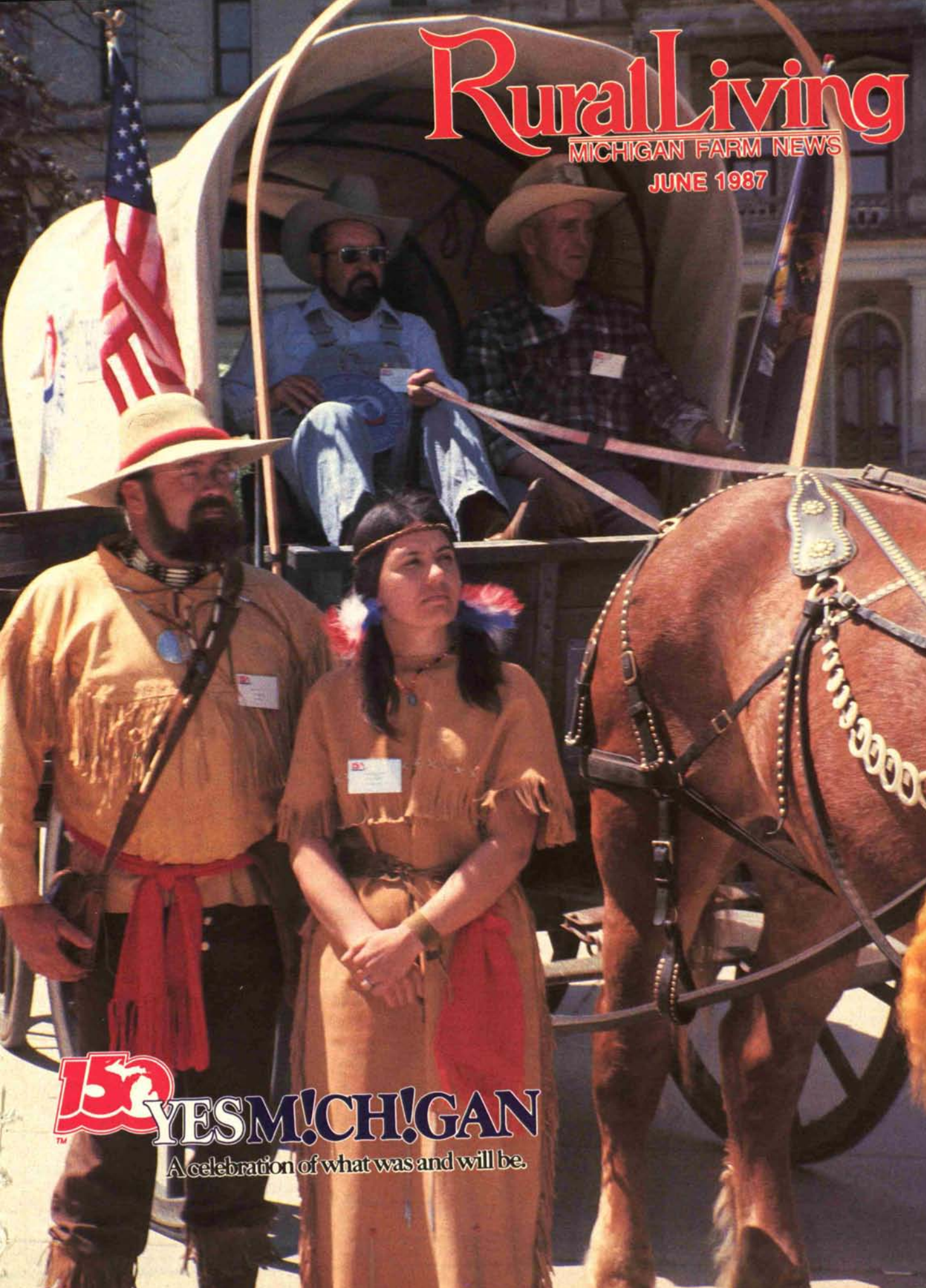


Rural Living

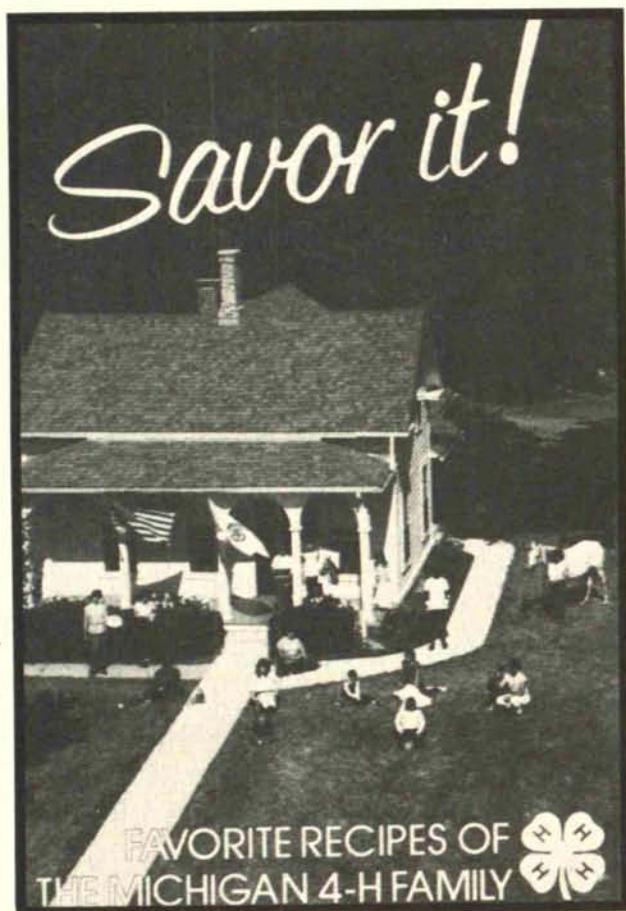
MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

JUNE 1987



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Rural Living

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

A Publication of the Michigan Farm Bureau

About the Cover

Michigan's SesquiTrain will be led by a
replica of the prairie schooners that
brought settlers to the state. The
wagon train will leave Lansing on
June 15.



PHOTO BY MARCIA DITCHIE

In This Issue

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- 9** **FB's Vital Link** The Community Action Group program marks its 50th anniversary this year with recollections from the first group formed in 1937 and new ideas for the 80s.
- 14** **Ag Tourism: A New, Profitable Partner** An entrepreneurial approach to enhancing two of the state's largest industries, agriculture and tourism, is fostering a new travel experience within our borders.

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President's Message

Share Your FB Pride

All of us at one time or another have felt a sense of pride in our accomplishments. It may have been a satisfied pride in the excellence of our farming operations, or a warm pride in the togetherness of our families and loved ones. Or perhaps, the exuberant pride we take in the success of our favorite sports teams.

Most of you who have been involved in Farm Bureau activities have felt a pride in the broad strength and power of our organization. It's an eloquent power that speaks the language of "getting things done" when farmer members work together.

I urge you now to tap into that sense of pride to help propel you and your county that last extra step needed to ensure membership target, gain and goal.

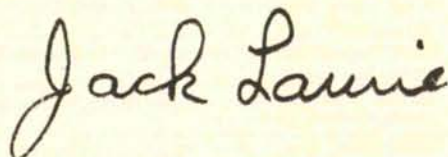
First of all, membership growth provides the financial fuel to make possible a wide variety of county and state activities. From mall displays that tell the farm story to consumers, to sponsoring students to the Young People's Citizenship Seminar, to sending county legislative leaders to Washington, D.C. . . all the positive things Farm Bureau does on behalf of agriculture happen because farmers and others voluntarily join the organization each year.

Grassroots membership also supports activities on the state level that translate directly back into money-in-the-pocket for farmers. Dollar-saving benefits like tires, batteries and steel products from Group Purchasing/Safemark . . . discount travel from the Farm Bureau Travel Service . . . group health care coverage for a wide range of budgets . . . the AgriCom/AgriVisor marketing service . . . these benefits, and many others, all add up to savings that more than cover the cost of a year's membership dues. And that doesn't even include the direct and indirect benefits of having a full-time legislative, commodity activities, field operations, and information and public relations staff on duty in Lansing looking after your interests.

But memberships do more than just finance Farm Bureau. They bring new energy, ideas and enthusiasm into the organization. Farm Bureau thrives on the people power of its members, and that power is enriched and renewed by membership growth.

At the beginning of this month's column, I mentioned pride in accomplishments. I've been fortunate to have had the opportunity to travel to many Farm Bureau meetings across the nation, and I've always been proud of the respect and admiration that's felt for the Michigan Farm Bureau. Almost every year, we rank near the top in the number of first place awards for program excellence. But to be eligible for the awards program, a state Farm Bureau must attain AFBF quota. In Michigan's case, that quota is 98,763 members. I'm confident that Farm Bureau members, staff, and affiliate company personnel . . . working together . . . can achieve and surpass that level.

The pride you and I will feel in that accomplishment will reflect a well deserved glow of success on all of our county Farm Bureau and Community Action Group activities.



Jack Laurie, President
Michigan Farm Bureau



Seeds

- As a member of the National Commission on Dairy Policy, President Laurie was in Syracuse, N.Y., May 4 and 5 to hear testimony from representatives of dairy organizations and farmers.
- Speaking on the topic, "Farm Organizations and their Impact on Ag Policy," MFB President Jack Laurie addressed a group of MSU agriculture students, May 6.
- MFB President Laurie and Michigan Townships Association President W. Bryce McGinnis met May 7 to strengthen communication liaison between the two organizations.
- A television crew was "down on the farm," May 18, when Channel 12-Flint taped a feature with MFB President Laurie at the family farm in Tuscola County.
- President Laurie met with representatives of Farm Credit Services of Mid-Michigan, May 19, to discuss current issues affecting the Farm Credit System.

Disaster Aid Still Coming

Washington

Disaster Aid for Wheat —

A Senate bill was passed which will allow wheat producers who were unable to plant their 1987 wheat crop last fall because of excessive rains and floods to collect 92% of the deficiency they would have earned on a normal crop.

In passing the measure the Senate resisted a number of costly farm bill changes, clearly demonstrating that it does not intend to drastically alter the 1985 Food Security Act.

The Senate bill must be reconciled with a slightly different version passed earlier by the House before going to the president for his signature.

Field Sanitation —

A court order forced the U.S. Department of Labor to require all farm employers of more than 10 field workers to provide nearby drinking water, toilets and handwashing facilities. The department said about 54,000 growers and 471,600 workers will be affected by the order. Rules requiring the availability of drinking water have an effective date of May 30; rules regarding handwashing facilities and field toilets have an effective date of July 30.

Agricultural Chemicals —

In early May, the Senate Agriculture Committee opened hearings on reauthorization of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). No agricultural groups were permitted to testify at the May 1 hearing. The focus of the first hearing was groundwater contamination.

In opening remarks, Committee Chairperson Sen. Leahy urged development of strong national groundwater quality standards, a view which FB policy supports.

In testimony, an EPA spokesperson stated the agency's role should be that of manager and providing technical assistance; states should have primary responsibility to respond to contamination problems. Other witnesses urged the development of realistic health effect standards for contaminants, and a re-examination of modern farm management and production systems.

A second hearing was scheduled for late May regarding pesticide residues on food.

Payment Limitations —

Members of a House agriculture subcommittee heard testimony from Texas farmer and TFB president S.M. True that violations of the payment limitations to farmers under the 1985 Farm Bill are the exceptions, not the rule. He urged that no further reductions be made in the \$50,000 limit per farm. Further cuts in per-farm payment limitations could force some farmers to break up their operations into smaller and less efficient units. □

Lansing

Highway Finance —

Many changes have been made in the 10-bill Senate highway package (SB 150-159) that was outlined in the May Rural Living.

The major changes include: eliminating the option for charter taxing authorities to levy property taxes, with voter approval, of up to five mills for five years for local roads.

The package has also been changed to cut the present 15 cents per gallon gas tax to 13 cents. The revenue loss of about \$90 million is to be made up through "fees." The proposed fees and anticipated revenue are as follows: increasing

the title transfer fee from the present \$2 to \$10 (\$28 million); adding a \$4 processing fee to vehicle registration cost (\$3.2 million); increasing the driver's license fee from \$7.50 to \$15 for a new driver's license and \$6 to \$12 for renewal (\$10 million); increase commercial registration fees by 15% (\$10 million); increase diesel fuel sticker from \$12 to \$25 for out-state trucks and retain the current \$92 fee for in-state trucks (\$5.6 million); and increasing driver reinstatement fee from \$25 to \$100 (\$4.5 million).

Cutting the gas tax by 2 cents and restoring the \$90 million in revenues by sharply increasing fees actually increases the tax burden for Michigan citizens. Currently, the gas tax is shared by tourists visiting the state.

In other changes, a provision has been eliminated which would have permitted levying a local gas tax, if approved by voters. This would have been very difficult to administer.

Other local option fees, if approved by voters, include: vehicle registration fees up to \$10; and local driver's license fee up to \$3 per year (\$12 for a four-year renewal). The proposed local impact fees on new developments for road improvement up to 1% of the total value or the actual road improvement cost were dropped.

The present state formula would remain unchanged: 39.1% state, 39.1% county, 21.8% cities.

The Economic Development Authority which would be created, would be cut from \$120 million to the original \$96 million to be funded from auto-related sales tax revenues. The funding would be evenly divided among four cost areas: road projects for economic development, road capacity improvement, state acquisition of certain roads, and increased rural primary road support.

While the proposed package is "revenue neutral" (i.e., with revenues remaining the same), every study
(continued on next page)

Legislative Review

(continued from previous page)

has indicated a large backlog of road repairs and maintenance is needed.

No doubt there will be many changes in the package as it progresses through both the Senate and House.

Reflectorized License Plates — This House bill (HB 4373) would require both front and rear completely reflectorized license plates on a vehicle. This requirement would add \$2 to the license plate fees. It is also estimated that the cost to the state for machinery and other production changes would be about \$30 million. FB policy opposes the bill.

The Michigan Police Officers' Association and the Fraternal Order of Police also oppose the second plate and full reflectorization. The groups claim that full reflectorization makes the numbers more difficult to see. Michigan's present license plates have reflectorized numbers which have proved to be effective.

The secretary of state has consistently opposed both the second plate and full reflectorization as unnecessary and too costly. This has been an issue in other sessions of the Legislature.

School Finance — Another proposal to shift a part of school financing away from the property tax to other sources is being introduced by Sen. Rudy Nichols (R-Waterford). The proposal would:

- Cut the average property tax for schools to 20 mills. It would be a statewide uniform property tax. This would decrease as valuations rise to about 17 mills. Voters would have to approve such a statewide property tax in the 1988 election.

- Each school district would receive \$3,000 per pupil from the state, at a total cost of nearly \$5 billion. It would eliminate the present school aid formula. Present per pupil spending ranges from \$1,800 to more than \$5,000. Local school districts would also be permitted to raise additional operational millage up to four mills if approved by voters. Currently, the average school millage is 33 mills.

- In order to pay for the proposal, 48% would come from the statewide property tax and 52% from "state resources." This includes "earmarking 50% of the annual growth in state revenues, modifying the Homestead Property Tax program, and dedicating .25% of income tax revenues." This may prove to be difficult since the entire state budget now depends on annual revenue growth.

The school financing portion of the proposal is very close to the recommendations made by the Senate Citizens' Property Tax Commission. That study suggested \$3,000 per pupil and limits property tax school millage to 17 or 18 mills. However, it suggests that a 2 cent increase in the sales tax in addition to other revenues would be needed to pay for the reform.

It is expected that none of the various proposals will be given serious consideration before the fall session of the Legislature, and not until the Michigan School Finance Commission makes its report in September or October. It is likely that any major reform will have to go on the ballot in the 1988 general election.

Budget Deficit — A somewhat gloomy forecast has been made by experts on state fiscal matters. While there is some disagreement about the amount, it is generally agreed that a deficit is likely. The Senate Fiscal Agency predicts a deficit ranging from a possible \$9.2 million to around \$100 million by Sept. 30, depending on what is done about supplemental appropria-

tions. Although several things can be done to balance the budget, the state's fiscal situation would be weakened.

The House Fiscal Agency predicts a \$19.8 million deficit in 1987 and \$162.4 million in 1988.

These circumstances affect the state's fiscal picture: Income tax revenues were up, but sales tax and Single Business Tax revenues are disappointing. Lottery revenue which goes to schools is about \$40 million less than estimated. Some new costs are emerging such as \$50 million for operating the three new prisons. In the past five years, the prison population has increased from 12,000 to 20,000. Other new prisons will be built. It also is not known what the full effect will be when General Motors completes its work force reduction.

Sales Tax — This bill (S.B. 222), introduced by Sen. Nick Smith, would give a sales tax exemption for drain tile used for agricultural purposes, and certain grain bins which meet the definition of being portable. This legislation passed the Senate in the last session. The bill was also reported favorably to the House floor where it was used as a vehicle to complete a package of bills on another issue. This was done with the understanding that it would be reintroduced early this session. □

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



MEMBERSHIP EXPRESS

*Let's All Get Aboard
the 1987 Membership Express
to AFBF Quota and Beyond!*



To help push the MFB Membership Campaign to American Farm Bureau Federation quota of 98,763, and MFB's goal of 100,000 members, Michigan Farm Bureau announces the MEMBERSHIP EXPRESS CONTEST.



Each volunteer membership worker who qualifies for 1987 membership in the Prestigious Michigan Farm Bureau Key Club will win a trip to a 1987 Detroit Lions football game. The trip bonus includes one ticket, bus transportation and meal.

To qualify for the Key Club and the fall trip bonus, volunteers must sign a minimum of five (5) regular members. Regular memberships signed beginning September 1, 1986, through August 31, 1987, will qualify for this contest.

Any Key Club member who signs two additional regular members, for a total of seven (7), will earn a guest trip bonus for the Detroit Lions game.



The top four (4) volunteer membership workers in the state, based on TOTAL MEMBERSHIPS SIGNED (both regular and associate members/minimum of five memberships) from May 1, 1987 through August 31, 1987, will win a special three day trip bonus for two. Winners will travel by train to Chicago for three days and two nights.

Trip bonus dates will be announced.
MFB winners will accompany winners in a similar
Farm Bureau Insurance Group membership contest.

SesquiTrain '87 Rolls into History

By Marcia Ditchie

History will come to life for thousands of mid-Michigan residents when the largest single wagon train since the early 1830s rolls through five central Michigan counties in celebration of Michigan's Sesquicentennial.

SesquiTrain '87, composed of over 100 covered wagons, prairie schooners, freight wagons and horse-drawn buggies from Michigan, 18 states and Canada, will move at an estimated 4 mph as it travels a 150-mile round trip route. The wagon train will assemble at Lansing's Francis Park on June 14 and leave the next morning for the 13 day "birthday party," arriving back in Lansing, at the state capitol building on June 27.

"We will have over 600 people participating in SesquiTrain '87," said Judy Class, SesquiTrain director. "This will probably be the biggest wagon train since the U.S. Bicentennial, when all of the state wagon trains merged going into Valley Forge in 1976. This event will be something people may never have another chance to see," she said.

Nightly encampments are scheduled in Charlotte, June 15; Olivet, June 16; Marshall, June 17; Albion, June 18; Jackson, June 19-21; Munith, June 22; Pinckney, June 23; Brighton, June 24; Fowlerville, June 25; and Williamston, June 26. At each encampment, historic observances and displays, and local entertainment will be provided to visitors.

Calhoun, Eaton, Ingham, Jackson and Livingston county Farm Bureaus will furnish hay for the horses at each of the encampment locations.

"This particular route was selected so as many people as possible, especially children, could see the wagon train," said Class. "We wanted to provide them with the opportunity to learn about history and make it accessible to as many people as possible."



Judy Class, SesquiTrain director, received a Michigan Sesquicentennial flag from Pat Casey, agricultural advisor to Gov. Blanchard at a news conference at the capitol on April 29. The flag will be flown from the official sesquicentennial wagon as it makes its 150 mile trip through mid-Michigan.

Special birthday cards will be collected at each encampment and carried by the wagons. The cards collected along the 150-mile route will be presented to Gov. Blanchard and the Sesquicentennial Commission when the wagon train returns to Lansing. FB Community Action Groups throughout the state will send birthday greetings for the presentation. The cards will be placed with the sesquicentennial display in the state historical museum.

The official sesquicentennial wagon will be pulled by two 2,000 pound giant Belgian horses. The wagon is an authentic replica of a prairie schooner which brought early settlers to the midwest. It was fashioned after plans in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., and was part of the wagon train which traveled to Valley Forge to help celebrate the nation's bicentennial in 1976.

Over a half million people are expected to watch SesquiTrain '87 roll through the mid-Michigan area.

"The wagon train has more than doubled in size from what we anticipated," said Class. "I have told the local coordinators to plan on 20,000-50,000 visitors a night depending on their location. When 15 Michigan wagons joined a segment

of the bicentennial wagon train in 1976, 150,000 people viewed the train as it traveled across lower Michigan. SesquiTrain '87 will include even more wagons."

During its 13-day, 11-city trip, the sesquicentennial wagon train will follow several historic trails once traveled by Indians, wagons and stagecoaches. On June 18-19, SesquiTrain '87 will travel from Marshall to Jackson on the once famous wagon trail — Territorial Road.

Also known as the St. Joseph Trail, it dates back to 1829. The trail extended from Detroit to the mouth of the St. Joseph River where the city of St. Joseph now stands, and basically followed the route that is now I-94. Settlers who took the trail established homes and farms in the Kalamazoo Valley. Travelers to Chicago would follow the trail to the mouth of the St. Joseph River and then take a steamship to the city.

SesquiTrain '87 will also follow a portion of another main historic wagon trail, the Grand River Trail, June 25-27, as it travels from Brighton to Lansing. The Grand River Trail, which later became U.S. 16 and follows present-day I-96, branched out of Detroit extending to Grand Haven, opening settlement of the Grand River Valley. □

From the Very First

FB's Vital Link Community Action Groups

By Donna Wilber

Farm prices, trade issues, rural roads, soil conservation, school financing, the federal government and the farm problem — upcoming discussion topics for Community Action Groups? While they may still be “front burner” concerns of farmers today, that list is a page from Farm Bureau history — topics discussed by FB Community Groups 50 years ago.

It was in 1937 when neighborhood groups of farmers, gathered together to share good food, special fellowship and spirited exchanges of opinions on current issues, became part of a full-fledged FB program. It was a program that would become known as the “backbone” of the Michigan Farm Bureau, the vital link between the state organization and its grass-roots members, a leadership training ground, a means through which individual members could express their opinions and provide direction for policy.

Michigan's First Community Group

In the March 1937 issue of the *Michigan Farm News*, MFB Organization Director J. F. Yaeger told about his visit to the Paw Paw Community Farm Bureau meeting in Van Buren County. Following a potluck supper, “a really grand affair,” he said, members of the group enjoyed a few mental contests and then spent a large portion of the evening discussing the Farm Bureau program, past and present.

“Many points were clarified, opinions freely given and questions answered. All was done in a spirit of friendliness. There was disagreement of opinion, but without temper,” he wrote.

(continued on page 10)



To All to Whom These Presents Shall Come:

We, the undersigned, do hereby certify that the

Paw Paw Community Farm Bureau
having complied with all the conditions of organization is
awarded this charter as

Community Farm Bureau No. /

and as such is entitled to all the rights and privileges of
such organizations in its relationships with the Michigan
State Farm Bureau.

This award is made possible through the diligent,
unselfish services of the members of Community Farm
Bureau No. / to the cause of an organized agriculture
for Michigan.

In Testimony Whereof we have hereunto set our hands and
affixed the seal of the Michigan State Farm Bureau of the
City of Lansing, this 11th day of October, 1937.

C. L. Brady
Secretary

J. D. J. J. J.
President

CAG's

(continued from page 9)

"The 40 folks present were as enthusiastic a Farm Bureau group as I've seen anywhere. Similar local Farm Bureau activities, so necessary to maintaining interest, are going on throughout Michigan. The lack of participating, informed membership too often has been the cause of cooperative failure," Yaeger told the *Farm News* readers.

"Many points were clarified, opinions freely given and questions answered. All was done in a spirit of friendliness. There was disagreement of opinion, but without temper."

The Paw Paw group was later certified by MFB as Community Farm Bureau No. 1. The charter read, in part: "This award is made possible through the diligent, unselfish services of the members of Community Farm Bureau No. 1 to the cause of an organized agriculture for Michigan."

Fifty years later, that group, now named the Michigan First Community Action Group, still meets regularly and some of its charter members are still active, including the group's organizer and first president, Max Hood.

Community Group attendance in 1937 was a family affair — baby sitters hadn't been "discovered" yet, Max recalls. After the potluck supper, one of the older children looked after the younger ones in the kitchen while the grown-ups participated in the meeting.

Another "First" 50 Years Later

The Community Action Group program is half a century old but that doesn't mean that it's an "old folks" activity. The social, educational and leadership development opportunities that attracted members to get involved in Community Groups 50 years ago are still considered important benefits to many members today.

The first new young farmer Community Action Group to organize in

1987, the program's Golden Anniversary year, was the Superior Young Farmers in Chippewa County. The group has targeted promotion and education as a priority project. Under the leadership of Promotion and Education Committee representative Tom Gage, group members will be actively involved in the Ag in the Classroom project.

The new group is chaired by Randy DeWitt, who also serves on the Chippewa County FB Board. Other group officers are Tom Gage, co-chairperson; Tim Hoolsema, discussion leader; Vicki Gage, *Rural Leader* reporter; Marilyn Hoolsema, minuteman; and Bruce Berkompas, secretary.

"Meeting the Challenge of Change"

While the topics discussed by Community Action Groups in 1987 bear some similarity to those discussed by the neighborhood groups back in 1937, the socio-economic environment in which the program operates has changed dramatically.

In 1937, group members worked through MFB to gain rural electrification. Today, television sets in every rural home bring entertainment that may outrank a CAG meeting on members' priority lists. In 1937, Community Group meetings were a social highlight in the lives of farmers. Today, farmers have the same pressures for time devoted to school, church and civic affairs and recreational opportunities as their urban neighbors. Community Action Groups have a tough time competing for a share of a busy member's time.

In 1937, groups were made up of full-time farmers with the same interests and concerns. Today, the changing structure of the agricultural industry has resulted in a new "mix" of group members with different interests and points of view.

Despite these challenges, delegates to the 1986 MFB annual meeting reaffirmed a long-standing belief in the importance of the program. They went on record for not only maintaining, but expanding, the program, with support from the state and county levels to make it happen. They called for a "merger" of the county CAG Committee and Local Affairs Committee. The resulting new Community Activities Committee, they said, should help county boards identify local issues and utilize CAGs

to carry out action on those issues, and develop a plan for establishing new groups.

The Green Meadow Plow Jockies Group in Kalamazoo County has successfully blended the interests of members ranging in age from under 30 to over 50. They're mostly full-time farmers, but a few part-time farm couples and the local FBIG agent are also a vital part of the group.

Group member Steve Gazdag believes that expansion and strengthening of the CAG program should be a priority for the organization, but says that the changing lifestyles of those involved in agriculture today present some challenges for group organizers.

When you organize a group, he said, "you're putting together a structure, not just a meeting, and that's a challenge when lifestyles are getting to be so much different."

"Farm Bureau represents a lot of those part-time farmers and the organization needs their perspective and involvement."

"There are fewer and fewer full-time farmers today. Young farmers, especially, are having a hard time and many have had to take off-farm jobs. That's changed their outlook to some extent," he said. "Farm Bureau represents a lot of those part-time farmers and the organization needs their perspective and involvement."

Structuring the program so CAGs have more opportunities for involvement in the policy development/policy execution process is important, Steve believes. "It's something that needs to be done because that's what Farm Bureau is all about," he said.

Social Activities Important Aspect

Steve and other members of the Plow Jockies applaud the CAG "Rural Spotlight" video tape for adding a new dimension to the information and education benefits of belonging to a group. But they believe that the social aspects of the program are important, too, for creating the special fellowship that develops between group members.

In February, the Plow Jockies and the Futuristics, a group formed as an outgrowth of the county's Young Farmer Committee, combined their creative talents to stage a "Winter Sweetheart's Mystery Dinner."

The "mystery" became evident when guests were given a menu of mind-teaser items, such as cupid's fingers, love boat, turtle doves, passion's promise and maiden's reward. They were allowed 10 selections from a list of 22 items. Guests who ordered a snow fence to go with their snowdrifts, but no cupid's fingers, ended up eating their mashed potatoes with a knife!

The two groups plan to make the joint fun evening an annual affair.

"There's a lot of competition for people's time these days," Steve said. "But when people can have fun together as well as learning, they'll find the time to be involved."

Let's Celebrate!

Some of the pioneer "Farm Bureau Spirit" that fostered the rapid growth of the Community Action Group program 50 years ago will be recaptured for a Golden Anniversary celebration. Called "Summerfest," the big event will take place on the FB Center grounds in Lansing on July 22, timed to coincide with MSU's Ag Expo. Members attending Ag Expo can spend most of the day visiting its many attractions, and then participate in the Summerfest which runs from 3 to 7 p.m.

Summerfest activities will include a steak barbecue complete with all the trimmings; a live country band; pie eating, egg toss and goat milking contests; and other country fair style games. Tickets for the event, at a modest charge of \$2 per person, will be available soon.

Vic Verchereau, Summerfest coordinator, expects several thousand FB members will participate in the event. "It will be a celebration to pay tribute to a program that has served the membership well for over 50 years," he said. "It will also illustrate the organization's total commitment to expanding the Community Action Group program and making it even more valuable to members in the future."

Additional 50th Anniversary celebration activities are being planned for the 1987 MFB annual meeting. □



This Chippewa County group were the first Young Farmers to form a Community Action Group in 1987, the Golden Anniversary Year of the Community Action Group program. Pictured here are members of the group, who call themselves the Superior Young Farmers: Randy DeWitt, chairperson; Karen DeWitt; Tim Hoolsema, discussion leader; and Marilyn Hoolsema, minuteman. Other officers are: Tom Gage, co-chairperson; Vicky Gage, Rural Leader reporter; and Bruce Berkompas, secretary.

How to Start a Community Action Group

Every FB member should consider joining a Community Action Group. It's fun! It's educational! It provides you with opportunities to build your leadership skills, address local issues, promote agriculture, help set policy for the state's largest farm organization.

Call your county FB secretary to see if there's a group in your neighborhood. Or, start a new group. It's easy:

- Find someone who will host your first meeting. It could be you! Informal meetings conducted in the comfortable surroundings of an individual's home are part of what makes for a successful CAG.
- Make a list of potential members for your group. These could be neighbors, farmers you know who produce the same commodity as you do, friends, family, even non-Farm Bureau members who will surely want to join when they find out what FB has to offer. The most important factor in developing your list, is to seek various personalities who will enjoy meeting on a regular basis.
- Invite these people to your meeting. Personal invitations are best, followed by a postcard reminder.
- Various materials are available to assist your group in its first meeting. MFB will provide a starter kit outlining what needs to be accomplished during the first meeting. A notebook will be provided which includes the responsibilities of each CAG officer: chairperson, discussion leader, *Rural Leader* reporter, minuteman and secretary. Request this material from Community Programs Dept., Michigan Farm Bureau, P.O. Box 30960, Lansing, MI 48909; phone 517-323-7000, Ext. 541.
- To ensure good attendance at your second meeting, personal invitations are again essential. You may wish to have a new host couple. Moving your meetings around to other homes may encourage attendance.

Country Almanac

June

- | | | | |
|------------|--|--------------------|---|
| June 11-13 | National Asparagus Festival, Shelby/Hart. | June 19-21 | Strawberry Festival, Belleville. |
| June 14 | Flower Day II, Eastern Market, Detroit. | June 22-26 | Young People's Citizenship Seminar, Olivet College, Olivet. |
| June 15 | SesquiTrain '87 leaves Lansing's Francis Park for 13-day, 150 mile birthday party. | June 26-28 | National Pickle Festival, Linwood Bicentennial Park, Linwood. |
| | | June 30-
July 4 | Marion Farm Exhibit Assoc. Fair, Marion. |

Coming Up

- | | | | |
|------------|---|------------|---|
| July 1-5 | Lake Odessa Civic & Ag Fair, Lake Odessa. | July 13-18 | Vassar Fair, Vassar. |
| July 4 | International Cherry Pit Spitting Championship, Tree-Mendus Fruit Farm, Eau Claire. | July 15-19 | National Blueberry Festival, South Haven. |
| July 4-8 | Gratiot Agricultural Fair, Ithaca. | July 16-18 | Dairy Festival, Elsie. |
| July 5-11 | Montcalm County 4-H Fair, Greenville. | July 18-25 | Barry County Ag Fair, Hastings. |
| July 5-11 | National Cherry Festival, Traverse City. | July 19-25 | Croswell Agricultural Fair, Croswell. |
| July 9-10 | Michigan Cattlemen's Assoc. Summer Round-Up, Mackinac Hotel and Conference Center, Mackinac Island. | July 19-25 | Eaton County 4-H Fair, Charlotte. |
| July 10-11 | Strawberry Festival, Chassell. | July 20-26 | Fowlerville Agricultural Fair, Fowlerville. |
| July 11-18 | Van Buren County Youth Fair, Hartford. | July 21-23 | Ag Expo, MSU. |
| July 12-18 | Mecosta County Agricultural Fair, Big Rapids. | July 21-25 | Wayne County Fair, Belleville. |
| July 13-18 | Berlin Fair, Marne. | July 22 | 1987 Farm Bureau Summerfest, Farm Bureau Center, Lansing. |
| | | July 23-26 | Oscoda County Fair, Mio. |
| | | July 23-26 | Sparta Area Fair, Sparta. |
| | | July 24-26 | Alger County Fair, Chatham. |
| | | July 24-26 | Menominee County Fair, Stephenson. |





Summerfest July 22

It's a celebration summer for the MFB Community Action Group program! Community Action Groups are marking their 50th Anniversary.

You don't have to be a CAG member to join in the fun on July 22 at the Farm Bureau Center in Lansing. The event begins at 3:00 p.m. and the food, good times, and good tunes will go on til 7:00 p.m. The Romeo Ridge country western band will be providing the tunes. Outdoor chefs will be sizzling steaks and serving up all the trimmings for a delicious barbecue. The good times? It's a natural when FB folks get together!

You'll have a lot of fun and good food for a very small price! A nominal fee of \$2.00 per person is being charged. Use the order form below to receive your tickets, or contact your county FB office to purchase tickets locally.

-----TICKET ORDER FORM-----

We're ready to celebrate! Send us _____ ticket(s) for Summerfest at Farm Bureau Center, July 22.


A check or money order for _____ tickets at \$2.00 each is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send completed ticket order form and payment to: Vic Verchereau, Summerfest Coordinator, MFB Field Operations Division, P.O. Box 30960, Lansing, MI 48909.



Agriculture Tourism



By Connie Turbin

What do ice cream, orchards, maple syrup, blossom honey and the Great Lakes have in common? They are just a few of the enjoyable elements that make country living in Michigan so special. They are also the simple, outdoor pleasures that make Michigan a great place to vacation.

Sharing what is special about Michigan with visitors from throughout the country and within our own state has built a strong tourism industry here. Now a new entrepreneurial approach to enhancing two of the state's largest industries — agriculture and tourism — is fostering a new travel experience within our borders: ag tourism.



Farm market displays with a "country" accent provide visual appeal and promote sales.

Some agriculture entrepreneurs in Michigan have already recognized and pursued ag tourism ventures that have added fun and profit to their farming businesses. Combining the

natural beauty of an orchard setting, farm fresh fruit and fruit products, with a tourism experience for out of state and urban dwellers, has proven to be profitable pluses for fruit producers and farm market operators like Dave Amon of Williamsburg, Jim Robinette of Grand Rapids, and Sandy Hill of Montrose.

The three agreed to share their experience and enthusiasm for this new consumer market in an ag tourism workshop presentation at the Governor's Conference on the Future of Michigan Agriculture, February 25-26, 1987. They agreed the diversity of Michigan's agricultural industry offers the opportunity for a variety of tourism experiences — and new profit centers for farmers.

Phyllis Dowsett, executive director of the Southwestern Michigan Tourist Council, joined the farm owner/operators in the workshop presentation to describe the cooperative success of regional tourism planning to complement individual efforts.

Ag Tourism Works

In southwest Michigan, Van Buren, Cass, and Berrien counties took a regional approach to ag tourism, Dowsett said.

Farm market operators formed an agriculture committee of the southwest Michigan Tourist Council. The Cooperative Extension Service and the Tourist Council worked with the committee to promote the many outstanding farm markets in their area. The effort resulted in more visitors than ever to their ag related tourist attractions.

To encourage visitors, the committee produced "Pick Michigan" brochures, which contained maps and discount coupons for farm market products. They were made available

at highway welcome centers. Also available at the centers were samples of Michigan products.

Other key promotional activities included advertising on Chicago radio stations, and working with the state to install highway signs directing people to ag tourism information centers.

Individual efforts by Amon, Robinette and the Hills were successful in assessing their ag tourism potential and capitalizing on existing tourist trade to encourage more visitors to their businesses. They advertised in tourist magazines, joined bus tour associations, and collaborated with local restaurants.

The profits are there, they agreed, but there are challenges, too. Areas that need to be considered are parking availability, product quality, product mix, and adequate road signs. Support from local, regional and statewide agencies is needed to move the ag tourism industry ahead.

The Future of Ag Tourism

An already completed study of the ag tourism potential conducted by university, agri-business, and government groups strengthened the intuitive knowledge that travel and vacation experiences on the farm will attract tourism dollars.



A New, Profitable Partner

The study group recommendations provided the impetus for the workshop session during the Governor's Conference this year. A second conference on ag tourism is expected this fall and will be held in cooperation with Michigan State University.

Current initiatives to promote ag tourism include a joint effort between the Michigan Department of Commerce and the Michigan Department of Agriculture to promote ag tourism. The promotion and advertising campaign will be kicked off in July with television and radio ads.

Ag tourism can be a blossom tour, a bicycle ride along a country road, a hayride through apple country, a visit to buy produce, a walk around a livestock farm, a bus ride through cherry orchards...

Farm operators can take the first step in developing ag tourism ventures by making an effort to meet with their local or regional travel bureau. These "close to home" resource people can assist in identifying area vacation and tourist highlights, assessing ag tourism opportunities, and developing a plan to link existing attractions with the ag tourism enterprise, creating a new local attraction.

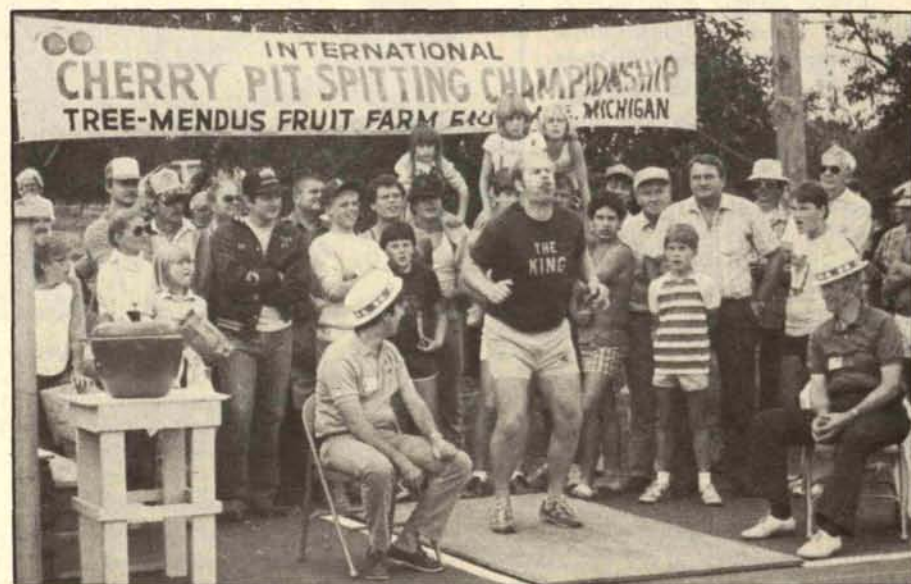
How Farm Bureau Can Help

Working together, Farm Bureau members can take a giant step in promoting ag tourism through the County FB. According to Juliann Chamberlain, program manager for the new Promotion and Education Committee, committees are now organizing in county FBs around the state. She suggests that committee structure might be able to provide key support and cooperative leadership for an ag tourism project in the county.

"Ag tourism can be a blossom tour, a bicycle ride along a country road, a hayride through apple country, a visit to buy produce, a walk around a livestock farm, a bus ride through cherry orchards, and many other things," said Chamberlain. "The result is the enjoyment and appreciation of agriculture through the happy experiences these new travel consumers take home from a vacation to the farm." □



Ag tourism experiences run the gamut from appreciation of a blossoming orchard to good-natured summer fun like the International Cherry Pit Spit held each year at Tree-Mendus Fruit Farm, Eau Claire.



4-H Promotes Wellness Through Nutrition

By Kimberly Marshall

The Michigan 4-H Food and Nutrition program is not just baking and canning; it's cooking in microwave ovens, outdoor cooking and teaching over 41,000 youths about nutrition and exercise. Promoting wellness through nutrition is the underlying theme of all food and nutrition education efforts by the Cooperative Extension Service.

"There's been an increased emphasis on fitness and that can be seen in the project materials of the 'Fit it All Together' series," said Pat Hammerschmidt, Michigan 4-H Food and Nutrition specialist.

Fit it All Together, a set of colorful, well-designed program guides for three skill levels, was developed for use by members and leaders. The series weaves together nutrition, physical fitness, food preparation and consumer skills in activities that make youths more aware of the relationship between the food they eat and their health. Another popular program is "The Microwave Connection," a fun project to help youths learn the basics of microwave cooking, safety, and good nutrition.

Program Goals

"Every project area in 4-H has a state developmental committee, composed of state staff, like myself, and volunteer leaders who work in that project area, as well as some university faculty, or people in associated fields who are interested," said Pat. "On the Food and Nutrition Committee, we have a number of volunteer leaders, two university faculty and a representative from the American Dairy Association of Michigan. We meet several times a year, and the committee helps plan the goals, direction and implementation of the 4-H Food and Nutrition program."

Currently, some of the Michigan 4-H Food and Nutrition program goals are:

- Take responsibility for making healthful food choices and establish a fitness plan based on the knowledge of one's nutritional needs, lifestyle, and physical condition.

- Develop skills in planning, selecting, preparing, serving, and storing food.

- Gain knowledge and understanding of psychological, social, economic and cultural influences of food choices.

- Acquire knowledge and skills of career opportunities in food and nutrition.

Future Trends

"The major future trend is involving younger kids in 4-H," said Pat. "Traditionally the entry age has been 9, but youths age 6-8 are ready to learn how to prepare nutritional

"A recent grant from the Allen Foundation, of Midland, has enabled 4-H to begin developing project materials geared to the 6-8 year olds. We need to increase their nutritional awareness at this early age when food habits are being formed.

"Computer programs in the food and nutrition area are something we have available to loan project leaders from the state 4-H office," said Pat. "Video tapes are the other thing we've gone into. We're keeping up with the food and nutrition field and making sure that we have up-to-date video tapes for the leaders to use."

One of the 4-H videos available is "Kids in the Kitchen." It shows two youths and their mother preparing several recipes. They demonstrate how to cook safely, and explain the nutritional value of the food they are preparing.

"We started purchasing video tapes over a year ago. More companies are now developing video tapes on different topics, so it's becoming easier to find ones to purchase. As the years continue, I see this as a fairly strong way to reach leaders with information, and I'm sure we'll be adding more to the system as they become available," said Pat.

Opportunities for Involvement

"A wide variety of opportunities are available within the Food and Nutrition project area for adults to correspond their personal interests with the 4-H Food and Nutrition program," Pat said. "If an adult does not feel comfortable with a certain area, like nutrition or food preparation, there is a lot of material available which contains the information he or she needs to know. Other projects available in the program include microwave, outdoor and international cooking. There's something for everyone!" □



A 4-H Exploration Days participant discovers that there are many ways to serve food with a flair. Turning ordinary graham crackers into a gingerbread house results in an attractive, and edible, centerpiece. 4-H Exploration Days is held every summer at Michigan State University.

snack foods. A lot of them already attend the project meetings with their older brothers and sisters.



Huron County FB has a new building, and on hand to celebrate and help with the dedication April 24, were MFB President Jack Laurie and Vice President Wayne Wood. Holding the dedication plaque (above, left-right), Huron County FB President Marvin Kociba and Laurie.



Isabella County FB Secretary Rita Eisenberger (at right) was trying out her new office during the open house Isabella FB held in March to celebrate the opening of their new building.

Jackson Woman Wins Beef Cookoff

■ A Jackson woman won the 13th annual Michigan Beef Cookoff on May 9 at the Westwood Mall, Jackson.

Joyce Rzepa beat seven other contestants with her recipe for "Flank Steak Florentine." She won an all-expense paid trip for two to compete in the Sept. 20-22 National Beef Cookoff in Sun Valley, Idaho.

Cooking facilities were set up in the mall for the contestants to prepare their beef recipes. The dishes were then evaluated by a panel of three judges who graded the entries on taste, ease of preparation and practicality, originality and appearance.

The contest was sponsored by the Michigan Cattle Women and the Michigan Beef Industry Commission. For a pamphlet that lists the 1987 contest recipes, write to the Commission at 815 Coolidge Road, Suite 307, Lansing, Michigan 48912. □

FARMETTE

By Andrea Hofmeister
Tuscola County



"Seein' as how it's your birthday, let's take a break and go someplace nice for dinner. We can finish up later."

Bonnie Burkett Memorial Scholarship Established

■ The following letter was presented to Chuck Burkett, MFB administrative director, by Jack Laurie, MFB president, at the closing breakfast of the Washington Legislative Seminar:

Dear Chuck:

As you well know, your mother was a dedicated Missaukee County Farm Bureau member and served as our county secretary for 29 years. We are sure that it was through her influence that you have chosen to devote your career to serving Farm Bureau.

It is my honor and privilege to in-

form you that we have named our college scholarship fund the "Bonnie Burkett Memorial Scholarship."

Through this memorial scholarship, we will all be reminded of your mother's drive, dedication and love for the Farm Bureau organization.

By helping young people continue their education in agriculture, your mother will continue to influence the direction of agriculture in Missaukee County and in Michigan.

With heartfelt sincerity,
Phil Brunink, President
Missaukee County Farm Bureau □

Immigration Reform and Control Act Makes Sweeping Changes

■ The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 is an unprecedented act to halt illegal immigration. The measure will involve tens of millions of U.S. citizens in the campaign to control this nation's borders. Affected by the sweeping new law are employers, all job seekers, state employment referral agencies, and homeowners/farm-owners who employ workers and domestics.

In short, the new law will legalize many of the illegal aliens who presently work and live in the U.S. and try to keep new illegal aliens out. The broad-based plan addresses these goals by ending the economic incentive to come work here and making it harder for aliens to enter this country. For agriculture, the major changes appear to be coming in the reform of the H-2 program that governs the rules of eligibility for the seasonal agricultural worker.

The general amnesty offering to illegal aliens is recognition on the part of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) that there are millions of illegal aliens already in the United States and that the financial or physical resources to remove them are not available. The second part of the amnesty program toughens sanctions for employers who fail to comply with the new law.

Effective June 1, employers will have to verify the identity and the work eligibility of new employees and keep records to that fact for three years or until one year after termination of the verification process. The sanctions for not complying go into effect June 1, 1987. First offenses will result in a warning citation, but subsequent failure to comply could result in penalties that range from fines of \$250 to \$10,000 per alien, plus a six month jail sentence and/or an additional \$3,000 fine for a "pattern or practice" of violations.

Employee eligibility verification can be accomplished in two ways — first, by presenting a U.S. passport or a certificate of U.S. citizenship or naturalization. Legal status can also be verified with state-designated cards such as driver's license, birth certificate, or other document approved by the state attorney general.

A second economic piece to the puzzle is lost work time to employers as their employee weaves his/her way through the legalization maze. After applying for temporary residency on their way to permanent residency, illegal aliens will need to gather documents verifying their continuous residence in the U.S. If they have not had residency prior to January 1, 1982, documents that

are employment-related will need to be submitted and then independently corroborated. This independent corroboration will most likely be the employer/farmer who supplied the documents. In Michigan, the hearing site has been established in Detroit and may require a day away from the farm for both the employee who has filed application and the employer who must corroborate the employee's testimony.

The last major economic concern of farmers and farm labor groups is the U.S. Department of Labor's proposed H-2A rules draft which many feel make the new program more unworkable for growers than the old H-2 program.

(continued on page 22)



Many segments of Michigan's fruit and vegetable industry rely heavily on migrant and seasonal labor for field work and harvest. Sweeping changes in the Immigration Reform and Control Act will affect all employers, particularly those using the H2A worker program.

Discussion Topic

Farm Credit Update

"You Said It"

Here's how Community Action Group members responded after discussing the March topic, "Availability of Rural Health Care."

- CAG members indicated overwhelmingly (96%) that they were satisfied with the health care and hospital care available in their area.

- Most CAG members rated local hospital services good (54%) to excellent (38%). Nearly 90% of the respondents indicated that they use the services of their local hospital.

- Ninety-eight percent of the groups who responded said that they expect their local hospital to be functioning in the year ahead.

- CAG members cited these advantages in using local hospitals for services such as surgery and acute care: proximity to home and immediate treatment in life threatening situations.

- Disadvantages cited by the group members were that patients may not receive top quality care and that the hospital staff may be working with less specialized equipment and techniques.

In July

Policy Development Process

Community Action Groups play an important role in grassroots policy development for the Farm Bureau organization. The July Discussion Topic will examine how CAG members can take a more active role in this process.

Watch for this Discussion Topic in the July issue of Rural Leader newsletter.

■ U.S. agriculture systems are in the midst of a major debt/credit restructuring, shifting from a short-term view of credit to a longer term view. The focus has shifted to dealing with debt from within the farming operation, particularly for the one-third of commercial farm operators holding two-thirds of the total agricultural debt. Debt restructuring between the producer and the lender(s) has been the center of attention.

In December, the AFBF established a farm credit study committee to examine ways to deal with the nation's farm credit problems. The committee, consisting of eight state FB presidents, held a series of meetings to discuss options and met with key resource people from the Farm Credit Administration, U.S. Treasury Department, congressional representatives and federal regulators. A recent session held with officials of the Farm Credit Banks of St. Paul focused on their approach and philosophy in handling its financial difficulties.

Need For Action

The St. Paul Farm Credit district took unprecedented action with its bold financial recovery program. In three months, the district lowered its interest rates, sold 60% of its acquired properties and renegotiated 4,800 non-accruing loans (loans not receiving interest payments). The goal was to bring half of the district's non-accruing portfolio back into the earnings column.

Sales Provide Cash

Perhaps the most controversial part of the program was a widely advertised land sale program with offers of three year financing as low as 4.9% (with 40% cash payment).

"The average interest rate was 8.5% with an average cash down

payment of 17%; 31% paid cash. This provided the district with a cash infusion of nearly 50% of the value of the sold land," said Larry Buegler, president of the Farm Credit district.

On a separate track, the district set out to negotiate settlements on 8,100 non-accruing loans, working jointly with the local association. The district provided the broad framework for settlement; responsibility for final settlement rested on the local level.

As of April 3, 4,800 settlements were reached. Through debt-restructuring, 45% of the loans were restored to some form of viability. Seventeen percent of the negotiations resulted in "cashing-out" settlements; 18% resulted in foreclosure settlements; and 15% were handled through loan workouts in which the principal was reduced. Only 5% of the negotiations resulted in stalemates in which litigation is expected to follow.

One of the biggest problems still facing the Farm Credit System is the burden of high-cost bonds that were purchased four and five years ago when interest rates were topping 18%. In response, the district is making the transition to marginal pricing of its loans, i.e., basing interest rates on the current cost of money. The district's current borrowing policy is to execute only three and six-month bonds.

Uniform Rates 'Gone'

The district's Federal Land Bank offers variable and fixed rates under a three-tier structure, ranging from 9.75% to 12.5%. The risk rating is based on earnings as a percent of debt principal and interest. A borrower is eligible for lower interest rates once there is documentation of an improved financial condition.

(continued on page 21)



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

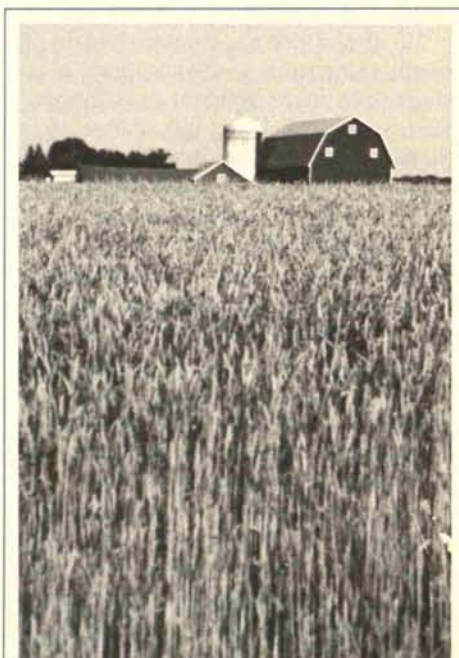
Good health makes good farming sense, because you depend on your family. But keeping down your cost also makes for good sense, so you have to get the best health care for your dollar.

At Farm Bureau we know that, because we've been insuring Michigan's farming community for over 40 years. And we also know that every family's needs are different. That's why we don't just offer one plan and say take it or leave it. Instead, we take a long, hard look at the insurance available—then offer the best to our members, at low group rates.

Here's a quick look at your four Farm Bureau Health Insurance options:

Comprehensive Plan: A full range of benefits and Major Medical coverage that keeps your out-of-pocket expenses to a minimum.

Dimension III Plan: Includes benefits for hospital and medical/surgical care, plus other coverage, on a share-the-cost basis.



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Econo Plan: You share the costs, but lower premiums give you a basic coverage you can depend on.

HMO Option: The only way for farm families to take advantage of HMO coverage and convenience on a group rate basis. Depending on your location, you could receive care through one of our HMO Groups.

For More Information: Contact your county's Farm Bureau secretary to find out more about the ways Farm Bureau is helping you take care of yours. Or fill out the

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

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Discussion Topic

(continued from page 19)

The Commodity Credit Corporation and the Farmers Home Administration continue to expand their credit. While the expansion of CCC loans is more a function of farm program policy than of conscious credit policy, the expansion of FmHA loans is a direct result of policy decisions of Congress and the president. Given the amount of problem loans in banks and the Farm Credit System, unless policy changes, the FmHA loan growth will continue over the next few years. This will be a combination of direct and guaranteed loans.

Meanwhile, the competition among agricultural credit sources continues to decline. Some regional "money center" banks have decreased their credit exposure in agriculture or pulled out completely.

FB Recommends FCS Rescue Program

After months of study by the special AFBF committee, a 21-point assistance program was developed.

"We have conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the problems faced by the Farm Credit System and how they relate to the total farm credit picture," said AFBF President Dean Kleckner in announcing the plan. "We are offering what we believe is the only viable solution for implementing an assistance program."

The FB plan calls for an infusion of money (\$4-\$10 billion) to the Farm Credit System and recommends the creation of a five-member Financial Assistance Commission comprised of the FCA Chairman, FCS representative, secretary of treasury or his designee, secretary of agriculture or his designee, and a farmer/rancher. The FCS has officially requested \$6 billion as a line of credit. The commission will sunset when federal assistance is repaid.

With the commission funneling the aid to the system, there would be no need for the Farm Credit Capital Corporation, which was created by the 1985 law to allocate aid and administer loss-sharing arrangements among districts. For various reasons,

(continued on page 22)

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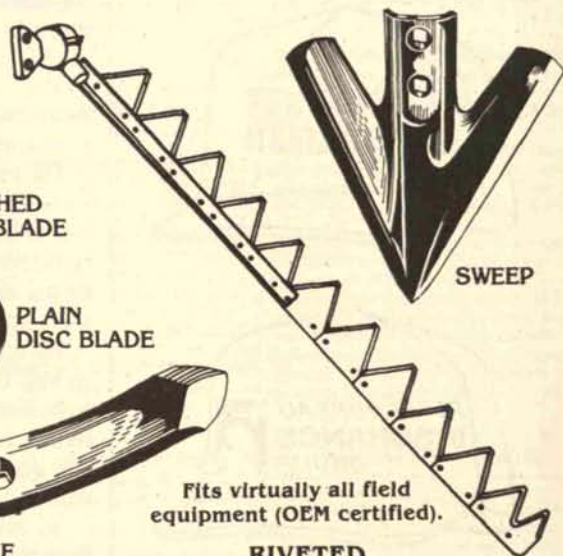
PLAIN
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DOUBLE POINT SPIKE

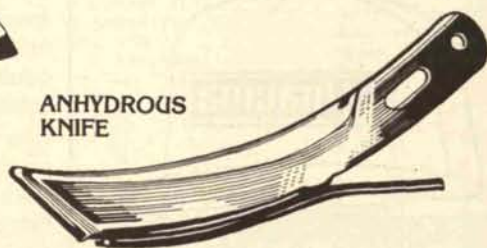


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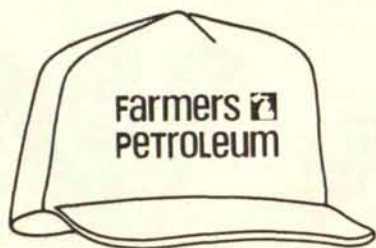


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The Farm Bureau Tent
Lot Nos. 248, 249
348 and 349.

Discussion Topic

(continued from page 21)

the capital corporation has been unsuccessful in those missions.

The capital corporation was supposed to work out problem loans. Instead, said Kleckner, "We believe this can best be handled at the district and association levels." The FB plan stresses debt-restructuring, stating that "assistance should be structured to reward districts and associations for dealing with problem loans" rather than foreclosing or refusing to restructure loans.

FB has called for an end to fund transfers within the system because there is not enough surplus available in the stronger institutions to transfer to the weaker ones. Such transfers have been entangled in a web of intramural litigation.

FB recommends using tools which have been successful, such as two-tier debt restructuring, interest rate reductions, shared appreciation mortgages and partial, instead of whole-sale, liquidations.

As for the handling of land acquired by the system either through foreclosures or deed-backs, the committee recommends that land be sold if it does not depress local land values.

To avoid future inter-district conflict, the plan suggests creating a "risk-related insurance fund" that would serve as a "buffer to minimize asset-sharing between districts in response to system problems." FB continues to support system-wide liability for bonds, which means if one district defaults on its bonds, the others are responsible for paying back bond-holders, because it allows the system to borrow at the lowest possible rates on Wall Street.

Other components of the FB program include: reconsideration of lending limits and criteria for loans; creation of a secondary mortgage market within the Farm Credit System; support for consolidations of local offices as long as they do not "unreasonably diminish the accessibility" to borrower-members and the members approve it; and reimbursement to borrowers who lost stock as a result of Production Credit Association liquidations in the Spokane and Omaha districts.

Questions For Discussion

- What do you think about FB's plan for the Farm Credit System?
- What should FB be doing to keep competitive sources of credit available to farmers?
- To what extent should the state and federal governments be involved in providing credit to farmers or in guaranteeing loans made by lenders?

Agrinomic Update

(continued from page 18)

The expanded H-2A program is designed for use by growers of fruits, vegetables, and other crops who need foreign workers on a temporary basis.

While the changes are at this point only in draft form, many groups have already expressed deep concern over the preliminary rules. In answer to the protests, the U.S. Department of Labor is redrafting its proposal, but nothing had been made public as of May 1. The areas of deepest concern are:

- Allow the virtual shutdown of a grower's H-2A operation if two or more workers become involved in a labor dispute with the grower;
- Mandate a grower fee of \$400 to make application for H-2A workers;
- Mandate that growers seeking H-2A workers must actively recruit domestic workers for a 40-day period prior to using H-2A workers; and
- Set the Adverse Effect Wage Rate (AEWR) some 20% higher than local prevailing wages. The AEWR is designed to make sure foreign workers do not undercut local wage rates.

Many feel if these and other proposals are adopted by the U.S. Department of Labor, it could leave a large segment of the industry without a work force.

Agrinomic Update was prepared by Douglas Fleming, commodity specialist in the MFB Commodity Activities and Research Department.

Farm Bureau Market Place

CLASSIFIED AD POLICY

- Farm Bureau members pay 25 cents per word for all classified advertisements.
- 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.
- All advertisements are subject to a 15-word minimum charge, including member ads.
- Please indicate if you are a Farm Bureau member.
- The deadline for ads is the first Monday of the month preceding publication.
- All ads must be pre-paid and may be pre-paid up to one year in advance.
- It is the responsibility of the advertiser to re-insert the ad on a month-by-month or year-by-year basis.
- The publisher has the right to reject any advertising copy submitted.
- No ads will be taken over the phone.

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