



Rural Living

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

MARCH 1988

Inside: Young Farmer Leaders

Governor's Conference on Ag

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Rural Living

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

A Publication of the Michigan Farm Bureau



About the Cover

*Welcome warm days release streams
and ponds from winter's icy grasp.*

In This Issue

- 8 Leadership Opportunities for Young Farmers**
Too old to belong to 4-H and Future Farmers of America? Want to become active in your community and develop your leadership potential? Learn more about the leadership opportunities through MFB's Young Farmer program.
- 10 County Presidents Urged to Mobilize Grassroots Action** Conference sessions challenge county presidents to boost member involvement in legislative and organizational programs.
- 11 Marketing Michigan Quality** The 3rd annual Governor's Conference on Agriculture emphasized Michigan's marketing strength in offering diversity and quality to national and international consumers.

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Seeds

- MFB President Jack Laurie welcomed nearly 600 industry representatives to the 1988 Governor's Conference on the Future of Michigan Agriculture, Feb. 2-3 in Lansing. Laurie was conference co-chair along with Robert Nichols of the Kellogg Company.
- On Feb. 4, President Laurie was in Kalamazoo for a news backgrounder. He joined FB leaders from surrounding counties in talking with news media guests about agriculture and Farm Bureau.
- On Feb. 5, Laurie attended the Michigan Pork Producers Association annual meeting in Lansing.
- As part of the Saginaw Fashion Square Mall farm show, MFB President Laurie and area district directors took part in Ag Olympic events on Feb. 6.
- President Laurie attended February MFB Cabinet Meetings in Grand Rapids, Howell, and Frankenmuth.

A Bright Future for Farming

(Excerpts of President Laurie's comments at the Farm and Food Policy Conference, Feb. 15 in Lansing.)

I'd like to begin my comments by saying that I feel good about the future of agriculture.

There have been a lot of positive things happening. Most input costs have dropped, inflation has declined, exports have increased, our country is at peace, and, with some exceptions, basically prosperous.

Future demand for food and fiber products looks good, simply based on population gains. Demographic experts predict another billion people to feed by the year 2000.

Economists foresee continued world economic growth, particularly in the developing nations that are our prime customers. Economic growth means people in the Pacific Rim, Asia and elsewhere will want to improve their diets...and they'll do so by importing not only our bulk commodities, but our high-value food products as well.

U.S. farmers, I think, are well placed to take advantage of increased export demand. First of all, our prices are more competitive, thanks to the farm program changes and export enhancement provisions in the 1985 Farm Act, and the recent decline in the value of the dollar against some foreign currencies. In addition, I believe that U.S. agriculture has some advantages that can allow it to be the low-cost producer of many commodities.

For example, we have an unmatched infrastructure of transportation and processing facilities.

We have a favorable climate, good supplies of water and a wide range of productive soils.

We also have access to tremendous technical and scientific support. You can see a pretty vivid example of this at the Michigan Biotechnology Institute (MBI). MBI is going to be cooperating with Michigan State University to do some innovative genetic manipulation of corn and other commodities to create new products and markets.

Perhaps our biggest advantage and asset for the future is that our agricultural industry is overwhelmingly made up of aggressive, entrepreneurial family farmers, men and women who are adaptable, eager to learn, fast on their feet. The kind of people who, if given the opportunities of a free market system, will quickly adapt to new marketing and profit opportunities.

Effects of the U.S.—Canada Free Trade Agreement

To the extent this agreement will stimulate trade between the United States and Canada, we can expect broad based economic growth to occur, and that will be to the advantage of farmers in both countries.

However, with respect to agriculture specifically, the assessment by Farm Bureau is that the agreement will not immediately result in a significant dismantling of agricultural trade barriers and other forms of government intervention on either side of the border.

In reality, the most sensitive products and programs were generally excluded from liberalization under the agreement, with the idea that they will be handled in the GATT multilateral trade negotiations.

So, while the agreement will not result in totally free agricultural trade between our two countries, FB believes it is a fairly balanced package that does take a step in that direction.

Perspectives on Agricultural Trade

Because of the production and marketing advantages enjoyed by U.S. farmers, I think we have more to gain than anyone in the world by having a level playing field in agricultural trade.

The Reagan administration proposal that most nations completely phase out all of their agricultural subsidies by the turn of the century would go a long way toward accomplishing that goal.

Although totally free agricultural trade seems like a longshot, the concept at least provides a clear purpose for the GATT agricultural trade talks. The United States will not, by itself, reduce subsidies. Other nations will have to go with us down the road toward reducing government intervention in agriculture and eliminating import barriers.

We will still need legitimate foreign and domestic food aid programs and safety nets for farmers. We need to make sure these programs are not set up in such a way that they send the wrong signal to farmers about production decisions.

A Prosperous Industry in the Future

It's clear that we, as farmers, can't be successful any more just by being productive. We have to grow and sell what people want to buy: not just what people in Detroit, Grand Rapids, or Lansing want to buy. We're going to have to adapt to the needs and wants of consumers in Tokyo, Peking, and Mexico City.

In order to get the best feedback on what customers want, we have to have the freest possible world trading system; not just in agricultural goods, but in information. (We need) the kind of information that will tell us more precisely and clearly than any government can, what it is that consumers are willing to buy.

I also think that in the future, agriculture is going to be affected more and more by government actions that do not seem directly related to farming.

For example, the federal budget mess may result in farm programs being subjected to unfair cuts. Agriculture may be more affected by the tax boost due to an increased tax burden that will drag down our entire economy and suppress demand for our products. We also have a tremendous stake in the course that government takes in the controversies over environmental protection, the quality and availability of groundwater, the use and conservation of land, and the promotion of rural development.

These are crucial issues that are broader than the interests of any one commodity group. They affect all of us, as farmers and rural people. In the future, more than ever before, we will need to work in harmony and present a united front to attack problems that threaten our industry.

We did that here on the state level, by forming a committee for animal agriculture in order to handle the issue of livestock management.

And on the national level, I serve on a national commission on dairy policy, which represents a new way to investigate and reconcile differing viewpoints within a single industry.

In his state of the union address, President Reagan told lawmakers that "Yes, we will have our differences. But let us always remember: What unites us far outweighs whatever divides us."

I think that's true for farmers. Let's look for opportunities to work together.

Jack Laurie

*Jack Laurie, President
Michigan Farm Bureau*

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forts between the Agriculture and Commerce departments to develop world trade. Offices are in Belgium, Africa, Japan, and Hong Kong. The promotion of Michigan will include food products. The agricultural marketing campaign will include the updating of food standards and inspection, and use of the "seal of quality."

Funding for these positions is expected to be in the executive budget.

The Legislature will determine the final budget, but is expected to stay within the governor's total recommendation.

■ **Wetlands** — S.B. 470 would exempt wetlands from property taxation if denied development permit. FB has policy on taxation of agricultural wetlands. The rules committee is working on a definition of wetlands and FB is involved to ensure uniformity with swampbuster rules.

■ **Grain Dealer** — H.B. 4757 would eliminate \$20,000 net asset requirement if dealer operates on cash basis.

■ **Libraries** — H.B. 4769 would allow townships to levy 2 mills, instead of the present 1 mill, for contractual library services. Requires vote.

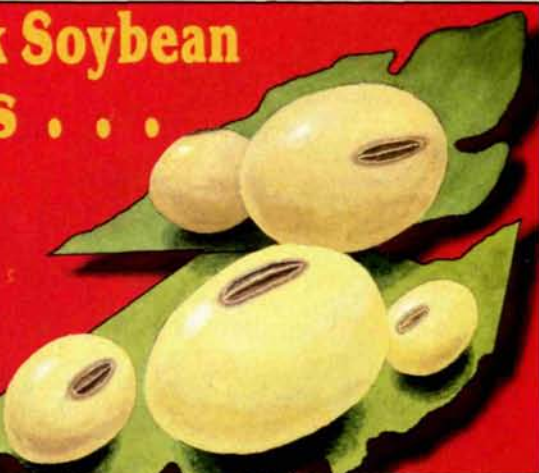
■ **Pickup Trucks** — H.B. 4759 would prohibit those under the age of 18 from riding in back of pickup truck. This measure has been considered in previous years.

■ **Truck Length** — S.B. 462 includes truck and trailer combinations in size, weight, length and load limits. This bill is important to the forest industry. Last year's bill was vetoed.

■ **Insurance PACs** — S.B. 467 allows insurance companies to form Political Action Committees (PACs).

■ **Salt Substitute** — H.B. 5205 creates a seven member commission to study alternatives to salt for deicing roads, bridges, etc. Emphasis is on calcium magnesium acetate (CMA) which can be made from corn. The Department of Transportation is using it on the Zilwaukee Bridge as a test. The (continued on page 27)

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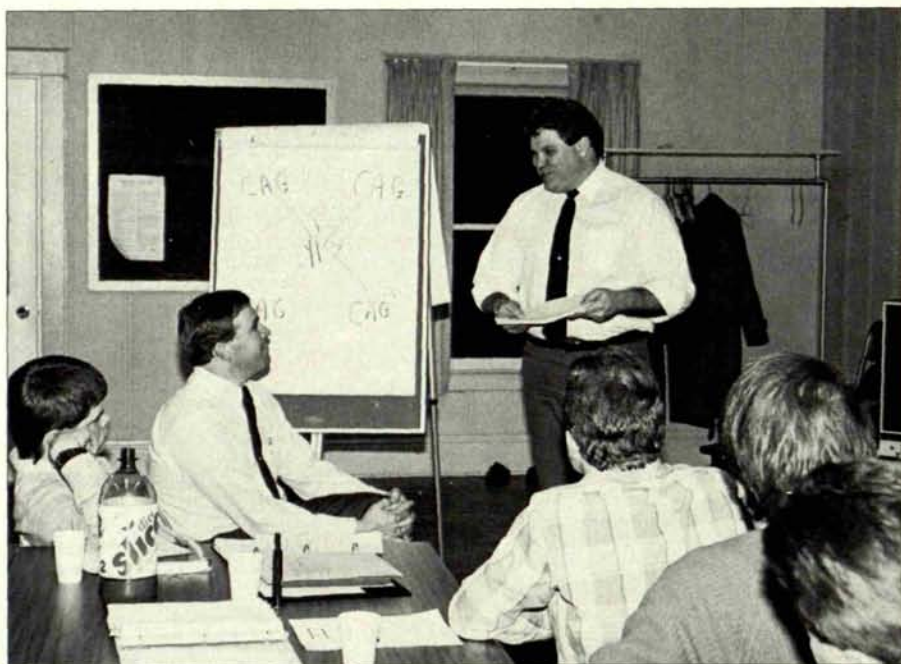

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Leadership Opportunities Available for Young Farmers

By Kimberly Marshall

Too old to belong to 4-H and Future Farmers of America? Want to become active in your community and develop your leadership potential? Farm Bureau needs young adult farmers and young farmers who will benefit from the opportunities FB can offer.

"Farm Bureau will continue its successful and influential approach to solving the many problems of farmers, only as its young members are given leadership responsibilities and are encouraged to contribute their energies and abilities to making a better way of life for farm families," said Vic Verchereau, MFB Young Farmer program manager.



Vic Verchereau, MFB Young Farmer program manager, is informing District 6 Young Farmer leaders of new programs and activities which they could include in their county Young Farmer Committee plans.

Training Ground for New Leaders

Young Farmer activities benefit the FB organization, farming community, and individuals as new leaders surface and are given opportunities to develop their potential, gain confidence, experience, and education in the areas of legislation, citizenship, and community involvement.

Ed Cagney, Kalamazoo County, is now serving his second year on the MFB Board of Directors, representing the state Young Farmer Committee. He has been involved in Young Farmers for nine years.

"I got involved because it gave me a chance to talk to other young farmers like myself," said Ed. "I also wanted to learn more about Michigan Farm Bureau and about farming itself."



Jim Mantey, state Young Farmer Committee member representing District 6, is reviewing the 1988 goals and objectives of the state Young Farmer program for his district's county program leaders.

The Young Farmer program was organized to develop leadership, fellowship, and education in the farming community.

"I got more than I expected from joining Young Farmers. When I first joined I never thought I would have the opportunity to be a leader at the state level. It has been an interesting experience being on the Michigan Farm Bureau Board of Directors," said Ed. "It took a little while to get a feel for the way things work and how important all the decisions are that the board makes.

"I don't see any major changes in the Young Farmer program coming up, just the ongoing challenges of getting new members involved in the program. We need to develop ways of getting more young farmers involved. The economic conditions of the past years have not been conducive to getting young farmers interested in making farming a career and, consequently, interested in Farm Bureau. The ones who have decided to continue farming are the ones we need to contact and get involved in the organization."

Programs Encourage Self-Help

The main criteria for selecting activities for a county FB Young Farmer committee is need. Program activities should be developed to fulfill needs of young farmers in the county.

"We want to encourage young farmers to analyze their problems, and then provide them with the tools and knowledge to solve these problems," said Vic. "By emphasizing the importance of having the voice of the young farmer heard, we will have new leadership for the future growth and continuation of the organization. Young farmers bring in fresh ideas and enthusiasm which are the qualities we need to put tomorrow's ideas in today's Farm Bureau policies."

If you are interested in learning more about the Young Farmer program in your area, contact your county FB office. □

Congratulations Young Farmers!

Distinguished Young Farmer



Frank Engler, Isabella County, was named Michigan Farm Bureau's Distinguished Young Farmer. Contestants are judged on the state and national level for progress and achievements in the individual's farming enterprise, leadership participation, and involvement in community activities. He is a dairy farmer, with 800 acres of crops including corn, alfalfa, wheat, oats, and sorghum. Some of the improvements Frank wishes to accomplish in the future are to increase his no-till acreage and computerize his farming operation.

Outstanding Young Farm Woman

Cheryl Cargill, Oceana County, was selected as MFB's Outstanding Young Farm Woman. She and her husband, Rex, operate a fruit and vegetable farm and open-air market. Contestants are judged on their contributions to agriculture, which are measured in terms of their knowledge of the current agricultural issues and an ability to communicate those concerns to the judges during an interview. Involvement in community and county FB activities are also essential qualifications. Cheryl believes that FB membership is "an opportunity to be part of a cooperative effort to improve the quality of Michigan agriculture."



Discussion Meet Winner

Michigan's Discussion Meet Winner, Gene Graham of Ingham County, skillfully competed in the national contest at the AFBF annual meeting in New Orleans. Gene reached the final round of four contestants. John Ackerman of Illinois was judged the contest winner.



County Presidents Urged to Mobilize Grassroots Action

County Farm Bureau presidents hold the key to FB's legislative success in Washington, according to John Datt, executive director of the AFBF Washington office.



John Datt, AFBF Executive Director

"The key to the legislative effectiveness of Farm Bureau on national policy issues in 1988 will depend on the leadership and involvement of county Farm Bureaus," said Datt,

guest speaker at the annual County Presidents' Conference held in Mt. Pleasant in late January. "Your ability to provide leadership in causing Farm Bureau members to become involved in the issues and reflect their support to the members of Congress will be the difference. The challenge is up to you to mobilize the member-strength of the organization."

Datt said the major 1988 policy issues include diesel tax collection reform, avoiding major changes in the 1985 farm bill, reform of the federal budget process, passage of legislation to provide for tax expansion, adoption of the Canadian Trade Agreement, and implementation of the 1987 farm credit legislation.

In other action, the county presidents heard motivational speaker Jolene Brown and had the opportunity to attend one of four workshops which included county budgets and finance, membership reorganization,

managing the job of president, and spokesperson training.

The Presidents' Conference provided the opportunity to introduce the newest incentive package for the revitalization of the Community Action Group (CAG) program. The Magic Vacation Combination for two, provided by FB Travel and valued at \$1,500, includes a four day cruise to the Bahamas on the Premier Cruise Lines, three days at Walt Disney World in Orlando, and free use of a rental car.

Any member of a CAG established between Sept. 1, 1987 and July 13, 1988 may become eligible for the grand prize. In addition, county presidents and Community Activities Committee (CAC) chairpersons in any county which starts two new CAGs are also eligible.

Beginning with the Presidents' Conference, 25 weekly drawings will identify finalists for the grand prize (continued on page 25)

The Wearin' of the Green!



County presidents Roger Van Damme of Hiawathaland FB and Bud Wegmeyer of Alpena FB were the first in the state to receive the specially designed green Community Action Group jackets. The jackets are the incentive prize for county presidents and Community Activities Committee chairpersons who report establishment of a county Community Activities Committee and two new Community Action Groups.

VanDamme (right) and Wegmeyer (left) were presented the jackets by MFB President Jack Laurie at the 1988 Presidents' Conference at Mt. Pleasant.



Marketing Michigan Quality

The third annual Governor's Conference on the Future of Michigan Agriculture, held Feb. 2-3 in Lansing, focused on the theme, "Competing in a Global Society." The conference sessions and workshops were designed to emphasize Michigan's need to remain competitive in domestic markets and to position itself as a worldwide competitor.

Nearly 600 members of Michigan's food and agriculture industry participated in this year's conference where they heard from futurist Joel A. Barker, author of *Discovering the Future: The Business of Paradigms*. Barker, who was a popular speaker at last year's conference, opened this year's program



Gov. James Blanchard introduced the Michigan Seal of Quality food marketing strategy to promote Michigan-grown foods.



MDA Director Paul Kindinger gave a status report on MDA program efforts.

with a discussion of the globalization of technology and how technological developments could affect the food and agriculture industry in the next 25 years.

Barker praised Michigan's strategic planning efforts, saying that the state is "demonstrating that we don't have to be stuck with the old rules." He pointed out that in each of the five major technologies of the future, food issues are on the leading edge.

Marketing Michigan Quality

The governor chose the audience of food industry representatives to announce plans to establish a premium "Seal of Quality" for Michigan foods.

"All around the country there is a growing awareness of the importance of quality in our food. In-

(continued on page 25)



Futurist Joel Barker opened the two-day conference with a discussion of the five regions of future and the coming reign of quality.

Country Almanac

March


- Mar. 1** CES Animal Waste Management meeting — Manure Management Practices for Producers, 9:45 a.m.-3 p.m., Holiday Inn, Gaylord. Cabinet Meeting for South & Southwest Regions, Stouffer's, Battle Creek.
- Mar. 2** CES Animal Waste Management meeting — Manure Management Practices for Producers, 9:45 a.m.-3 p.m., Ponderosa on U.S. 41 & U.S. 2, Escanaba.
- Mar. 3** Market Master Series II, Bay County FB Office, Bay City.
- Mar. 3-5** Young Farmer Leaders Conference, Valley Plaza, Midland.
- Mar. 4** MFB Grain & Livestock Conference, Michigan Biotechnology Institute & Sheraton Inn, Lansing.
- Mar. 4-5** Adrian Mall ag promotion, Adrian, sponsored by Lenawee County FB.
- Mar. 5** Lakeview Square Mall ag promotion, Battle Creek, sponsored by Branch & Calhoun County FBs.
- Mar. 8** Lansing Legislative Seminar for Southeast Region, YWCA, Lansing.
- Mar. 9** Cabinet Meeting for North, Northeast and Northwest Regions, Holiday Inn, Grayling.
Lansing Legislative Seminar for West and West Central Regions, YWCA, Lansing.
- Mar. 10** Cabinet Meeting for Upper Peninsula Region, Best Western Pioneer Inn, Escanaba.
Market Master Series II, Bay County FB Office, Bay City.
- Mar. 10-12** Westwood Mall ag promotion, Jackson, sponsored by Jackson County FB.
- Mar. 15-18** Washington Legislative Seminar, Washington, D.C.
- Mar. 17** Market Master Series II, Bay County FB Office, Bay City.
- Mar. 19** MMPA Annual Meeting, Fairchild Auditorium, MSU, East Lansing.
- Mar. 20-26** National Agriculture Week.
- Mar. 21-24** Agriculture and Natural Resources Week, MSU, East Lansing.
- Mar. 23** Michigan Certified Farm Markets & Farm Markets Cooperative Annual Meetings, Brody Hall, MSU, East Lansing.
- Mar. 24** Governor's Conference on Forestry, Kellogg Ctr., MSU, East Lansing.
- Mar. 29-30** Agricultural Computer Exposition, Cadillac, sponsored by Mason County CES. For information, contact Ext. Dir. G. William Robb, 616-757-4789 or Bob Neumann, 517-355-2286.




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5/16	50	50	50	50	25	25	25	25	
	2.40	2.95	3.55	4.27	2.59	3.31	4.03	4.75	
3/8	25	25	25	25	25	10	10	10	
	1.95	2.25	2.75	3.00	3.72	1.92	2.35	2.76	
7/16		10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
		1.39	1.65	1.92	2.16	2.51	3.31	3.84	
1/2		10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
		1.80	2.16	2.47	2.83	3.48	4.08	4.75	

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COARSE THREAD PLATED										Price per package		
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1/4	40	35	30	25	20	20	10	10	10	150	150	150
	1.16	1.32	1.43	1.49	1.43	1.71	1.21	1.38	1.64	1.60	.94	1.27
5/16	40	35	30	25	20	20	10	10	10	150	150	150
	1.71	1.98	2.09	2.05	2.04	2.53	1.54	2.09	2.64	2.53	1.05	1.60
3/8	40	30	20	20	10	10	12	10	8	120	100	100
	2.42	2.48	2.04	2.42	1.43	1.76	2.48	2.59	3.08	2.97	1.38	1.60
7/16	20	10	10	10	10	10	10	8	6	60	60	60
	1.82	1.16	1.43	1.71	1.98	2.26	2.59	2.64	2.37	3.08	1.27	1.60
1/2	10	10	10	10	10	10	8	6	5	50	50	50
	1.21	1.71	1.87	2.26	2.59	2.92	2.64	2.42	2.59	2.64	1.54	2.37
5/8		5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	25	25	25
		1.27	1.49	1.76	2.04	2.31	2.59	2.59	3.03	3.03	1.43	2.37
3/4		5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	24	18	18
		2.15	2.42	3.14	3.19	3.52	3.19	3.85	4.40	4.35	1.65	2.53

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HPC-P		Hitch Pin Clips - in poly bag, 4 of the most popular sizes. Approx. 22 pcs. \$3.50
RP-1-2		Split Ball Pins 1/16"-3/8" dia. Assorted lengths. Approx. 400 pcs. \$9.00
L-F		Lockwashers and Flatwashers General assortment. Approx. 900 pcs. \$6.00
SS-1		Socket Set Screws No. 10, 1/4", 5/16" and 3/8" dia. with hex keys. Approx. 180 pcs. \$9.60
SMS-1		Sheet Metal Screws No. 6, No. 8, No. 10, No. 12 No. 14 dia. Ass't. lengths. Approx. 275 pcs. \$6.50
WS-1		Wood Screws No. 6, No. 8, No. 10, No. 12 dia. Assorted lengths. Approx. 275 pcs. \$6.00
MS-1		MACHINE SCREWS with hex nuts 6-32, 8-32, 10-24, 1/4-20 dia. Ass't. lengths. Approx. 375 pcs. \$6.50
MS-2		MACHINE SCREWS with hex nuts 10-24 and 1/4-20 dia. with longer lengths. Approx. 350 pcs. \$6.50
GF-1		GREASE FITTINGS Contains all the popular 1/4-28 and 1/8 P.T. fittings. Approx. 75 pcs. \$7.25
WC-1		WIRE CONNECTORS (solderless type) 18 different connectors for popular wire range. Approx. 175 pcs. \$8.00
HNC-1		HEX NUTS (USA) coarse thread - 1/4-5/8 dia. Approx. 125 pcs. \$5.50
HNF-2		HEX NUTS (SAE) fine thread - 1/4-5/8 dia. Approx. 125 pcs. \$5.50
LNC-1		NYLON LOCK NUTS (USA) coarse thread - 1/4-5/8 dia. Approx. 125 pcs. \$7.00
LNF-2		NYLON LOCK NUTS (SAE) fine thread - 1/4-5/8 dia. Approx. 125 pcs. \$7.00

Farm Bureau MEMBERS ONLY

TO ORDER: Fill out the shipping information below and enter the total cost of each kind of hardware ordered on the appropriate line. RETURN the entire form with your check. Check must accompany order. Please make checks payable to: Hi-Grade Nut & Bolt Company.

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Item	Size or Part #	Quantity
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

TOTAL COST

\$

Sub Total

Tax (if applicable)

GRAND TOTAL

Complete Name _____

Complete Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

I certify that the goods purchased are for farm use only and exempt from all taxes.

Customer's Signature _____ Farm Bureau Membership Number _____

Send your order to:
HI-GRADE NUT & BOLT COMPANY
1490 Mapletown, S.W.
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Telephone: (616) 538-9900 or 532-9000

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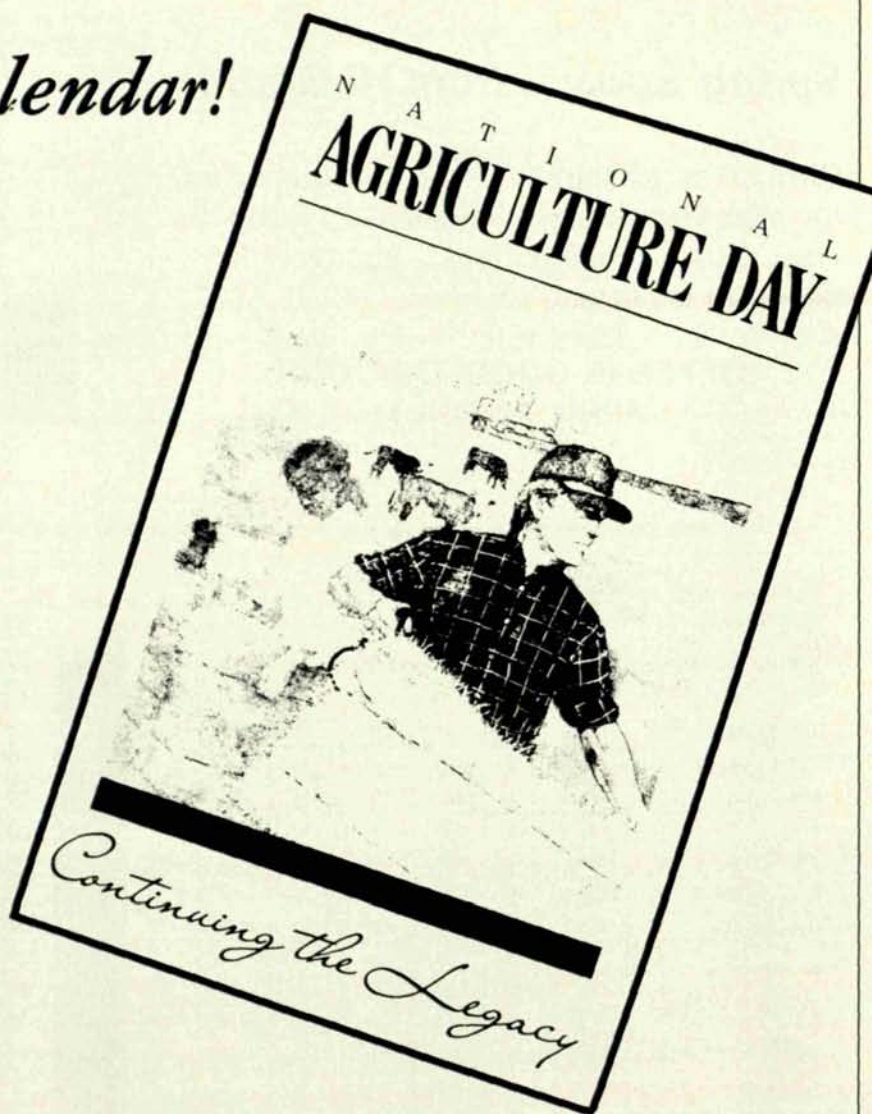
March 20 is National Agriculture Day

What's new about Ag Day 1988? A fine arts poster, the first of a continuing series reproduced from a specially commissioned oil painting, and a Capitol Hill display to attract the attention of urban legislators.

National Agriculture Day has been celebrated since 1973 by communities and organizations throughout the nation. It is officially recognized by the U.S. Congress, the president and most governors. The U.S. secretary of agriculture has served as honorary chairperson since 1981 and Secretary Lyng has agreed to serve in that capacity for the 1988 observance.

Fine Arts Poster Series

Bart Forbes, nationally known artist and the designated artist of the 1988 Olympics, was commissioned to do an original oil painting which will be reproduced as part of an Ag Day poster for 1988.



Carrying the theme, "National Agriculture Day: Honoring America's Providers," this year's poster is the first in an annual series of fine arts posters designed by nationally known artists which will make up the "National Ag Day Collection." Each year a new artist and theme will be selected.

Capitol Hill Display

Designed to attract the attention of all legislators, but especially those

representing urban America, a large-scale reproduction of the National Agriculture Day painting will be the focus of a display on Capitol Hill.

To demonstrate solidarity in the agricultural community and the diversity of the industry, flanking each side of the reproduction will be wall-sized boards listing in large print the names of individuals and organization that make up the food and fiber industry. □

Honoring America's Providers

Seminar Series Promotes State and National FB Policies

From Lansing to Washington D.C., February and March mark the implementation phase of Farm Bureau's grassroots policy making process. The intensive lobbying effort opens with the series of Lansing Legislative Seminars attracting more than 400 county FB leaders to the state's capital city for discussions with their area representatives and senators. The focus in this series of seven seminars is to promote FB state policy and to foster year around dialogue with the legislators.

gan Department of Agriculture and MSU's agriculture programs, education, school finance, property tax, and ag labor issues.

Legislators or their staff representatives arrive at noon for luncheon discussions with their FB constituents.

Afternoon visits to the State Capitol Building for legislature sessions or to legislators' offices are encouraged.

Seminar participants base their contacts and discussions with the Michigan legislators on the official MFB policy on state issues developed

Legislative Mission to the Nation's Capital

For the group of FB grassroots lobbyists selected by county FBs to participate in the Washington Legislative Seminar, the trip to Washington D.C. provides opportunities for input on key national issues.

MFB's 28th annual Washington Legislative Seminar, March 15-18, will be led by President Jack Laurie and members of the board's Legislative Committee, county FB legislative leaders and their assistants will share FB policies with their U.S. representatives and senators, USDA and administration officials.

After arrival in the nation's capital on Tuesday, the group will be briefed by AFBF staff regarding what's currently happening "on the hill," and then attend workshops to prepare for their congressional contacts. A breakfast meeting with their U.S. representatives is on Wednesday's agenda with a visit to the USDA that afternoon. The Michigan farmers will meet with Senators Don Riegle and Carl Levin on Thursday morning. Visits to congressional offices and attendance at committee hearings are also scheduled by members of the group.

Priority issues that will be addressed by the legislative leaders during their Washington contacts include the diesel fuel excise tax, trade reform, the federal budget, occupational health standards, and the overall farm program with emphasis on staying the course set by Farm Bill '85. □



The Lansing seminars open with a morning briefing session covering such key 1988 legislative issues as budget appropriations for the Michi-

by the delegate body at the MFB annual meeting.

The final installment of the MFB State Policies appears on pages 16-23.

1988 Policy Guides MFB Programs

The following is the final installment of the Michigan Farm Bureau state policies adopted by the 485 member delegate body at the organization's annual meeting in Grand Rapids, Dec. 1-4, 1987.

HIGHWAY SAFETY Highway accidents take many lives each year. Many people are injured and property damaged. We have, and will continue to support, legislation which will promote highway safety. We recommend the following to further reduce highway accidents: SMV signs should not be used for anything other than the law intended. All farmers must maintain their signs and replace them when faded or worn; information be provided so that farmers become aware of the laws involving the movement of farm equipment on the highways (e.g., no more than two wagons or trailers behind a farm tractor); all horse-drawn vehicles should have flashing lights for dusk and night driving for their own and other vehicle safety. Lights should be placed so they are visible from both front and rear; legislation which would allow specialized agricultural trailers to be treated as farm machinery where licensing, lighting, permit and width regulations are concerned, whether pulled by a farm truck, pickup, or a tractor, when moving from field to field; farmers should use care to keep field and animal residue off roads as these create highway safety hazards. If the farmer scrapes the road clear to the best of his ability, the farmer shall not be held liable; roads should not be used as headlands. It is dangerous to the farmer and hazardous to traffic; irrigation systems should be positioned so as not to apply water on public roadways, thereby eliminating a serious traffic hazard; that all drivers stop any time school bus red flashing lights are activated; state laws specifying vehicle widths, mud flaps, etc., should be vigorously enforced; hardtop roads should be marked with center lines and sidelines as an aid to safer nighttime driving; county Road Commissions and landowners should be encouraged to clear roadsides and intersections of hazards within the road right-of-way that obstruct the view of motorists, and road drainage, providing that farmers' liability does not increase in doing so. Permits are available at county Road Commissions; renewed emphasis should be directed toward the placing of crossroad, yield or stop signs at unmarked rural intersections; all rural roads should be marked with a name or number. A house number clearly visible from the road is essential; mail and newspaper boxes should be placed on the same side of the road to make travel with large machinery safer and easier; the use of the check-lane system should be continued rather than mandatory annual vehicle in-

spection; renewed emphasis should be placed on the rules and regulations of emergency flashing lights, especially on police, fire and ambulance vehicles, because of the public's growing disrespect for public safety; the Michigan driver's license should indicate specifically if the licensed person is wearing contact lenses; more responsibility needs to be placed upon the owners and operators of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), and we support educational programs to reduce violations of current law and dangerous situations; we recommend the use of headlights on all motor vehicles during rain or fog; education campaign to encourage seat belt use as required by law. Farm Bureau members should set an example by obeying this law and encourage others to wear seat belts. Farm Bureau Insurance provides \$10,000 of additional coverage in the event of accidental death in a vehicle while wearing a seat belt; reflectorized material should be on the outer edge of snow blades to be more visible at night; where rear vision is obscured by large equipment, we encourage installation of appropriate rear-vision equipment so that drivers may be aware of traffic conditions to the rear of their machinery while traveling a public thoroughfare; education programs relating to highway rules, regulations and courtesies, for both bicyclists and drivers of autos and trucks, should be encouraged. Safety flags and reflectors should be standard equipment on bicycles used on public roads. We encourage further development of bike paths for pedestrians, joggers and bicycles, when building or remodeling roads. We commend organizations that promote bicycle safety to the entire public.

LAW ENFORCEMENT We are deeply concerned about crime throughout our state and need to be reassured by our government officials that preventive resources, most notably the Michigan State Police patrols, are not diverted to urban areas where organized municipal police departments already exist. The availability of state police help and protection is essential to the safety of our citizens from the suburbs to all areas of rural Michigan.

The Michigan State Police is a highly professional department providing all types of services to citizens and other police agencies. We strongly urge the Michigan State Police be maintained and funded as a total agency providing service to all of Michigan.

Many county Sheriff Departments throughout Michigan have experienced cuts

in funding in recent years which has greatly reduced law enforcement services especially in rural areas. Therefore, we encourage adequate funding for all Sheriff Departments.



MFB Legislative Counsel Ron Nelson offers Lansing Seminar participants "proof" of the size and complexity of the state's annual budget.

We support fair evidence gathering procedures to be used in the prosecution of an alleged perpetrator of crime or crimes.

Because a lack of respect for the law and law enforcement agencies exists in our society, we encourage the restoration of authority and respect for our law enforcement officers. We urge Farm Bureau members to cooperate with the criminal justice system and follow through on the conviction of suspects charged with crimes. We encourage the judicial system to use stronger sentences when sentencing convicted felons. We favor raising the maximum fine for a misdemeanor from \$100 to \$500.

We support special police task forces, which focus on preventing crimes before they happen, rather than investigating them after they happen. These task forces would be set up to watch known repeat offenders. We believe this kind of action will lead to more and quicker convictions resulting in safer streets for all of us.

We support attempts to create mandatory sentences for certain crimes. We also strongly urge changes in the law to require complete restitution to victims in cases where appropriate.

We favor capital punishment.

CIVIL ACTION REFORM In order to stem the rising tide of lawsuits in our court system, we recommend legislative action that the plaintiff in a lawsuit be required to pay all legal fees including court and defendant costs if the case is lost and the court finds there was no basis in fact for the suit. We feel the courts should be responsible for collecting such legal fees from the plaintiff.

DRUNK DRIVING Driving is a privilege, not a right. We commend the many groups that contributed toward the enactment of amendments to Michigan's drunk driving laws.

We also commend the police for their increased attention to this problem, and we urge the Legislature to continue monitoring results to be sure that intoxicated drivers are removed from our highways.

However, the problem still exists, since half of all fatal accidents involve drunk drivers. Therefore, we strongly recommend mandatory jail sentences for drunk drivers, which should include drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs. All convictions must be submitted to the Department of state so that offenders' driving records are updated.

We believe the responsible authorities should direct their efforts toward removing the repeat offenders from the highways. People addicted to alcohol and drugs need help. We encourage our judges to insist these offenders enter an alcohol abuse treatment program. After treatment license may be granted on a probation period of six months. We support state funding of the DUI program.

We support national legislative efforts to require every state to have a legal drinking age of 21 years old.

NARCOTICS AND HARMFUL

DRUGS We encourage government officials, starting with the attorney general, to reorder law enforcement priorities so that significant efforts are directed toward the organized crime activities in the distribution of illegal drugs.

We strongly support a significant increase in the number of existing law enforcement personnel assigned to the enforcement of laws necessary to dramatically reduce the illegal importation, manufacture, and distribution of narcotics and harmful drugs. The insidious marketing of illegal drugs by organized crime has touched most of our lives and the health and welfare of our citizens are being jeopardized.

We encourage massive, direct and realistic education efforts to inform youths, parents and others about the harmful effects of drug abuse. Such efforts should begin at elementary school level and continue through the higher grades. Rehabilitation centers and drug information programs are now available to drug users in most parts of Michigan. We support mandatory, random drug testing for all public officials

and employees, and personnel of public transportation agencies.

We oppose the legalization of marijuana.

We encourage the continuation and promotion of Operation HEMP (Help Eliminate Marijuana Plantings) which is operated by the Michigan State Police and other similar programs conducted by county Sheriff Departments in cooperation with the federal Drug Enforcement Agency.

Courts should continue to strengthen penalties imposed on dealers of illegal drugs.



Issue briefing prior to meeting with legislators provoked concern and questions from the Lansing Legislative Seminar participants.

PRISONS Michigan's prisons are overcrowded and the cost of new facilities are expensive. We support the increased use of restitution as a means of sentencing convicted offenders. We recommend the state of Michigan eliminate early release for multiple offenders. We support a reform system utilizing public work projects for the convicted inmates that would aid in offsetting the cost of the prison system. We support adequate funding for remodeling and construction of penal institutions to meet only minimum federal standards. We feel that humane treatment is vital to proper rehabilitation of prisoners, but oppose additions to the prison environment that supports criminal activities, both within and outside the institution, such as unlimited and uncensored telephone and mail privileges. We further oppose lavish additions to the prisons.

The State of Michigan is currently searching for sites on which to build regional prisons near population centers. Instead of residents being concerned about living close to a prison, we believe they should consider the employment possibilities and the prison's need for goods and services.

We support solutions to correct possible inequities in funding the county judicial system for expenses incurred because of crimes committed at state and federal correctional facilities.

We are not opposed to prison farms producing food for exclusive use within the prison system, but we strongly oppose the

marketing of such food products on the open market and thereby competing with private enterprise.

We urge the executive office and the Legislature to take strong measures to immediately regain control of the Michigan prison system. We recommend an urgent review of prison administrative policies to protect the lives and property of the inmates and the public. We recommend proper remedial action be instituted promptly.

ELECTIONS We believe that Farm Bureau should encourage all people to register and vote. We also believe that Farm Bureau should expand efforts to provide education and information on elections.

Persons should not be permitted to vote in any election in any community where they have not established a permanent residence for at least 30 days. We favor college students not being allowed to vote in the district where they attend college unless they are a permanent resident of the district. Convicted felons should not be permitted to vote while imprisoned.

We recommend that: national election projections on Election Day not be released to the public until all polls are closed in the continental United States; clear, concise and simple language be used on all ballot issues; requirements for bilingual ballots in any public election be eliminated and only English used; Michigan Farm Bureau, along with the Michigan Townships Association, seek legislative changes to allow for local units to reduce the number of precincts at elections when it can be documented that the higher numbers are unwarranted.

We support: changing the current 10-year voter file (four years active and six years inactive) to a five year active voter file; changing terms of office for county commissions to four years, elected on a staggered basis; use of department of state resources to help local election officials maintain registration files with greater accuracy; reform in the election of state Supreme Court justices. We feel that consideration should be given to changing the election process to allow a vote on the candidates at the August primary election to narrow the field.

We oppose: voter registration by mail; voting on ballot questions by mail with the exception of the present absentee ballot system; reducing the voter registration deadline from 30 to 20 days, before an election; granting county clerks the authority to appoint deputy registrars with countywide registration authority; giving department of state personnel authority to register voters at group meetings; in recent years, there has been an increase in the number of recall elections. During the recall process our elected officials are ineffective. Because in many cases the elected officials were retained, we support an amendment to the Michigan Constitution to

increase the percentage of voter signatures required to initiate a recall election, thereby more adequately representing the wishes of the electorate. This would reduce the cost to taxpayers by reducing the number of unnecessary elections.

RURAL CRIME We are concerned about the number of crimes committed in rural areas. We commend Farm Bureau members and members of the Michigan Rural Crime Prevention Council for their efforts to continually create an awareness among rural residents to watch out for, and report, crime and suspicious activity.

Radio or television programs that alert viewers to acts of crime and offer citizens an opportunity to anonymously give police information on these crimes, have proven effective. The "Crime Stoppers" program on TV-5 in Saginaw is an excellent example. These types of programs should be expanded statewide.

We recommend that Michigan Farm Bureau continue to provide leadership in promoting crime prevention to Farm Bureau members and county Farm Bureaus. The Operation Identification, Operation Eyes or Neighborhood Watch programs should be expanded to those rural areas that demonstrate a need for such programs to reduce crime and suspicious activity.

Michigan Farm Bureau shall make available to the county Farm Bureaus, upon request and at cost, Operation Eyes or Neighborhood Watch, and Operation Identification materials.

NO-FAULT AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE We support the general principles inherent in Michigan No-Fault Insurance law in that people injured in automobile accidents now receive economic compensation more quickly and equitably. There remain aspects of the law which restrict rights and responsibilities of the individual and unnecessarily increase claims costs of no-fault, and ultimately the insurance premiums paid by motorists.

A court decision has removed much of the effectiveness of Michigan's No-Fault Auto Insurance law. We propose that this be corrected through legislative action.

TORT LIABILITY REFORM Farm Bureau supported the adoption of comprehensive tort reform measures and because the new laws were only a basic start, they must continue to be broadened.

The indiscriminate filing of tort liability claims through lawsuits, and the sometimes excessive judgments that are rendered, is a phenomenon that is costing Farm Bureau members, and others, much money. It is not uncommon for plaintiffs in such cases to be awarded multi-million dollar judgments.

Costs associated with paying the judgments are borne largely by the defendant's insurance company, and subsequently, passed on to its insureds through higher insurance premiums.

To alleviate the tremendous economic

pressure that this places on Farm Bureau members, hospitals, physicians, local governments, and others, we continue to support the adoption of the following comprehensive tort reform measures: abolish joint and several liability and allow defendants to name other principal defendants to the suit; mandate structured settlements for large monetary judgments; cap non-economic damages; reform prejudgment interest rules by reducing the interest rate; reform court procedures and/or jury instructions to inform the jury that judgments are nontaxable, perform calculations that reduce future damages to present value, review contingency fee arrangements; reform the collateral source rule to mandate revealing other sources of compensation for damages available to the plaintiff; enact a maximum seven-year statute of limitation on liability claims; prohibit the filing of liability claims in circuits other than those whose jurisdiction includes the location of the event from which the liability claims arises, or the plaintiff's home address; prohibit any person from filing a liability claim if the person is trespassing or breaking a law at the time of an injury; arbitration boards to consider all cases of alleged malpractice to decide which cases should be allowed to enter the court system; changes in the law which allows people up to the age of 21 to sue for complications of birth.

PRODUCT LIABILITY AND CONSUMER SAFETY We support making parties responsible for damages and losses caused by their unsubstantiated claims against approved products that result in market losses and the filing of frivolous lawsuits. We urge legislation correcting these problems be enacted.

We are concerned with the effect that these unsubstantiated, incorrect, or misdirected claims may have on consumer awareness especially in respect to actual emergency situations which may arise involving food safety.

AG TOURISM LIABILITY High liability rates discourage on-farm educational tours, visits, and agricultural rides. Farm Bureau should work with the Legislature to limit liability insurance rates to farmers providing on-farm educational rides, and other farm and agriculture experiences.

AGRICULTURAL SAFETY Farm accidents continue to be a problem. Farmers and farmworkers are inherently exposed to moving machinery parts and potentially dangerous situations. Many farmers, farm family members and employees are seriously injured each year because of farm accidents.

Michigan Farm Bureau should promote farm safety to: increase the farmer's awareness to farming practices that are unsafe, thereby reducing exposure to accidents; provide first-on-the-scene programs for farm families; encourage our members to take CPR and first aid certification classes; emphasize the importance and use of roll-

over protective structures and seat belts through films, demonstrations and seminars, etc; continue to promote the Agricultural Accident Rescue Program to emergency rescue personnel, farm families, and others; educate farm employers about their responsibility to enforce MI-OSHA regulations; make available to county Farm Bureaus, at cost, "engine emergency stop" decals that can be attached to farm equipment; encourage Farm Bureau members to conduct an annual safety survey of their agricultural operations to reduce risks such as missing guards and shields on tractors and agricultural machinery; encourage Farm Bureau members when they purchase used agricultural machinery to obtain and install all of the safety shielding and guards that are available for that particular machine. Such safety items include the PTO Master Shield and the PTO Stub Shield; not allow additional passengers, including children, to ride on agricultural equipment so as to reduce the number of tragic deaths and injuries which result from passengers falling off and being crushed by farm equipment.

To assist communication with police, fire departments and ambulance services, rural residents should have their house numbers plainly visible for day and night identification of their property. House numbers should be highly visible from the nearest public roadway.

A strong effort should be made to urge machinery companies to standardize the positions of all major operating controls of farm tractors, combines and other powered farm machinery as much as possible. This standardized position would eliminate operator error with equipment controls and help prevent many farm accidents.

A statistically valid farm accident survey has not been conducted in Michigan since 1968. We recommend that Michigan Farm Bureau support the 1988 Michigan Agricultural Accident Injury Pilot Study to be conducted by Michigan State University. This study will be conducted in two Michigan counties being organized with Farm Bureau volunteers and local farmers within the study area. The purpose of the survey is to gather information about farm accidents and work related illnesses and we urge Community Action Groups, Promotion and Education Committees, and county Young Farmer Committees to fully cooperate in the survey. We encourage this survey to be expanded to more counties. Using the information gathered, this will enable Farm Bureau to implement programs that will increase the quality of life for farm families and their employees.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE The general assistance programs that provide for the support of some residents of this state are needed to provide temporary incomes when eligibility requirements are met. However, due to the fact that general assistance can become lucrative, in some

cases recipients find it more attractive to receive assistance than seek gainful employment.

We support legislation passed in 1984 requiring general assistance recipients to register for job training programs or have their benefits terminated for up to three months. We support the efforts that have been made in exposing those recipients fraudulently receiving aid and urge continuation of these efforts.

Workfare programs are far better than welfare for those physically and mentally able to work. The dignity of work is important to every individual. It should, however, be coupled with a skills improvement program.

We urge local governments, commissions, nonprofit agencies, etc., to use the Department of Social Services employment program. This program will result in a boost in self-respect and the probability of becoming self-sufficient.

We support general assistance for those who need it, but it should not be available to those on strike. General assistance benefits should not be higher than surrounding states.

Michigan should require a six-month residence before being eligible for general assistance benefits.

ENGLISH AS NATIONAL LANGUAGE Farmers are often required by civil rights standards to do posting of warning signs and instructions in language other than English. The inconvenience and additional expense caused by this ruling is unfair. We urge that English be adopted as the one and only official language for the United States and the state of Michigan.

AIDS TESTING The potential losses to insurers as a result of indiscriminate insurance coverage for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) victims could have disastrous effects on the insurance industry. We believe that all insurers, whether life, accident, or health insurance companies, should have the right to request AIDS tests. We also support an increased effort in educating the public on the dangers of this disease and we support the research efforts being conducted to find a cure.

JURY VERDICTS We urge the judicial branch of government consider revising the criminal jury instructions to clarify what sanctions would be applicable to the "guilty but mentally ill" verdict as opposed to the "not guilty by reason of insanity" verdict. We believe the trial judge should be able to state the sanction options to both of these verdicts for a full understanding by the jury in their deliberations.

RIGHT-TO-KNOW The Right-to-Know Act deals with hazardous materials in the workplace and the proper furnishing of information to employees. Agriculture is included in this act.

We encourage Farm Bureau members to become informed about and conform to the Michigan Right-to-Know Act, in an ef-

fort to develop a safer workplace for employees and farm family members.

We commend MSU and others who cooperated in developing an information packet that assists agricultural employers in meeting the posting and training requirements of the act.

RAIL TRAILS A coalition of citizen groups has started a movement to convert abandoned railroad beds into recreation trails which would be developed under the Department of Natural Resources and would be operated as state parks with a user fee being charged. The trail would be for hikers, bicyclists, horseback riders, joggers and non-motorized vehicles.

The 1,000 mile long rail trail would follow abandoned railroad beds and would circle the Lower Peninsula, cross the Mackinac Bridge and continue to the western border of the Upper Peninsula. The concept of the trail is that it would be a world tourist attraction and was named the Sesquicentennial Discover Michigan Trail.

Concern has been shown by the agriculture community as to a variety of situations surrounding this trail, both positive and negative. The rail trail opens new and interesting possibilities for added income for farmers in the form of farm markets, bed and breakfast in farm homes and farm tours. It also opens the doors to increase litter, liability, vandalism, theft and the questions of easements and right-of-ways to name a few.

The question of the 100-year-old reversion clause which would revert the abandoned railroad bed property back to the original landowners was rendered null and void with recent laws and court cases. However, the adjacent landowners have continued to pay taxes on the right-of-way for this land in many cases.

We urge the passage of legislation that would allow all abandoned railroad beds to revert back to adjacent landowners, or would grant those landowners have first right of refusal for the purchase of those abandoned railroad beds. Railroad beds should be blocked with fences or other methods to restrict unauthorized travel as soon as the railroad bed is abandoned.

We oppose the establishment of hiking, bicycling, horseback or motor driven vehicle trails on former railroad right-of-ways unless the adjacent property on both sides of the abandoned railroad bed is state owned land. Farm Bureau members' concerns include: a conflict of land use in zoned agricultural areas; the possible loss of tax base; the requirement of additional police and fire protection (occasionally, state parks have been closed for unruly behavior and vandalism even when all entrances and exits are controlled); many right-of-ways across railroad tracks were granted by the railroad companies to people having property on both sides of the tracks and the moving of equipment or livestock across a rail trail could be a hazard to trail users; costly rest areas would need to be established and main-

tained along the trail; the construction and maintenance of fencing to protect property owners would be costly; by the establishment of rail trails, these trails would increase the threat of vandalism, theft, trespassing and liability lawsuits to the adjacent landowners.

We urge that every effort be employed to protect the rights of the adjacent property owners when a railroad bed is abandoned.

Policy Reaffirmations

COMMISSION SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT Since 1945, the Michigan Department of Agriculture has been controlled by the commission system. The bipartisan commission is appointed by the governor and approved by the Legislature. The commission sets policy for the department and hires the director.

Under this commission system, the average tenure of the director has been nine years, which allows for continuity of programs. Prior to this system, the directors appointed by the governor served an average of 2.6 years.

The present commission system has allowed for continuity and consistency of programs. We strongly support maintaining the commission system of government, including authority for the commission to employ the director.

MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION PROMOTION FUNDS State funding has been used to promote many Michigan products including agricultural products. Agricultural commodity promotion groups have, in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Agriculture, developed and carried out several Michigan agricultural product promotions. We support the use of state funding when available through the Michigan Department of Agriculture to match commodity group funds for promotion of Michigan agricultural products. Such funds should not be used for advertising product brands.



MARKETING AND BARGAINING

LEGISLATION The Michigan Agricultural Marketing and Bargaining Act (P.A. 344 as amended) has proven to be a fair and equitable procedure through which marketing and bargaining associations and processors negotiate fruit and vegetable prices and other terms of trade. We support: aggressive action to defend marketing and bargaining majority rule concept legislation. We will oppose any efforts by opponents of P.A. 344 and national farm bargaining legislation to weaken or cripple its operations and effectiveness; amendments to P.A. 344 which would clarify where necessary the provisions and procedures to make it more workable; amendments to the federal Agricultural Fair Practices Act to allow marketing associations to represent all producers of a commodity under the majority rule concept; action to assist farmers in other states in the development and enactment of state marketing and bargaining legislation.

We urge that Farm Bureau at all levels give the highest priority to marketing and bargaining legislation.

BANKRUPTCY OF AGRICULTURAL

HANDLERS Agricultural producers are severely affected when handlers of agricultural products file for bankruptcy.

Legislation at both the state and federal levels such as the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA) and the Michigan Grain Dealers Act, have been adopted which begin to reduce farmer's risk. We feel additional changes in federal bankruptcy laws are needed to further protect farmers: in order to increase a farmer's chance to receive some compensation in a bankruptcy of a handler of agriculture products, we believe a farmer's bankruptcy status should be upgraded from an unsecured creditor to a secured creditor; and that a change be made in the federal bankruptcy code to prohibit a trustee in bankruptcy from recovering preferential payments made to farmers on overdue accounts within 90 days of the filing of the bankruptcy petition for delivery of product to a processor, elevator, or other purchaser.

We believe farmers have a responsibility to know who they are dealing with. Education is needed to inform farmers of the Uniform Commercial Code and Michigan Grain Dealers Act on protection available in the form of a lien that they can take against an elevator in the amount of the commodity delivered.

We also support amending the Michigan Grain Dealers Act to provide protection to producers who have delivered grain and beans to a grain dealer on a forward contract, basis contract or a cash sale, but have not yet been paid.

FORESTRY AS AN AGRICULTURAL

ENTERPRISE We believe since many farmers derive some or all of their income from the growing and harvesting of Christmas trees, logs, pulp and other forest prod-

ucts, that this constitutes an agricultural enterprise and should be recognized as such by the state of Michigan. We support efforts to better define what forest industry activities should be considered agricultural regarding issues such as truck licenses, tax on equipment and supply purchases, right-to-farm and others.

We are opposed to legislation that authorizes the state of Michigan to lease large tracts of state-owned forest lands over a long period of time for the purpose of commercial company harvesting of forest products.

MSU SEED BREEDING PROGRAMS

The issue of how new varieties of various crops are released from MSU seed breeding programs is of deep concern to Michigan agriculture.

Historically when new seed varieties are developed by the MSU public research program, a few hundred pounds of seed have been released to the Michigan Foundation Seed Association for increased development, and disease screening. The foundation seed group then produces and sells foundation seed to Michigan Crop Improvement Association members to grow certified seed. Certified seed is then sold to commercial farmers.

The Soybean Promotion Committee of Michigan, the Michigan Bean Commission, Michigan Foundation Seed Association, and Michigan Crop Improvement Association all contribute to the variety development program, along with the state and federal government, at MSU.

We do not feel it is necessary to pay MSU faculty and staff royalties for their research activities, but rather support increasing their salaries to be competitive with similar research units at other universities.

INSPECTION OF MOISTURE

TESTING EQUIPMENT Farmers who wish to sell crops at elevators or placed under CCC loan must rely on the accuracy of moisture testing equipment. Currently there are no state regulations requiring inspection of the moisture testing equipment and a standardized shrink chart for grain dealers. We support the enactment of a program to require spot inspection and annual certification of moisture testing equipment and the development of a standardized shrink chart by the Weights and Measures Division of the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

LOW INTEREST LOANS We appreciate the Legislature recognizing the need for low interest farm loans. The program was developed for a limited time. Because of numerous factors, the need for this program continues.

The Legislature has extended the program until March of 1988. We request that the Legislature carefully monitor this program and extend the deadline if conditions warrant such action.

DISEASE CONTROL Control of plant and animal diseases is a constant challenge to farmers. Many contagious diseases can be spread by the casual movement between farms by farmers and various agribusiness representatives. Farmers and farm visitors must constantly follow practices to minimize spreading diseases between farms. Disposable footwear, sanitizing footwear and other disease control practices must be strictly followed. Education of farm visitors will also help to further ensure protection of production plants and animals.

BIOLOGICAL PEST CONTROL The increasing restrictions on pesticide use pose many uncertainties as to their future availability. While considerable progress has been made to develop biological controls against pests, much remains to be done. We support continued research to further develop effective biological pest control programs.

WATER RIGHTS Agriculture is highly dependent on water. Michigan is well known for its abundant water resources. However, the demands for water and the rights to it, are increasing areas of conflict.

The demand for water from the three largest sectors of Michigan's economy—agriculture, industry, tourism—is expected to increase during the rest of the 1980s. Because settlement of disputes by court action under current common law is slow, expensive, tedious and uncertain, we will support enabling legislation that would: authorize county Water Use Review Boards to be appointed by the county Board of Commissioners from persons nominated by local interested groups; the board shall consist of five members of which two shall be full-time farmers, one of whom shall be an irrigator using a major amount of water; one representing recreational users; one homeowner; and one person representing industry or business; the purpose of the board shall be to review and recommend settlement of disputes among water users. The board may use appropriate resource persons in the review and development of recommendations to solve water disputes. To minimize court involvement in water disputes, the parties shall review the dispute with the board prior to initiating court action. We support local control as far as possible and since streams, rivers and lakes often extend beyond county and/or state boundaries, we urge a system of multi-county and interstate review boards be provided for in any legislation; implement a water use permit program administered by the county Water Use Review Board for surface and groundwater on a critical water area basis. No permit should be put into effect until critical water shortage areas are established. The county Board of Commissioners may implement a water use permit program upon recommendation from the county Water Use Review Board; provide for the concept of minimum instream flow for the protection

of the aquatic wildlife resource and recreational interests. Because monitoring and enforcement of flow could be costly and complex, we recommend that disputes regarding stream flow be resolved by the proposed county Water Use Review Board on a case by case basis; modify the severance rule to allow riparian rights to be restored to lands that have been rejoined to parcels that currently have riparian rights, provided that minimum water levels are maintained; the Riparian Doctrine should be applicable to groundwater. The use of monitoring wells should be applied to determine the cone of influence, amount of draw-down, rate of recovery, and whether the water table is being permanently affected; allow the interbasin transfer of irrigation water on land which is immediately contiguous and adjacent to land which touches lakes, streams or other watercourse so long as such land is held in the ownership of an individual or other legal entity and is held for the purpose of agricultural production of food and fiber; require all fresh water wells and irrigation units to have check valves or proper safety equipment to protect both ground and surface water from possible contamination; require a statewide and state funded hydrological study to be completed to identify the source, quality and quantity of our groundwater.

We appreciate new research that is being done on crop and soil moisture. We feel the final decision on irrigation scheduling should be left to the best management decision of the farmer.

DRAIN CODE REVISION Michigan farmland is enhanced by an adequate and well-managed drain system. Nearly 12 million acres of Michigan farmland require drainage to produce food, feed and fiber.

We support amendments recommended by the Michigan Department of Agriculture Drain Code Task Force which would retain authority for administration of the Drain Code in the Department of Agriculture. We support revisions in the Drain Code which would benefit agriculture including, but not limited to, the following: provide access to the minority of the landowners in petitions for a drain; require construction standards that minimize negative public opinion aspects of drain construction and maintenance; encourage a program by local governmental units to manage stormwater coming from urban areas in a manner compatible with overall watershed needs; provide for the establishment of a fund for annual maintenance work on each new drain constructed or in existence as of a specified date. The fund, not to exceed the three-year estimated maintenance cost, would be established by an annual assessment on landowners benefiting from the drain. Provision for reimbursing a landowner for approved maintenance performed on that portion of the drain on the landowner's property should be provided.

We also support an amendment to allow for an assessment against landowners who contributed to the impairment of a drain through abusive practices such as excessive erosion from improper soil management, pasturing of livestock in or on drain systems and improper installation of drainage inlets.

Notice of any change of design or assessment from the proposed project presented at the drain hearing should be delivered or mailed to all landowners in the drainage district before the construction begins.

When a drain fails to perform the purposes for which it was designed and constructed, the drain commissioner should be notified and empowered to act, with concurrence of an appointed three-person board, to repair and/or clean out the drain obstruction to bring it to original standards without petition and long delays.

Drainage laws in other nearby states provide for routine maintenance which benefits agriculture specifically and the community in general. We believe that all revisions to the drain code should be limited to drain issues and not include other issues such as water rights, irrigation or any other water issues. We are opposed to a complete rewrite of the Drain Code. We vigorously oppose amendments that would add additional and unnecessary expenses and delays to drainage projects.

County Farm Bureaus should schedule information meetings with their county drain commissioner, Soil Conservation District and others who may have an impact on maintaining and improving agricultural drainage.

We will aggressively pursue these revisions to the drain code and urge that Michigan Farm Bureau be represented on groups seeking to revise the Drain Code.

AIR POLLUTION CONTROL COMMISSION The long standing exemption of agricultural odors from the definition of air pollution has been overturned by the Air Pollution Control Commission. This will have a significant and negative impact on farmers throughout the state. We will support passage of legislation to clarify agriculture's exemption from industrial air pollution standards.

AGRICULTURAL IMPACT STATEMENT Whenever a proposed project in an agricultural area requires an environmental impact statement, we recommend that an economic impact statement and an agricultural impact statement also be required.

MINERAL, GAS AND OIL RIGHTS Public Act 42 of 1963 permits oil and gas rights to revert to the owner of the property unless they are reregistered by the owner of the specific mineral or petroleum rights. We believe this principle should be extended to other kinds of mineral rights. We recommend that the present 20-year claim period be reduced to 10 years.

We oppose attempts to ban exploration for mineral deposits. We support legislation requiring owners of mineral rights to notify landowners of their intent to explore for, or develop, minerals. Every attempt should be made to mutually negotiate easements and damage.

We recommend that any person leasing oil, gas or mineral rights be required to register with the state of Michigan and display the license issued for identification.

An agricultural impact statement should be required when an application for a drilling permit is filed.

TRESPASS BY OFF ROAD

VEHICLES Trespassing by off-road recreational vehicles (ORVs) is a nuisance and often results in significant damage to crops. The Recreational Trespass Act, P.A. 323 of 1976, requires the operator of an ORV to obtain written permission before operating the ORV on private land. Public Act 159 of 1980, known as the Turfing Law, provides for penalties, including restitution, when crops are damaged. Citizens should be made aware of the law and violators should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

WILDERNESS DESIGNATION Experience has shown that the no management concept applied to certain areas under the Wilderness Act of 1964 has resulted in the serious degradation of the resource. A preponderance of evidence has demonstrated that the removal of all man-made facilities has resulted in sanitation and health problems that threaten the values the act was designed to preserve. Established wilderness criteria further threaten such areas by prohibiting the employment of power tools and vehicles in watershed management, trail maintenance, soil treatment, noxious weed control, waste management and fire protection.

Wilderness management is inconsistent with sound multiple-use principles. We oppose further expansion and urge re-evaluation of all existing wilderness areas.

WOOD ENERGY Michigan has large areas of timber both in public and private ownership. The production, harvesting, processing and transportation of wood products provides jobs and an important economic base. We support the concept of wood energy as a viable use of low grade timber, especially as a renewable fuel resource. The adoption of wood energy should be encouraged where economically feasible.

TAXATION A balanced and equitable tax structure at the national, state and local levels is necessary to create job opportunities through economic development and the creation of a healthy business climate. We support a good mix of revenue sources, credits and exemptions to help direct and encourage economic activity.

A tax structure can result in encouraging or discouraging economic activity by creating a noncompetitive atmosphere. Tax exemptions and credits are often used to

bring balance and equity to the system. Some of these techniques have been used to promote agricultural production in Michigan and make it competitive with other states. We continue to strongly support those tax expenditures used to create jobs and tax equity for the agricultural economy.

ROAD BRIDGE AND PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT

We oppose the practice of bridge construction and repair being assessed to property owners when a drainage network is cleaned and/or improved.

PREMIUM TAX There is presently a proposal to tax insurance premiums at a rate of 2% on workers' compensation, life, liability, auto, truck, and group accident and health; and 3% on fire and allied lines. We oppose such legislation.

SALE OF TAX REVERTED LANDS

The state of Michigan has gained ownership of many parcels of land due to non-payment of property taxes. Some of these parcels are small, isolated, and difficult and expensive to manage. These tracts may be more valuable and put to better use as privately owned land. We support the sale or trade of such tracts to private individuals.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

The mission of the Agricultural Experiment Station is to provide a viable research and development program in Michigan for agriculture and natural resources.

Specific goals are to provide support for a productive and expanding agriculture for Michigan; the development of management strategies for wise utilization of natural resources; protection of crops, livestock, forests, and other natural resources from pests and other hazards; new product development; greater efficiency in production, processing, storage, transportation, marketing; better human nutrition; wise community development; improved housing and well-being; assist developing countries; and expand export markets for Michigan produced commodities.

Michigan is in direct competition with not only other states, but also other countries; and to remain competitive, we must have up-to-date research from the various Michigan Experiment Stations. We stress the need for appropriate funds for the outlying MSU Experiment Stations with special consideration to the Upper Peninsula.

We are proud of the work done at the Experiment Station. We commend the personnel for their efforts to maintain quality research programs on limited appropriations.

Good research is a continuing process and cannot be turned on and off. Agricultural research has proven to be a sound investment that has returned great dividends to all citizens for over a century. We urge the Legislature to recognize the need to appropriate sufficient funds to carry on research projects.

We support updating and funding the five-year plan for staffing agricultural research developed by the MSU Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service.

4-H We agree with and support the MSU Five-Year Plan statement that: "4-H Youth Development Programs represent a continuing effort to aid young people as they mature in an age of technology characterized by compelling social problems. Activities focus on contributing to the growth and development of Michigan young people to help cultivate and nurture personal values which will enable boys and girls to assume responsibilities as citizens in a state and national democratic society. A five-fold thrust, planned and conducted with the assistance of local community volunteer leaders, is designed to: help youth apply knowledge and science through various projects, appreciate the worth of work, assist in the choice of a satisfying career, manage their lives wisely, and become effective leaders and future citizens."

We are proud that MFB is supporting the 4-H foundation both financially and with leadership. We urge county Farm Bureau members to participate in this program.

NORTHERN MICHIGAN CRITICAL ROAD USE FUND

Northern Michigan agriculture and forest industries experience many unique, seasonal problems in the transportation of commodities. We support enactment of a Critical Road Use Fund. The creation of such a fund is necessary to improve the northern Michigan transportation infrastructure in order to continue development of a growing agriculture and forestry industry.

COUNTY ROAD COMMISSIONS The Board of County Road Commissioners is a unit of local government responsible for maintenance and construction of most roads within a county. The three-member boards have six-year staggered terms and are, in most cases, appointed by the county Board of Commissioners.

A local option provision in the law permits the election of the board of county Road Commissioners. They are elected in 26 counties. We continue to support this system of local control selection and oppose any effort to shift control of county roads to some other agency.

We believe each county should have the option to decide if it needs a three or five member county Road Commission regardless of population.

We believe that county Road Commissions must dedicate themselves to using the most economical means possible, including the receiving of private bids on all road construction, to reconstruct and maintain quality roads and to make tax revenues cover as many of the pressing needs as possible.

Currently, townships that are financially able have the right to contract for their own road building program, especially

when county matching funds are not available. County road commission permission is required.

HEALTH Farm Bureau members have a real concern for their family's good health. We encourage members to support health promotion and disease prevention through practicing good health habits. Farm Bureau members should serve on local health and hospital boards where decisions are made affecting services and costs.

We recommend: a long-range education program be launched to help Farm Bureau members understand the importance of health, wellness and related issues; en-



Lansing Legislative Seminars provide public affairs experience for FFA students such as these young men and women from the Charlotte chapter who attended the Feb. 9 seminar.

couraging medical interns to serve in rural areas for a determined length of time as a condition for receiving subsidized education; that at Farm Bureau meetings, health and wellness should be incorporated, and health screening should be promoted; that the general public respect the rights of physically disabled persons by not utilizing spaces reserved for the handicapped. We encourage law enforcement agencies to better police such spaces for violations.

MEDICAL HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

County medical care facilities have provided health care to rural Michigan for many years. Thirty-nine such facilities currently exist in Michigan, but their future may be threatened unless some changes are made.

In 1980, the Legislature imposed Maintenance of Effort Assessments against county medical care facilities when such facilities treat patients whose medical bills are paid by Medicaid. These assessments are not levied against similar facilities in the private sector.

In 1984 the Legislature froze the daily rate for assessments (Maintenance of Effort Assessments) which relieved some economic pressure for the counties.

Further efforts may be needed to ensure that county medical care facilities remain available to provide important health care services to rural residents.

We support the establishment of active dialogue between Farm Bureau, at all levels, and other organizations interested in rural health care to identify issues that will be important to rural health care availability when future Maintenance of Effort Assessment negotiations take place with the Legislature in 1988.

AGRICULTURAL FIRST AID Safety in the workplace should be a goal of every Farm Bureau member. Nationwide, agriculture is one of the most hazardous occupations. Farm Bureau is not opposed to first aid regulations as long as the regulations are not excessive upon the employer; are practical, factual documentation of need; include agricultural representation in the drafting process; and actually help to administer basic first aid to injured workers.

We support the concept of 911 emergency telephone communications as it provides the public more direct and immediate access to police, fire and emergency medical agencies. We encourage the cooperative exploration by state and local units of government in establishing 911 emergency telephone regions throughout Michigan. We support planning and implementation efforts having the participation of all levels of government within a 911 region.

We encourage our members to become CPR and first aid trained.

We will continue to work with the Agricultural First Aid Advisory Committee and make input as needed.

MI-OSHA We encourage all farmers to become aware of any occupational hazards and voluntarily adopt safety programs. We also support the concept of appropriate safety regulation. We oppose MI-OSHA regulations that are more strict than existing federal OSHA standards.

As MI-OSHA continues as an enforcement agency, it is essential that representation be provided for agriculture. We support the creation of an Agricultural Advisory Committee which shall be consulted on all MI-OSHA regulatory proposals affecting the agricultural industry.

We favor educational programs and no penalty first-time inspections.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES The original purpose of the Michigan Employment Security Commission, part of the federal system, was to bring together employers and qualified employees.

We will work with other organizations to assess problems with the labor exchange function of the employment service and develop legislation to achieve an employment service at the state and federal levels which answers the job exchange needs of agriculture.

JOB TRAINING Continuation of job training programs will be necessary to help many unemployed people, including economically displaced farmers, find employment. We support job training programs to encourage employers to hire the unemployed and initiate on the job training. The Youth Corps and Workfare programs have been effective and we encourage the continuance of such programs.

MI-OSHA CONFINED SPACE ENTRY Confined spaces, including toxic or oxygen deficit atmospheres in agricultural confined spaces, have contributed to workplace fatalities over the past several years. We are not opposed to a MI-OSHA confined space entry regulation as long as the regulation is easily adaptable to existing farm workplaces, requires a minimal amount of administration, and specifically designates agricultural confined spaces.

PUBLIC UTILITIES Activities of public utility companies take them across much of Michigan's farmland. They often damage underground tile in farmlands when installing new facilities. Farm owners should be notified a minimum of 30 days prior to installation of such new facilities so the farmer can identify the locations of tile and prevent damages.

Electric and telephone utility transmission lines, gas lines and oil rights-of-way for these purposes should be standardized as nearly as possible with contracts or other legal instruments including as many protections to the owner as possible. Utility companies should physically expose underground wires and pipes when requested by the landowner.

We further believe that consideration should be given to the leasing rather than sale of rights-of-way.

We support legislation that would return abandoned utility routes (routes unused for two years) to the land tracts originally yielding these lands for the utility purposes.

We support legislation to require licensing of land acquisition agents for oil, gas and utility companies. The legislation should require that landowners be informed of their legal rights, the proposed use of the land, the amount of royalty, if any, and the state agency that can provide further information.

AQUACULTURE Michigan can be proud of a very diverse agriculture, which supplies a variety to our diet and stability in our economy. With a varied climate and soils surrounded by the Great Lakes there are many opportunities for unique agricultural products. Aquaculture and commercial fishing are major contributions to our Michigan food basket. We urge that these activities be recognized by the Michigan Department of Agriculture for their contribution to our agricultural economy. We support the allocation of funds for the research and updating of fish population surveys to more effectively manage and utilize this natural resource.

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Presidents' Conference

(continued from page 10)

drawing. The grand prize winner's name will be drawn at Summerfest '88, July 20.

As part of another incentive program, county FB presidents who have established a county CAC and set up two new CAGs in their counties, will be awarded specially designed CAG jackets. At the Presidents' Conference Alpena County President Bud Wegmeyer and Roger VanDamme, president of Hiawathaland FB, received their jackets from MFB President Jack Laurie. □

Governor's Conference

(continued from page 11)

ingly, consumers are looking for nutritional value, wholesomeness, freshness, and flavor," he said.

"Michigan foods are very high quality, and now is the time to begin marketing that quality."

He continued, "To assure that consumers who buy Michigan foods know that they're getting the highest and best quality product, we will be putting in place a premium seal of quality for Michigan-grown foods which meet the highest standards of the Michigan Department of Agriculture."

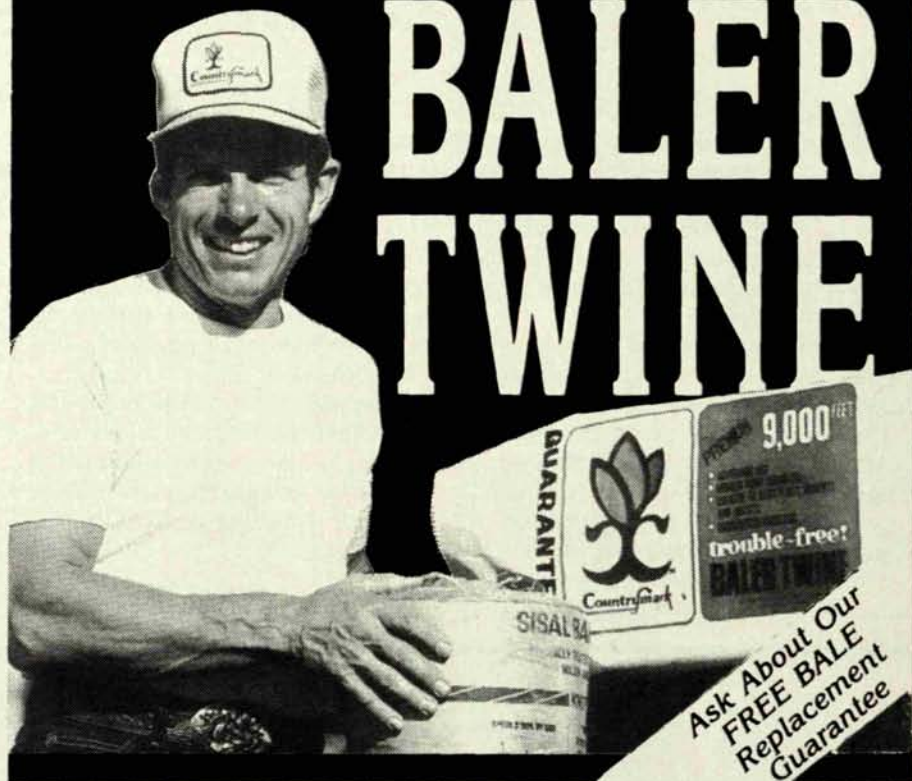
Blanchard told the conference audience that input from the food industry is needed to establish the quality standards and make the program work.

Other conference highlights included workshops focused on international trade development and global competitiveness, a preview by MDA Director Kindinger of the new fall/winter advertisements for the food and agricultural marketing campaign, and a status report on MDA program efforts to address the needs of Michigan's food industry.

MFB President Jack Laurie and Kellogg Company Vice Chair Robert Nichols served as co-chairpersons for the conference. □

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1988 Corn Program Participation

The adjoining worksheet has been developed to guide Farm Bureau members on 1988 corn program participation. The USDA final details of the 1988 farm programs were delayed until the federal budget deficit reconciliation took place in late December.

Certain key program announcements include the projected deficiency payment for corn of \$1.10/bushel. The advanced deficiency payment will be 40% of the estimated final payment. One-half of the 40% will be paid in cash at the time of program sign-up and the rest of the payment will be made in generic certificates some time in May. Sign-up

for the 1988 corn program ends April 15.

In addition, wheat and feed grain producers may enroll in the 0/92 optional acreage diversion program. Under the terms of 0/92, a farmer could idle all or a portion—up to 92%—of his permitted acreage and receive a deficiency payment. The payment made under 0/92 is guaranteed not to fall below the estimated deficiency payment rate of \$1.10/bushel for corn and \$1.53/bushel for wheat. Program enrollment for 0/92 will be held through March 11.

In the worksheet we have used a full deficiency payment for the projected payment and used last year's program as a guide to other details. Our working example includes:

- Target Price \$2.93
- Loan Rate \$1.77
- Fall Corn Price \$1.90
- Fall Soybean Prices \$5.70
- Acreage 200
- Corn Base 100
- ASCS Yield 120
- Expected Corn Yield 130
- Expected Bean Yield 40

We assumed the out-of-program farm would stay with a 50-50 rotation.

(continued on next page)

1988 PROGRAM WORKSHEET

This example uses 200 acres with 100 acres of corn base.

	EXAMPLE				YOUR FARM			
	NOT IN PROGRAM	20% ONLY	20+ 10% PLD	FULL 0/92	NOT IN PROGRAM	20% ONLY	20+ 10% PLD	FULL 0/92
CORN								
1. Base Acres	100	100	100	100	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. ASCS Yield	---	120	120	120	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Expected Yield	130	130	130	130	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Acres Planted	100	80	70	0	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Program Bushels (line 2) × (line 4)	---	9,600	8,400	8,400	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Expected Production (line 3) × (line 4)	13,000	10,400	9,100	0	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Variable Costs Per Acre (fert., seed, chem., etc.)	180	180	180	180	_____	_____	_____	_____
SOYBEANS								
8. Expected Yield	40	40	40	40	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. Acres Planted	100	100	100	100	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. Diversion Payment \$1.75 × (line 1) × (line 2) × 10%			2,100	2,100	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. Deficiency Payment (line 5) × (\$1.10)		\$10,560	\$9,240	\$8,501	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. Corn Sales (line 6) × (\$1.90)	\$24,700	\$19,760	\$17,290	\$ 0	_____	_____	_____	_____
13. Cost Savings (line 7) × non-planted acres		\$3,600	\$5,400	\$18,000	_____	_____	_____	_____
14. Additional Costs \$15 × non-planted acres		\$ 300	\$ 450	\$ 1,500	_____	_____	_____	_____
15. Soybean Sales (line 8) × (line 9) × \$5.70	\$22,800	\$22,800	\$22,800	\$22,800	_____	_____	_____	_____
16. Gross Revenue lines 10 + 11 + 12 + 13 + 15 - 14	\$45,500	\$56,420	\$56,380	\$49,901	_____	_____	_____	_____
17. Advance Payments \$0.44 × (line 5) + (50% × line 10)		\$4,224	\$4,746	\$4,746	_____	_____	_____	_____

Agrinomic Update

(continued from previous page)

Make your own assumptions and plug your own numbers in. Work through as many examples as you can. Each example brings more understanding of the possibilities.

We worked through dozens of examples changing price levels, the ratio of corn and soybean prices, yields, the ratio of corn and soybean yields, and the ratio of expected and ASCS yields. We also changed several factors at the same time. The general conclusions are:

- Basic program participation is still recommended.

- 0/92 is not competitive.

- Leaving the program and planting more soybeans is attractive with prices over \$6 and more than three times corn prices.

Some other observations include:

- Higher soybean prices reduce the profit impact of corn base.

- Paid land diversion (PLD) is more attractive with short crops, but it takes a severe drought to make PLD work.

Legislative Review

(continued from page 7)

federal EPA estimates salt caused \$5 billion damage last year to roads, cars, etc.

- **State Income Tax** — S.B. 8 passed. It allows for an \$1,500 exemption on children's earnings including interest income. FB supported.

- **Railroad Rights-of-Way** — S.B. 299 allows abandoned rights-of-way to revert to property owner and provides for the procedure. If property is not claimed, it is to be put up for sale. Also provides requirements for any state department owning a right-of-way.

- **Ethanol** — S.B. 531, P.A. 269, creates a task force to study alternative fuels with ethanol. Could lead to mandatory use in some areas, such as Colorado, for air pollution control.

- **Crime** — Sixty-nine bills have been introduced; eight have passed. The rest of the bills are either on House or Senate floor.

- Fall cash corn prices must approach \$2.20 before opting out of the program is best, even with no yield reduction as set-aside comes back into production.

Longer-term considerations reduce the attractiveness of adding more soybeans. Program bases depend on acres planted. To cut corn acreage this year reduces corn base in years to come. Rotation also argues against an all-bean crop plan.

Opting out of programs cuts you off from PIK possibilities. "PIK & Roll" has been profitable.

You may have an ASCS farm on which all beans is a good option. Or a farm with such a small base that you will choose to leave the program and plant more corn. Each farm is unique. Do your homework on each unit. □

Agrinomic Update is prepared monthly by the MFB Commodity Activities and Research Department (CARD). This month's topic was prepared by Robert Craig, manager, CARD.

- **Death Penalty** — Senate Joint Resolution "M" would put issue on 1988 ballot. Would apply to first degree murder. FB policy supports.

- **Truck Weights** — H.B. 5335 would reduce truck gross weight limits to 80,000 pounds (presently 164,000 pounds). Several surrounding states have the lower limit.

- **Education Reform** — Several bills. Senate committee working on S.B. 547 requires a core curricula; S.B. 548 requires K-12 school board to develop an annual school improvement plan; S.B. 549 requires annual school education report to be available to the public.

Finance reform will receive a great deal of attention. House Taxation Committee is having special study sessions on numerous proposals. The governor and legislative leaders have agreed to establish a joint
(continued on page 30)



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Grassroots Perspective

“You Said It”

Here's how Community Action Group members around the state responded after discussion of the December 1987 topic, "Improving Net Farm Income."

Recommended actions:

- Add income through diversified business enterprises.
- Manage inputs more carefully to reduce costs/waste.
- Attention to product quality.
- Increase foreign trade opportunities.

FB's role in implementing these ideas:

- Working with lawmakers and government agencies.
- Demonstrate FB unity in support of policies.
- Continue support for agriculture research.
- Opportunities to share entrepreneurial ideas.

Other suggestions for improving farm income:

- Roadside markets, ag tourism.
- New crops and new by-product uses such as ethanol from corn.
- Increase products promotion.

Getting Together

■ New Community Action Groups formed last month are:

Ingham County — The Super Colliders
Clinton County — Class 02 Irregulars
Hiawathaland — St. Nicholas

These new CAG members are now eligible for the Magic Vacation drawing. Finalists, whose names are selected in a weekly drawing through July 13, may win a Caribbean Cruise/Florida vacation for two. The following persons are weekly finalists through Feb. 8:

Antrim County — Lila Carpenter, No Man's Land
Presque Isle County — Leann Hopp, Countryside Diversified
Huron County — Lori Swartzen-druber, The Zookeepers

CAG Friends Remembered

■ Members of the Stalwart County-Liners Community Action Group in Chippewa County offer this memorial for FB members Bob and Carolyn Wilson, who were killed in an auto accident Christmas Eve 1987.

Bob and Carolyn's Farm Bureau roots went deep. They were among the original members when the Chippewa County FB was formed. Bob was an agent for FB Insurance for 28 years, retiring in 1986. During that time he supported many FB-sponsored programs including the America and Me essay contests for school children.

They were probably best known by their fellow FB members as coordinators for the county's direct marketing program for citrus, frozen fruits and vegetables. Those who helped on delivery day had a brief glimpse of the many hours that the Wilsons volunteered before the products were in the hands of the members.

Bob and Carolyn were always there when something needed to be done whether in their church, school, community or family. Bob was involved in township government, serving for 37 years as treasurer. They were Mom and Dad to six children and several exchange students. □

Discussion Topic

Status of the Ethanol Industry

■ The use of alcohol fuels has a long history in the United States. Efforts to develop markets for alcohol fuels distilled from agricultural products were first made in the early 1900s. Although usage declined when cheap gasoline became available from U.S. oil fields, alcohol fuels were again marketed briefly in the 1930s.

The spiraling oil prices of the 1970s stimulated new interest in ethanol alcohol made from corn and other farm crops. This modern product was a 90% gasoline/10% alcohol blend called gasohol.

Federal legislation in 1978 and 1980 also helped boost ethanol production. Today, tax incentives continue to be important in ensuring that alcohol fuels are cost competitive. Currently, the fuels have a 6 cent per gallon federal fuel tax exemption, while 28 states have additional exemptions of varying amounts.

The Michigan tax exemption was phased out several years ago.

Although oil prices have dropped considerably in recent years, ethanol production and use has increased. In 1979 only 8 million bushels of grain were used for ethanol, but the 1987 figures are expected to total about 340 million bushels.

About 7% of all gasoline sold today is an ethanol blend. There are about 55 ethanol producing plants in over 20 states, but only one operating plant in Michigan. That facility, in Jackson County, has a 3 million gallon a year capacity, considered small by industry standards.

Prospects for the Future

The National Advisory Panel on Cost-Effectiveness of Fuel Ethanol Production recently released its 129 page report. The indepth study keys

in on several areas including the technology and economics of the industry; ethanol fuels and agriculture; air quality benefits of ethanol blended fuel; and ethanol and U.S. energy security.

The major conclusions of the panel include:

- Ethanol's steady growth has been supported by federal and/or state incentives.

- Ethanol is recognized as a gasoline extender, octane enhancer and a means of improving air quality by cutting carbon monoxide 10-30%.

- Increased production efficiency could reduce the cost.

- Current federal tax incentives make ethanol blends price competitive.

- Research is needed into human consumption of high protein and vitamin-rich food by-products currently used in livestock feed.

- The federal government should provide stable and consistent incentives and include ethanol as a part of long-term energy policies.

- Ethanol can provide a major market for corn and other feed grains, increase farm income, and save on federal farm program costs to more than offset current federal tax incentives.

- Ethanol is one of a very few available liquid fuel alternatives to reduce the increasing United States dependence on foreign oil. Ethanol is produced from renewable, domes-

tically grown feedstock that is not subject to foreign domination.

In the report, Bill Swank, chairperson of the panel and executive vice president of the Ohio Farm Bureau, said "ethanol production is good for everybody—the federal treasury because it reduces farm program payments, the farmer because it means higher corn prices, for cleaner air because it reduces carbon monoxide and for energy independence because it reduces the need for imported oil."

He pointed out that continuation of the 6 cent per gallon federal tax exemption or its equivalent is essential. He also noted that the Congressional Budget Reports from 1982 to 1987 show \$17 billion in subsidies to the U.S. gas and oil industry...far more than the assistance provided to ethanol.

A Michigan Perspective

The Michigan Department of Agriculture reports that gasohol consumption in the state in 1987 was 15% greater than in 1986. Helped in large part by aggressive promotion efforts, Michigan, for the past six or seven years, has been one of the top three states in the nation in consumption of gasohol.

Michigan Farm Bureau has been a leader in the promotion of ethanol. Farmers Petroleum Cooperative, an MFB affiliate company, was the first

organization in the state to offer ethanol blended fuel to the public.

FB policy passed by the voting delegates at the state annual meeting states in part: "Ethanol is the best replacement for the required reduction of lead in fuel. It contributes to a clean and safe environment through major reductions of pollutants in carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons.

"We encourage additional research using ethanol...continued production from farm products" and "economic incentives to encourage...production facilities in Michigan." □

Discussion Questions:

- How many members of your group use ethanol fuels?
- What are some reasons members of your group do or do not use ethanol fuels?
- Do you think there should continue to be a 6 cent/gallon federal tax exemption for ethanol fuel?
- What kind of incentives should the state or federal government provide to increase the use of ethanol fuels?

This month's Discussion Topic was prepared by Robert E. Smith, MFB senior legislative counsel.



Ag Olympics Draw Mall Show Visitors

■ Farm Bureau members from Bay, Gratiot, Midland, Saginaw, Huron and Tuscola counties took a little bit of the farm to the Saginaw Fashion Square Mall, Feb. 4-6. With commodity displays and special program activities, the farmers provided education and entertainment to their city neighbors.

One mall show activity was especially popular. The FB leaders and news media representatives competed in Agriculture Olympic events such as shelling and shoveling corn. The contestants were blindfolded for the difficult potato toss event and the toy wagon race.

FB's Ag Olympic contestants were MFB President Jack Laurie; MFB directors Wayne Wood, Lyle LeCronier, and Dick Leach; and county presidents Don Sutto of Saginaw and Tom Fleischmann of Bay County. News media representatives in the competition were Dave Hebert, *The Valley Farmer*, and Dan Lee, *Tri-County Citizen*.

Dennis Mahoney of Saginaw County, general chairperson of the mall show, explained that the project not only promotes the various commodities produced in Michigan, but also gives FB members the opportunity to help non-farmers understand more about the business of farming. □



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Legislative Review

(continued from page 27)

House-Senate committee to develop recommendations on an education finance program.

■ **Property Tax Reform** — 10 bill Senate package carried over from last session dealing with numerous assessing, equalization, appeals, etc. issues.

A new MSU assessment study of farmland in the central region found it to be grossly overassessed, averaging 45%, high of 77%. One of the two study counties were under-assessed by 12%. This is 1986 data.

■ **Environmental Bonds** — S.B. 651, allows general obligation bonds for recreation facilities, contamination clean-up, solid waste and resource recovery alternatives, waste water treatment, loan programs for these purposes. Requires vote.

Gov. Blanchard proposed an \$800 million "Build Michigan" bond program to pay for toxic waste cleanup, recycling, and other environmental problems.

■ **Animal Care** — H.B. 5302, Randall, R-Elwell, prohibits abandonment without provision for adequate care.

■ **Wetlands** — H.B. 4817, Gagliardi, D-Drummond Island, requires state to purchase certain wetlands.

■ **Animal Industry Act** — S.B. 511 complete rewrite on livestock laws. Passed Senate, in House Agriculture Committee.

■ **Polyhouse** — H.B. 4341, passed House, exempts poly-vinyl greenhouses for horticultural plantings as real property. FB supports.

■ **Pesticide** — H.B. 205, a major law rewrite. FB amendments ensure that farmers can continue to do their own application. Has passed House. The Senate Agriculture Committee is giving careful study to the bill. □

Lansing legislative topics are reviewed by the MFB Public Affairs Division.

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.

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LIVESTOCK

REGISTERED ANGUS BREEDING STOCK: For sale at all times. Bordner Angus Farms, 68730 County Farm Road, Sturgis, MI 49091. Phone 616-651-8353. (4-12t-20p)

BABY CHICKS — Free prices and details. Shephard Hatchery, Route 1, Dept. M, Cannelton, IN 47520. (3-3t-15p-ts)

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HAY FOR SALE: All qualities and grades available. Call for a list of farms between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Phone 517-724-6478 or 517-736-8245. ALCONA COUNTY HAY GROWERS. (3-25p)

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BERRY PLANTS — Raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, currants, gooseberries, others. Free catalog. Makielski Berry Nursery, 7130 Platt Road, Dept. RL, Ypsilanti, Mich. 48197. Phone 313-434-3673. (11-12t-22p)

HARDY NORTHERN GROWN STRAW-BERRY AND ASPARAGUS PLANTS — Free Brochure. Krohne Plant Farms, Rt. 6, Box 586 RL, Dowagiac, Mich. 49047. (11-13t-21p)

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ATTORNEY: Farm born and raised. Engaged in General Practice at Law. Particular emphasis on financial problems, bankruptcy, negligence, contracts, land, estates and planning. Particular knowledge of agricultural problems. Call or write Thomas J. Budzynski, 43777 Groesbeck, Mt. Clemens, MI 48043. Phone 313-463-5253. (1-6t-40p)

SHEEPMEN'S TOUR — England, Scotland, Wales. Visit farms and major tourist sites. June 26 - July 7, 1988. Contact Norm Braun, 11541 Brady, Chesaning, MI 48616. Phone 517-845-2532. (3-26p)

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