Pine Shoot Beetle Discovery Results in Quarantine

Although the beetle won’t kill the tree, except in severe infestations, it does cause disfigurement. "The adult bores into the current year’s growth, and then bores up the tree’s shoot, causing the shoot to tip down and die, distorting the shape of the tree," said Rauscher.

The reproductive stage of the beetle occurs just under the bark of the tree where eggs are laid. The larval stage of the beetle is spent under the bark, meaning that logs and lumber with bark still attached, provides an ideal vehicle for transporting the beetle into unaffected areas.

Methods to control the beetle are limited to treatment with methyl bromide of logs and lumber. The USDA is researching other control options, including freezing since it’s suspected the insect can’t survive below -5 F. Despite that theory, the beetle can easily over-winter in Michigan, said Rauscher. "The beetle over-winters at the base of the tree as an adult, under bark flaps which are also under snowcover, so the temperature may very well be above -5 F degrees" said Rauscher. "It’s demonstrated its ability to survive in Europe in areas much colder than Michigan."

The beetle can fly up to a half mile seeking out any kind of pine to feed on, making it difficult to limit movement of the beetle entirely. With no means of chemical control, Rauscher advises tree growers to keep their operations clean of scrap that could provide breeding sites for the beetle.

"One of the things that’s practiced very intensly in Europe is sanitation, and that means getting rid of any kind of cut logs, slash piles, and/or cut stumps," explained Rauscher. "It’s not only promoted, it’s legislated in Europe that those items are cleaned out and removed. It’s very strictly regulated, especially in Scandinavia."

This cut-away view of an infested Scotch pine shoot shows an adult beetle feeding inside the shoot. The white spot is the point of entrance into the shoot.

Chinese Extension Delegation in Michigan

Two of the world’s biggest communist party systems have experienced change. Russia went about it at a pace that shocked even the most optimistic. China is undergoing a much more subtle transformation, but it is change nonetheless. It all started 10 years ago in China and it’s accelerating rapidly on a daily basis. It’s allowing joint ventures to take place. It’s allowing more freedoms in decision making at the farm level. It’s improving the standard of living and the diets of the Chinese people.

Sixteen Extension specialists from the National Agriculture Technological Extension Center in China spent 20 days in Michigan, looking at the MSU Cooperative Extension Service’s structure and relationships with agricultural producers, in an effort to tap into some of our democratic methods, according to MSU Agriculture and Extension Education Professor, Dr. Frank Brewer.

Their impression of Michigan agriculture? "Big - very big, much bigger than Chinese agriculture," said Nie Chung, deputy division chief in the Chinese National Agriculture Technological Center and interpreter for the group. "Your farmers use many large pieces of farm equipment — that’s different from China."

How different? According to Chung, the average Chinese farm is just one hectare (roughly 2-1/2 acres), a majority of the farming is done by hand, and the average dairy farm consists of 10 cows. Despite those facts, Chinese agricultural production has nearly doubled in the last 10 years, thanks in large part to major reform efforts, that should remind all of us about the merits of free-enterprise.

"Ten years ago, we adopted the household responsibility system, which means that each farmer can get land from the state and they have the right to decide which crop to plant," explained Chung. "That is why the Chinese can produce enough food for our people to eat and still export food products to the U.S.S.R. and other countries."

Just how much trade may surprise many. China’s trade surplus with the U.S. this year is expected to top $20 billion. A recent trade agreement between China and the U.S. will eliminate China’s import licensing requirements, quotas, and other trade barriers over the next five years, averting the threat of a trade war between the two countries.

See "Chinese Delegation" continued on page 8

While in Michigan, the Chinese delegation toured the Michigan Farm Bureau and met with several staff members to discuss Farm Bureau’s structure and operation. Pictured with the group is MFB Administrator Chuck Burkett and MSU Professor Dr. Frank Brewer (third and second from right, respectively, front row).

Special Member Program Guide in This Issue - Pull Out and Save!
Focus on Future and Land Grant Philosophy - A Must in New MSU President

The Michigan State University Board of Trustees is beginning the process of selecting a new president for MSU. We, as farmers, think it's critically important that the board hires someone who understands and vigorously supports the land grant philosophy.

After all, MSU was the pioneer land grant university. It was a leader back in 1855 in advancing the then-radical land grant concept that college research and teaching should be available to all people, not just the elite. MSU needs to continue to be a land grant leader in the future so that farmers, and all Michigan citizens will be able to cope with an increasingly interrelated and competitive world economy.

The future of a healthy agricultural economy in Michigan is vitally dependent upon a growth-focused teaching, research and extension mission at MSU. The university needs to continue to lead the nation in developing improved marketing techniques, new uses for existing commodities, new and improved varieties, innovative machinery, workable environmental solutions and improved (and profitable) integrated pest control measures.

Other crucial issues facing a new president include:
- Rising costs. It's becoming more expensive every year to attend MSU. Tuition and other fees have been rising much faster than inflation. The new president has the difficult task of aggressively holding down costs while upgrading the quality of education.
- A focused mission. With limited resources, it is important to focus in particular on MSU's rich and unique history of providing agricultural education. MSU must realize that it can't be all things to all people. Young people can get a college education at many places in the state, but an agricultural university education is available only at MSU.
- Support for the Agricultural Experiment Station and the Cooperative Extension Service. The new president needs to be sensitive to the unique features of these programs. They are not tuition supported and need special consideration for general university support.
- Communications. Years ago, MSU was a pioneer in using television technology to provide education and extension information to the agricultural community. Creative use of modern technology is important to our future communication needs.
- Animal agriculture. The Board of Trustees is aggressively supporting the animal industry initiative. We recognize the university has other pressing needs, like a new library. But money for the animal industry initiative has been committed by the governor and Legislature. The new president needs to keep this project on track.

The general news media often focus on issues at MSU, such as athletic success, that are trivial in affecting the future of our agricultural industry. I hope that a clear focus by the Board of Trustees on the real concerns of Michigan farmers will yield a new president who can make a positive difference in how the university affects our way of life.

In Brief...

Special Alert – MUSTCOM $50 Surcharge and Letter a Scam!

The Michigan State Police Fire Marshall Division is alerting owners of underground storage tanks about payment requests from the Michigan Underground Tank Commission (MUSTCOM), UST Compliance Section. These payment requests have been received from many Michigan underground storage tank owners, instructing them to pay a surcharge of $50 per tank, and indicating that if owners fail to pay, they will jeopardize their Michigan Underground tank grpup funding.

State Police say that MUSTCOM is not a governmental agency. Furthermore, refusal to pay the surcharge may result in the owner's referenced private property address and/or property identification information being published in a public registry on file with the State Police Fire Marshall Division. Refusal to pay the surcharge will result in the owner's property being dropped from the Michigan Underground Tank Compliance Fund (MUSTFA), operated by the Michigan Department of Management and Budget.

Capt. Wade E. Schafer, State Fire Marshal, indicates that State Police investigators, in cooperation with the office of the Attorney General, the Department of Management and Budget, and the U.S. Postal Service are looking into this matter for any violation of the law.

Persons with information which may assist this investigation are asked to call 1-800-827-8277. This toll-free number was established so that other telephone lines remain available for regular program needs of Michigan’s underground storage tank owners.

USDA Raises Crop Estimates

As expected, the USDA raised its estimate of corn, soybean, and wheat crops for the year and adjusted the amounts of each expected to be on hand when the 1992-1993 marketing year ends. The agency pegged the corn crop at record-high 9.39 billion bushels, soybeans at 2.108 billion bushels and wheat at 3.459 billion, all slightly above the September numbers. The USDA based its predictions on the expectation of record setting per acre yields of 124 bushels for corn and 36 bushels for soybeans.

USDA figures there will be 308 million bushels of soybeans left on hand at the end of 1992-1993, up from 278 million this year. Corn carryover is estimated at 1,864 billion bushels, wheat at 573 million, and cotton at 4 million bales. See page 6 in this issue for MSU Ag Economist Jim Hilke’s interpretation, and the latest supply/demand reports.

ConAgra/Berger and Klein Brothers Limited Merge

ConAgra/Berger and Klein Brothers, Limited, based in California, have announced their intention to merge, effectively forming the largest bean handling company in the world. All pieces of the new company will reportedly continue to operate as they have, at least through the balance of harvest, but it would seem reasonable that within the next few months all products will be brought under the same umbrella.

This merger continues the trend established about 15 years ago toward fewer and larger dry bean handlers. This mirrors the same trend in the canning and packaging business. Twenty years ago, there were literally hundreds of independent processors and canners, but through mergers and acquisitions, the numbers active in each field have dwindled to a handful.

Vegetable Chemical Use Survey Underway

A major Vegetable Chemical Use Survey was started Oct. 16, and will continue through mid-December, according to the Federal/State Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service (MASS). The survey has the support of most major Michigan vegetable organizations and growers are encouraged to participate.

This survey is part of the President’s Food Safety Initiative, which is a multi-agency program addressing recent public concerns about the safety of the nation’s food supply. Our nation’s Department of Agriculture’s roles in this initiative is the Pesticide Data Program. The successful 1990 Vegetable Chemical Use Survey was the start of this program. An every other year rotation is planned between vegetables and fruit chemical use.

The primary objective of this program is to provide data to develop an agricultural chemical use data base that is timely, detailed and reliable. Statistics are needed to assemble chemical use information to help address both water quality and food safety issues. The program is intended to strengthen the government’s ability to respond to pesticide and food safety concerns and to protect the public health.

In Michigan, about 1,000 vegetable growers will be asked to participate in the survey. All growers will be interviewed personally. Data collected will be treated confidentially and used only in the summary of state and national totals. A final report of the vegetable chemical use data is scheduled for release in June of 1993.
The 102nd Congress Adjourns

On Oct. 9, the 102nd Congress officially adjourned. There will be no legislation considered during the remainder of this year. Therefore, Capitol Corner will not be reporting any national legislative developments until the new 103rd Congress convenes in mid-January 1993.

Health Insurance Tax Deduction

MFB Position: Farm Bureau strongly supported continuation of the tax deduction for health insurance premiums paid by the self-employed, increasing it to 100 percent.

MFB Contact: Al Almy, Ext. 2040

Both the House and Senate passed different versions of a bill containing several tax exemptions and also imposing several billion dollars of higher taxes. Among the provisions in the House version, H.R. 11, was a continuation of the current 25 percent deduction for the cost of health insurance premiums paid by self-employed persons, which had expired April 30. The Senate version would allow self-employed persons to deduct 100 percent of the cost of their health insurance premiums as a business expense. However, when a conference committee met to resolve this difference and others between the two versions, it was decided to extend the current 25 percent deduction for 18 months. The legislation has been sent to President Bush for signing into law.

Loans for Beginning Farmers

MFB Position: Farm Bureau supported the passage of H.R. 6129.

MFB Contact: Al Almy, Ext. 2040

Since the U.S. Supreme Court's 1990 decision in Adams Fruit Co., Inc. v. Barrett, a migrant or seasonal employee may receive workers' compensation benefits and also sue his or her employer in court for additional damages. The case stems from a 1985 incident in Florida, when 19 migrant workers employed by Adams Fruit Farm were transported to the fields in a single van, a violation of the Migrant and Seasonal Worker Protection Act - MSWPA. After an accident, all of the injured employees received workers' compensation. The amendment clearly states that workers' compensation is the exclusive remedy for loss of such worker under this Act in the case of bodily injury or death. The reversal is not permanent, and will sunset in nine years. Workers' Compensation Integrity, Stability and Equity coalition, (WISE).

MFB Contact: Howard Kelly, Ext. 2044

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MFB Contact: Howard Kelly, Ext. 2044

Workers' Compensation - Adams Fruit Case

MFB Position: Farm Bureau supports H.B. 5990. Adoption of this bill is important to Michigan producers to permit the export of milk from Michigan to other states.

MFB Contact: Ron Nelson, Ext. 2043

Legislation awaiting President Bush's signature, H.R. 6129, is designed to attract more young people into farming by easing some state, social security and workers' compensation laws. Federal legislation is needed to overturn the effects of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the Adams Fruit Case, which makes the migrant and seasonal workers the only employees eligible to receive benefits from both the courts, through tort law suits, and workers' compensation. MFB, and many other state Farm Bureaus joined with AFBF and other interested groups to form the Workers' Compensation Integrity, Stability and Equity coalition, (WISE).

MFB Contact: Howard Kelly, Ext. 2044

Pseudorabies Control & Eradication

MFB Position: Farm Bureau supports Senate Bill 1112. The process of eradication of pseudorabies so Michigan can eventually be designated as a disease-free state to allow movement of hogs between Michigan and other disease-free states. The bill has passed the Senate and is waiting final action on the House floor.

MFB Contact: Ron Nelson, Ext. 2043

Senate Bill 1112, sponsored by Sen. Warriner (R-Portage), adopts the Federal Pseudorabies Eradication Program. Michigan currently tests and vaccinates for pseudorabies. S.B. 1112 would give the Michigan Department of Agriculture more authority and responsibility to both test and control the movement of the disease through quarantine of infected herds. The federal program consists of a five stage effort. Michigan currently is in the third stage where the disease is substantially under control, but is not being eradicated.

Pseudorabies is contagious within the swine population and when transmitted to other species, such as cattle or sheep, it usually results in the death of the infected victim. At 10,000 and under, other species are not affected by pseudorabies. The disease poses no threat to human health. Currently, producers retain private veterinarians for the testing and vaccination, which will continue. State funding will be available for additional surveillance efforts on the part of MDA veterinarians to ensure every herd in the state is tested and quarantined if infection is confirmed.

Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO)

MFB Position: Farm Bureau supports H.B. 5990. Adoption of this bill is important to Michigan producers to permit the export of milk from Michigan to other states.

MFB Contact: Ron Nelson, Ext. 2043

House Bill 5990 and S.B. 1058 would amend the Fluid Milk Act of 1965 and the 1969 edition of the Grade A Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO). In addition, the bills would increase the license fee for milk haulers from $50 to $100, clarify the bonding requirements by requiring a surety bond for milk buyers and provides additional protection for their solvency. The MDA is given the authority to revoke the license of any milk plant that provides any of the security arrangements provided for, violations increase and if violations are increased. The maximum milk temperature on farms is reduced from 50 to 45 F.

Currently S.B. 1058 is in the Senate Ag Committee where seven amendments were attached. The amendment for Over Order Pricing was adopted and included Over Order Premium for Class I milk not to exceed $1.25. The Marketing Committee which recommends the price to the director of agriculture would consist of nine members appointed by the governor. One individual will represent dealers, one the general public, and the other seven will represent dairy producers, including one not representing any cooperative. In determining the Over Order Premium, the committee shall consider price being paid by dealers, the cost of production, prices paid in other adjoining states, and the general public. This enabling legislation would be enacted upon a written petition signed by 35 percent of the milk producers and a successful referendum if more than 50 percent of those voting, which represents more than 50 percent of the production, voted in favor of a statutory premium. The same process would hold for terminating the Over Order Premium.

Limitation of Passengers in the Open Bed of a Pickup

MFB Position: Farm Bureau supports H.B. 5434. The legislation is currently awaiting concurrence by the full House and Senate.

MFB Contact: Ron Nelson, Ext. 2043

House Bill 5434 would limit transporting passengers in the open bed of a pickup to work related activities, cities, townships, and villages with populations of less than 10,000. The bill would also prohibit riding in the back of a pickup on any freeway at any time including those passing through such cities, villages, and townships with populations less than 30,000. An exemption has been included in the bill to permit riding in the back of a pickup for all farm related activities for family members and employees.

Removal of Animal Carcasses from Roadsides

MFB Position: Farm Bureau supports H.B. 5642. The legislation is currently awaiting concurrence by the full House and Senate.

MFB Contact: Darcy Cypher, Ext. 2048

House Bill 5642 would limit transporting passengers in the open bed of a pickup to work related activities, cities, townships, and villages with populations of less than 10,000. The bill would also prohibit riding in the back of a pickup on any freeway at any time including those passing through such cities, villages, and townships with populations less than 30,000. An exemption has been included in the bill to permit riding in the back of a pickup for all farm related activities for family members and employees.

MFB Policy supports removing the Department of Natural Resources to be responsible for removal of large animal carcasses from local roads and right-of-ways.

Michigan Farm Bureau (517) 323-7000

Michigan Farm Bureau News

October 30, 1992
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Weather

Cooler than normal temperatures persisted during the past 30 days in all but northern sections of the state, where readings averaged near to slightly above normal. Similarly, precipitation totals were above normal over nearly all of the Lower Peninsula and northern sections of the Upper Peninsula. This unfavorable mixture of conditions caused lengthy harvest delays in some areas. While many central and northern sections of the state experienced killing freeze back in late September, crops in southern Lower Michigan continued to grow into mid-October with a bit of frost, especially in southeastern areas. Even so, all important heat accumulations during the period were only in the 125-275 unit range.

The outlook for the coming weeks is not promising. The latest 30-day outlook from the National Weather Service calls for a jetstream pattern to persist over the Upper Peninsula through mid-November, and possibly longer. This would likely lead to frequent outbreaks of cold, arctic air, and put Michigan along a southwest to northeasterly storm track. The outlook specifically calls for a continuation of below normal temperatures and above normal precipitation.

Michigan Harvest on Hold Across Michigan and Cornbelt

Michigan

Harvest activity in Michigan had been brought to a standstill with considerable rain and waterlogged fields across parts of Michigan. Statewide, corn harvest as of Oct. 19, was reported only 5 percent complete compared to 25 percent on average, and soybeans were 15 percent complete, slightly below the five-year average of 15 percent. Many farmers were still waiting for significant reductions in moisture levels before harvesting corn, which was rated only 50 percent mature compared to 95 percent on average.

Soybeans were rated 80 percent mature, compared to 95 percent on average, with harvest reported 20 percent complete - well behind the five-year average of 45 percent. Dry bean harvest was 90 percent complete and was rated 65 percent fair to good.

Potato harvest was 90 percent complete in spite of the rain and cold. Sugarcane harvest had been stalled as well, with 30 percent of the harvest complete compared to 25 percent on average. Winter wheat planting was 70 percent complete, with concerns growing that considerable acreage may not get planted due to late harvests.

Apple harvest in Southwest Michigan was nearly 66 percent complete, but was slowed by rains and freezing temperatures. Concord grape harvest was slowed by freezing temperatures as well. Many growers had been waiting for better sugar content in grapes before beginning harvest. Grape damage due to the freeze had not been determined as of press time.

Most vegetable harvest had been nearly completed. Cabbage and cauliflower were being harvested as weather permitted. Onions and carrots continued to be harvested throughout the state. Freezing temperatures Oct. 17 and 18 brought an end to the fresh market tomato harvest.

Ohio

Corn harvest was behind average as of Oct. 19, as heavy rains soaked toplows and kept producers out of the fields, the Ohio Agri-Facts Service reported. Only 10 percent of the total corn acreage was harvested, compared with 75 percent a year ago and the 41 percent average. Corn was rated 25 percent excellent, 49 percent good, 21 percent fair, 4 percent poor and 1 percent very poor. Corn standing in water was a big concern for farmers, who said it will be another 10 to 14 days before their corn was harvested. The average moisture level was 27.4 percent. Harvesting of corn for silage is coming to an end.

Soybean harvest was 65 percent complete, versus 84 percent a year ago and the 62 percent average. Soybeans were rated 19 percent excellent, 47 percent good, 26 percent fair, 6 percent poor and 2 percent very poor. The recent wet weather has kept soybeans "puffy" with some farmers reporting moisture levels at 17 percent.

Harvest Progress, page 5
Michigan Groundwater and Freshwater Protection Act

Senate Bill 1199, sponsored by Sen. McManus (R-Traverse City), would provide for the protection of groundwater from contamination by pesticides and fertilizers through the development and implementation of a pesticide and fertilizer management strategy for the state, according to MFB Legislative Counsel Vicki Pontz.

"It would regulate the use of certain pesticides and fertilizers in order to prevent adverse effects to human health and the environment, and to protect the state's groundwater resource," said Pontz.

The bill requires MDA to develop and promote groundwater stewardship practices designed to prevent the contamination of groundwater. MDA would also develop a voluntary on-site evaluation system designed to provide farmers with the ability to voluntarily determine the relative groundwater impact potential posed by their use of pesticides and nitrogen fertilizers.

A groundwater advisory council would be established to provide educational programs on groundwater protection and coordinate technical assistance programs for farmers making changes consistent with the groundwater stewardship practices. Regional groundwater stewardship teams may also be established to implement programs developed under the act.

"Those farmers participating in the groundwater stewardship program would be eligible to receive grants for making changes consistent with the stewardship practices," explained Pontz. "Liability for groundwater contamination would not be imposed on a person in the groundwater stewardship program unless he was grossly negligent, or in violation of state or federal law."

A freshwater protection fund would be created through the collection of groundwater protection fees from chemical registrants. Specialty (non-farm) pesticide registrants would pay $100 per product per year. All other pesticide (agricultural) registrants would pay 0.75 percent of the previous registration year's sales with a $150 minimum. Specialty fertilizer products would be charged $100 per product registered, and nitrogen fertilizer distributors would pay an additional $0.65 groundwater protection fee for each ton of fertilizer sold.

The funds would be spent for direct assistance programs such as closure of improperly constructed wells, pesticide disposal and recycling programs, and cost share programs for persons in the groundwater stewardship program; indirect assistance programs such as education and demonstration programs, technical assistance programs for pesticide and fertilizer users, and research programs; emergency response and removal of potential sources of groundwater contamination, and administrative costs, which could not exceed 20 percent of the total fund.

The director of MDA would also establish: rules to designate pesticides with groundwater concerns as restricted use pesticides; a program to track pesticides; and monitoring programs for the general screening of groundwater.

If the director determines that voluntary adoption of groundwater protection practices have not been effective in preventing groundwater contaminant levels from exceeding the groundwater resource response level (30 percent of the Maximum Contaminant Level set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency), he or she may promulgate a groundwater protection rule that defines the scope and region of implementation. This rule could mandate practices that are protective of groundwater or cancel the use of a pesticide in the area of concern.

The bill was introduced just prior to the legislative session. Some discussion may occur between now and the beginning of the next legislative session. No action is expected on the bill in this legislative session. MFB has not taken a position on the bill as introduced at this time.
Michigan Farm News

October 30, 1992

6

The Oct. 8 USDA Crop Report told us the U.S. will have a record corn crop this year, 9.838 billion bushels. Not only that, but history tells us big crops tend to get bigger in recession reports, such as the report to be released on Nov. 10. The record production comes from the second largest harvested acreage in the last ten years and a record yield, 123.8 bushels per acre. The previous record yield was in 1987 at 139.8 bushels per acre. A 270 million-bushel increase in the record yield is phenomenal, and the growing conditions for many parts of the country were not optimal: look at Michigan. I wonder what the potential is? Michigan's corn yield is projected to be 105 bushels per acre, down from last year's fairly typical 110 bushels per acre and the record 115 bushels per acre.

The USDA released an updated Supply/Demand Report (see Table 1). They updated beginning stocks to 1.1 billion as shown in the September Stocks report. When added to projected production, we have total supply over 10 billion for the first time since before the 1988 drought.

While increases in year-to-year projected use does make up for all the increase in supply, it does make a dent in it. Feed use is projected to use 750 million bushels from last year and 150 million more than the September projection for this year, which did not include the September Hogs and Pigs Report that showed continued expansion. Food, seed, and industrial use is expected to be up as well. Exports are projected to be down due to less being shipped to the FSU. However, exports to this point are running near year ago levels.

Even with the significant increases in use, ending stocks will grow an estimated 764 million bushels. Ending stocks as a percent of use is forecast at a plentiful 22.8 percent. This would put the average annual weighted corn price around $2.10 per bushel.

We’re likely seeing market lows for corn about now. In order to reach the $2.10 cash average, we’ll likely see a combination of a rebound in out futures contracts and a tightening of the basis. This increase, while not likely be huge, should more than cover the cost of on-farm storage.

Soybeans

It appears that soybeans did not want to be outdone by corn, as we are projected to have the second largest soybean crop on record since 1982’2,190 million bushels on more acreage. The estimated yield of 36.3 is 2 bushels per acre higher than last year’s record, and is almost twice the percentage increase we saw in corn. However, once again, Michigan as a whole is not on these high yields. Michigan’s yield is expected to be 35 bushels per acre versus the last two year’s 38 bushels per acre and a five year average of 35 bushels per acre.

In Table 3, we have the updated USDA supply/demand report. Supply will increase more than projected use. Unlike corn and wheat, the ending stocks aren’t a particularly burdensome. This means that there is the most upside potential in the soybean market of the three major crops. We are, or will soon see, the market lows for the 1992-93 marketing year. The odds are quite high that between basis appreciation and a post harvest rally in the soybean futures, on-farm storage costs and interest will be more than covered.

Cattle

The only good thing about hog prices is they have hung in there several dollars per hundredweight higher than expected given the huge supplies. While the credits actually being allowed to Russia for pork has helped the market, it does not come close to answering why hog prices have held relatively strong. While there is no reason to believe this strong demand will disappear, there is the question of how long it can hold an increase without some rebound in income growth.

However, given the expected supplies, hog prices are still likely to fall under $40 per

Wheat

The all wheat production number was raised due to spring wheat yields which were increased in some areas. The updated wheat supply/demand report showed total supply of wheat about 100 million bushels above last year. When divided with a use number nearly the same as last year, this increase in estimated ending stocks as shown in Table 2.

The new estimates took into account the surprisingly low wheat stocks reported in September. The USDA’s increased expected feed usage 75 million bushels, from 175 to 250. However, this is still a big question mark. Some argue they will “find” the bushels in the next report, which will lower use. Others argue they did not increase use as much as the report called for. USDA split the difference. Export projections were lowered in year-to-date sales are no near last year’s levels.

Winter wheat planting has gone quite well in most of the important winter wheat primary growing areas. Unless something changes potential for next year, it will probably keep the pressure on wheat prices. There are more bearish factors in the wheat market than bullish factors.

Hogs

The Quarterly 13-State and Monthly 7-State Cattle-on-Feed Report that was released Oct. 23 for confirmation, it appears we are at or near a short-term top in cash cattle prices. About all you can do short-term is keep current. Cash steer prices look like they’ll trade in the $71 to $74 price range from mid-November through most of the winter.

However, there may not be great money to be made. We have seen both feeder calves and "find" the bushels in the next report, which will lower use. Others argue they did not increase use as much as the report called for. USDA split the difference. Export projections were lowered in year-to-date sales are no near last year’s levels.

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Comparing The Big To The Average Size Dairy Farm

by Sherrill B. Nott
Agricultural Economics, MSU

Michigan is seeing an increasing number of dairy facilities being built for dairy herds of 300 cows or more. It requires a considerable investment in facilities and managerial talent to operate them profitably. Some ask, why bother? Other dairy farmers are aware of the magnitude of these farms and are alarmed because they don't fit their notion of what a family farm should be.

A study of 1987 national costs of production data split specialized dairy farms into 10 size groups and concluded, "There was substantial variation in management programs across farms in each of the size classes."

The average herd size in Michigan is about 75 milk cows. However, it seems as if several major dairies, with operations of 300 or more. This is an overview of the profitability these two farm sizes enjoyed in 1991.

The "Mean" group averaged 75 cows, ranging from 72 to 78. They sold 17,124 pounds of milk per cow and used 5.06 acres per cow. The mean group also were apparently more diversified into crops. They sold $240 of cash crops per cow, compared to $96 per cow for the big group.

Net income averages for both groups showed any number of potential changes, or anything for operator and unpaid family labor. You should be able to fill similar categories in your 1991 income tax summaries and forms. Try comparing your farm against these averages.

A group of 16 Telfarmers with over 225 cows were compared to a group of 16 that were close to the state average size of 74.4 cows. Telfarmers use Michigan State University's mail-in accounting system called Telfarm for management and tax reporting. The group averaged 138 cows, sold 18,310 lbs. of milk per cow, and averaged $753 per cow. The average herd size is over 225 cows. In the tables, they are labeled "Big." They ranged in size from 225 to 700 cows per farm.

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The "Mean" group averaged 75 cows, ranging from 72 to 78. They sold 17,124 pounds of milk per cow and used 5.06 acres per cow. The mean group also were apparently more diversified into crops. They sold $240 of cash crops per cow, compared to $96 per cow for the big group.

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A group of 16 Telfarmers with over 225 cows were compared to a group of 16 that were close to the state average size of 74.4 cows. Telfarmers use Michigan State University's mail-in accounting system called Telfarm for management and tax reporting. The group averaged 138 cows, sold 18,310 lbs. of milk per cow, and averaged $753 per cow. The average herd size is over 225 cows. In the tables, they are labeled "Big." They ranged in size from 225 to 700 cows per farm.

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Waving fields of grain, neatly stacked bales of hay, and the opportunity to work the land may make farmers appear to lead charmed lives. But research shows that working in agriculture is actually one of the most hazardous ways to make a living—and farm accidents aren’t the only dangers farmers have to deal with.

According to a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health study, farmers and laborers have the highest rates of death due to stress-related conditions. Heart and artery disease, hypertension, ulcers, and nervous disorders top the list of killers.

The American farmer has to cope with more stress than the average worker does. Droughts, floods, pests, long hours, money problems, and other complications can lead to feelings of frustration for farmers and their families. At harvest season, when nerves become frayed and problems seem magnified, stress often reaches its highest level.

Here are tips from the National Safety Council for reducing stress and improving your mental and physical condition:

- Acknowledge that stress exists in your life. It’s the first line of defense.
- Get enough sleep. If you have trouble sleeping, try a little light reading, or listen to relaxing music.
- Talk out your problems with family, friends, or clergy—or seek professional counseling. Doing so will help clear your head and allow you to focus on eliminating or reducing anxiety and stress-related ailments.
- If you smoke, try to quit.
- Eat a well-balanced diet, and try to limit the amount of caffeine and alcohol you consume. If you smoke, try to quit.
- Don’t minimize your reactions to stress. If you keep stress buried inside, it’s liable to create mental and physical problems.
- Keep all machinery in good condition. Eliminating possible breakdowns will help you avoid stressful days.

Remember, you can’t control the weather—but you can control your ability to deal with stress in productive, not destructive, ways.

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**Take the Bite Out of Dental Care Costs**

Member dental insurance is the affordable way to assure that you and your family receive the dental care services you require—even when sudden and costly needs arise.

Measure the rates against your annual dental care bills and consider the advantages:

- Single: $18 per month ∙ Couple: $32 per month
- Member/Child: $32 per month ∙ Family: $41 per month

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**Chinese Delegation**

Continued from page 1

In addition to trade, Chinese agriculture is attempting to cope with other issues such as biotechnology, environmental concerns and conservation techniques. "The government has issued environmental laws to protect the water and the environment, by regulating chemical and fertilizer use," said Chung. "We have recently begun using no-till farming methods, which have provided a number of benefits to our soil structure."

Chinese agriculture has made use of fertilizers and chemicals for quite some time, but according to Brewer, the amount available is far short of the amount usually required. "That’s especially important when you recognize that they’re taking as many as three crops off their ground, and their taking the entire plant in many cases," he said.

"They’ll take the whole corn plant, for example, not just the ear, and they’ll even take the brace roots for use in stoves as a fuel."

Brewer explained that the Chinese will often interplant new crops among maturing crops, since planting and harvesting is all done by hand, allowing for triple cropping, except in the most northern areas. "They can plant corn in wheat, for example, harvest the wheat, and then turn around and plant snap beans around the corn plant," he said.

With such a labor intensive agriculture, nearly 40 percent of China’s population is engaged in production agriculture, requiring a large Chinese Extension Service as well. There are nearly 300,000 Extension workers in China, accounting for over half of all the Extension workers in the world, according to Brewer.

"Extension is run through a centrally planned economy, at least in the past—it’s part of the government, it’s run by the government," said Brewer. "But they’re very interested in adapting some of our techniques to provide more freedom of discussion in terms of what the local communities want; what the farmers would like to do in raising and selling crops; and determining which inputs they are going use."

"These Extensionists now see that they can work with these communities with a different model than the top down model that they’ve had in the past. They’ll be allowing the Chinese communities to determine their needs and trying to let them make decisions they’ve never made before," Brewer concluded.
Polls Show Michigan Voters Favor Medical Liability Reform

Recent poll results show that medical liability reform is overwhelmingly favored by Michigan voters.

At the same time, new information shows Michigan hospitals with the highest medical liability rates in the nation. This substantiates the state's reputation as having the worst medical liability climate in the country.

In recent regional surveys of registered voters, 97 percent in the eastern Upper Peninsula and northern lower Michigan, 91 percent in Wayne County, and 84 percent in east central Michigan agreed "the increasing cost of medical liability insurance is driving up the cost of health care dramatically in Michigan."

In addition, 94 percent of those surveyed in the eastern Upper Peninsula and northern lower Michigan, 86 percent in Wayne County, and 84 percent in east central Michigan agreed "the increasing cost of medical liability insurance is making it harder for people to get access to care in Michigan."

Support for passage of House Bill 5435, which calls for unlimited economic damages, a $250,000 cap on non-economic damages, and limits on fees attorneys can charge in medical liability cases, was strongly endorsed by voters.

A nearly identical bill was passed by the Senate almost one year ago, but the House has yet to debate it. In the surveys, 80 percent or more of the voters said it was important that the medical liability reform bill be passed by the House of Representatives.

In a separate statewide poll, two-thirds of the voters surveyed believed that H.B. 5435 should be passed. The same survey showed that two out of every three voters would be more likely to cast their ballot for a state representative candidate who supports passage of the medical liability reform bill.

According to St. Paul Insurance Company's annual national survey of medical liability rates, Michigan's costs went up nearly 10 percent in the past year, now averaging $5,700 statewide per hospital bed--the highest in the country.

National rates have remained stable for the past three years at $1,300 per bed. Detroit had the highest rate in the nation of any metropolitan area--$6,600 per bed--more than six and one-half times higher than the national average.

Medical liability insurance rates for hospitals in cities like Saginaw or Flint are higher than six and one-half times higher than the metropolitan area--$8,600 per bed--more than six and one-half times higher than the national average.

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Michigan agreed "the increasing cost of medical liability insurance is making it harder for people to get access to care in Michigan."

The surveys in the eastern Upper Peninsula and northern lower Michigan, in east central Michigan and Wayne County were conducted by Public Sector Consultants, Lansing, for the Michigan Medical Liability Reform Coalition. The statewide survey was conducted by Market Research Group, Lansing, for the MHA.

Michigan's Corn Marketing Program Questions and Answers

The development of industrial uses for agricultural commodities represents a strong growth opportunity for Michigan's farmers. Corn, Michigan's most abundant crop, leads the way in its ability to meet America's needs for alternative agricultural uses.

The chart on the right shows the impact that new corn uses has on corn use.

By passing the Michigan Corn Marketing Program, Michigan's corn growers can help lead the fight to develop new uses, promote their crop, and increase their profitability.

To learn more about the Michigan Corn Marketing Program, read on!

What is a corn marketing program?

A corn marketing program is a program organized by corn farmers to benefit corn farmers. It places a small assessment on the first sale of corn and deposits these funds in a statewide pool. All funds collected go toward promotion, research and market development for corn. There are currently 18 state corn marketing programs in the US. Michigan is the second largest corn growing state in the nation without a corn marketing program.

Will the corn I grow and feed on my farm be subject to assessment?

No. Only corn sold will be subject to assessment. Corn you grow yourself and feed on your farm will not be assessed. Seed corn, popcorn, and corn grown for silage are also exempt from the assessment.

What will be the assessment rate be?

The Michigan Corn Marketing Program will collect 1 cent per bushel at the first purchaser (usually the local elevator). On an average 100 bu. yield, that would mean $1.00 per acre of corn grown for cash crop.

Who is eligible to vote on the Michigan Corn Marketing Program?

Any corn grower that has sold over $800 of corn in any marketing season within the last three (3) marketing seasons is eligible to vote. If you feed on-farm all the corn you produce, you are not subject to assessment and therefore are not eligible to vote.

What will my contributions be used for?

All funds collected will be used to promote corn and corn products. This will be accomplished through research, market development, and public promotion of corn. For example, ethanol blended fuels remain a significant market for corn and are one way to clean our nation's air. In Michigan, ethanol blended fuels command an 18% market share. Corn growers have been a major force behind the development of ethanol markets.

Will most of the funds collected stay in Michigan?

Yes. All funds will be controlled by a nine member board of corn growers, each representing one district and appointed by the Governor. While some funds will go to national organizations (like the National Corn Growers Association and the US Feed Grains Council), most of the Michigan Corn Marketing Program funds will be used in the state.

Will administrative costs of the marketing program be closely controlled?

Yes. All budgets will be developed and approved by farmers. In addition, the program caps administrative expenses at no more than 15% of funds collected. Typically, most state corn marketing programs operate at much less than 15% of funds collected.

How can I vote "YES" on the Michigan Corn Marketing Program?

You need to visit your county extension office or county ASCS office during the voting period, which is Monday, November 30, 1992 to Friday, December 11, 1992. Pick up a ballot, complete it according to the instructions on the ballot, and return it via US Mail to the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

For More Information, Call the Michigan Corn Growers Association at (517)323-6600.

Remember, Vote YES in December for your future!
The Bush administration and Congress are placing increased emphasis on the role that federal crop insurance will play in protecting farmers from future crop failure. Farmers seeking disaster assistance on 1991 and 1992 crops must also apply for crop insurance on their 1993 crops, according to Michigan's ASCS Director David Conklin.

Monthly frosts in northern Michigan this past summer severely limited forage yields and stunted corn growth in some areas. In addition, Conklin said that spotty frosts on the western side of the state cut into apple production, and severely impacted blueberry and grape production as well as vegetables.

"Producers with crop insurance must have had losses greater than 35 percent to qualify for disaster assistance," said Conklin. "Producers without crop insurance must have had losses greater than 40 percent."

Producers applying for disaster payments from USDA's 1992 crop assistance program must also purchase crop insurance on the same crop for 1993, if this year's losses exceed 65 percent, as required by the 1990 farm bill.

Explain Conklin, "These types of losses fall under the Phase-III sign-up period, which started Oct. 13, and will run through Feb. 12, 1993," he said.

Farmers cannot avoid the crop insurance requirement by delaying disaster sign-up. Farmers who purchase crop insurance as a requirement for receipt of ASCS disaster payment or debt forgiveness, will be required to obtain a 30 percent or higher market price selection. Farmers must also certify that they understand that failure to pay the required crop insurance premiums will mean forfeiture of disaster payments.

The application for Phase-III disaster aid applies to losses in 1992 and for losses from 1990 or 1991 crops, which did not previously receive disaster payments. According to the Conklin, disaster assistance is available on a per-farm basis for any two years of 1990, 1991, or 1992.

Expanded crop insurance options now give farmers a chance to select coverage that more closely meets their specific needs, with insurance now offered on 51 crops covering nearly 75 percent of the agricultural production. The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation plans to expand that coverage within five years to include 95 percent of the total agricultural production.

Another new twist to Phase-III disaster assistance - the payment factor has been predetermined at 50.04 percent. Previously, all disaster assistance applications were submitted and then a payment factor established based on the total losses filed for. "We know now that the factor is going to be 50.04 percent," explained Conklin. "If you have a loss and you're eligible, you'll be paid $500.40 on a $1,000 loss claim."

Conklin suggests that producers intending to apply for disaster assistance, begin to compile their past production records now as well as current production evidence.

"If an individual wants to prove yields, they're going to need specific farm production evidence," Conklin said. "We're in the process now of updating our yields for state averages and those haven't been released as yet, but they soon will be."

With fall in the air, many landowners are out in the woods admiring the foliage, hunting or taking photos. Take advantage of this time to evaluate your property with a critical eye to see if it is as healthy and productive as you would like it to be.

If it isn't, the Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) and the Stewardship Incentive Program (SIP) can provide financial assistance for wildlife habitat improvement, tree planting, wetland restoration, fisheries habitat improvement, tree improvement, and windbreak construction, renovation and maintenance.

These programs are based on a land ethic that encompasses a long-term view of the entire forest community. Specifically, the programs assist landowners in making ten-year plans for improving or protecting the environmental quality of their property and then helps them implement these plans.

Landowners who have at least 12 acres of contiguous ownership and not more than 1,000 acres of forest may be eligible for cost-share assistance under these programs.

The cost-share or reimbursable amount varies with the practice from 50 - 75 percent of the cost. Individual components under the practices include: planning, seeding, planting, fencing, weed control, mulching and site preparation.

The stewardship programs in Michigan are a cooperative effort between the Department of Natural Resources, the MSU Cooperative Extension Service, the Soil Conservation Service, the Michigan Department of Agriculture, and the Agricultural Conservation and Stabilization Service.

It's guided by the recommendations of the Michigan State Stewardship Committee, a 29-member group representing environmental concerns; state, local and federal government agencies; agriculture; and private landowners.

For more information on eligibility and signup for FSP/SIP cost-share assistance, contact your local ASCS or CES office.
Researchers at Purdue University in Indiana are investigating ways to reduce farm animal waste runoff while providing potential wildlife habitats and reaching common ground on the wetlands issue between farmers and environmentalists.

The objective of the Purdue project is to find a way to prevent possible contamination of lakes and streams by surface water runoff from nearby livestock farm yards and feedlots.

The project involves placing wetlands between the waste origin and the body of water. Animal waste is high in nutrients, especially phosphorus and nitrogen, which aquatic plants thrive on. When lakes and streams are polluted by this waste, they experience high plant growth which eventually chokes out fish and other aquatic life.

Wetlands, on the other hand, are full of nutrient utilizing plants and by placing one between the waste source and body of water, the excess nutrients are used up, providing the lake with clean water and slowing the nutrient runoff process.

"As the water travels through the wetland cells, the nutrients that are in that water will be taken up by the wetlands, and then the water that would be discharged into the lake would be clean water and not present any kind of a problem for water quality in the lake," said Stephen Lovejoy, professor of agricultural economics and director of Purdue's Center for Alternative Agricultural Systems.

Purdue's first project involves three test wetlands on an Indiana dairy farm in Lagrange County. Researchers placed three long, shallow cells 20 feet wide and 150 feet long between the farm operation and a nearby lake. The individual cells enable researchers to test the water and adjust nutrient levels so the water that leaves the wetlands is as clean as the water in the lake or stream.

The tests will also determine how large the wetlands should be and how many will be needed for certain types and amounts of waste. "What we're going to find out is how efficient these wetland cells are at taking out the nutrients from this kind of livestock waste," said Lovejoy.

Large farms with an excess of 1,000 head of cattle must have a special permit for waste disposal from the Environmental Protection Agency. Smaller operations are not regulated yet, but with the clean water legislation currently being debated in Congress and the heightened environmental awareness of the general population, regulation of waste on small farms may not be too far away.

"One of the unique things about this project is that it satisfies the need of farmers to be more responsible in how they handle their animal waste," said Lovejoy. "It certainly fulfills an environmental need for not only water quality, but also the creation of wetland cells. That's one of the things that the environmental community and citizens in general have indicated over the past several years, that they feel are very important, not only from a water quality point of view, but also from a wildlife habitat point of view."

The wetland filter system appears to be a relatively inexpensive waste disposal option even for small farms. With the knowledge obtained on the experiments, researchers will be able to calibrate the size of the wetland for each particular operation.

The wetlands not only have potential to become wildlife habitats, but could also give the farmers an economic return. "Some farmers who are close to a fishing area may want to put some bait minnows in there and then harvest them for sale," said Lovejoy.

"We're also looking at some potential crops in the wetland that could be harvested for forage for certain types of species. We want to make sure that we're not only producing an environmental good, but we're also producing some economic good."

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**Endangered Species Act Reform Possible**

Legislation introduced to reform the Endangered Species Act "should restore balance, scientific integrity and common sense to an important environmental law," according to MFB Public Affairs Director, Al Almy.

The proposal would require the federal government to consider the effect on local and regional economies when designing recovery plans for threatened or endangered plants and animals.

Almy said the bill will speed up the process of protecting endangered species by requiring recovery plans to take effect within 18 months for species newly listed and within 5 years for species already listed. It would also provide a timetable and goals for boosting the population levels of listed species.
MLSE's Live Stock Feeding Program – Unique and Growing

In the mid 1980s, live stock producers had difficulties obtaining agricultural credit from conventional banks. To help keep many of their members in the cattle business, the Michigan Live Stock Exchange (MLSE) developed the Livestock Feeding Program (LFP).

The LFP was started by the MLSE in 1986 when many members who were second and third generation live stock producers could no longer receive traditional financing, according to MLSE General Manager Tom Reed. The MLSE felt the need to assist the farmers. "We tried to find a way to provide the credit so they could stay in business until the banks came back into the arena," said Reed.

"We're not a bank, so we can't loan money," said Reed. After researching many options, the MLSE decided to form a subsidiary, the Michigan Live Stock Credit Corporation (MLCC). The MLCC's objective is to borrow capital and purchase live stock to place with farmers having difficulty getting conventional credit to purchase cattle.

"We're contracting producers to feed cattle that we retain ownership of," Reed said.

Traditional feeding programs give the farmer a set price per pound of gain. The LFP treats the producer as if he is renting the cattle from the MLCC. The farmer is actively involved in marketing and placement of the cattle. When the cattle are sold, the farmer receives a check for the livestock minus the marketing fee and a service fee. This enables the producer to take full advantage of market trends.

"His profit is the same as it would be if he had owned the cattle and had borrowed his money from the bank," said Reed. He also adds that the program has definite risk advantages over dealing with a bank. "If the farmer has a very big loss in a particular year, the bank may take a piece of his farm. In our program we're sharing some of that risk. If he gets less than cost back, we also have to absorb some of that loss.

Reed said that the LFP has cut through the red tape that farmers generally go through with the banks. "The farmer doesn't need to fill out long financial statements; all we care about is whether he has the feed, the facilities, the integrity and the knowledge to feed our livestock," he said.

In the beginning, the program was not received well by the banking community. "They were laughing at us," commented Reed. "They said we were going to go broke in the first year." A few years later, MLCC sent a representative out to explain the program and try to convince them to start lending funds to farmers again. "The banks were so impressed with our program that rather than taking producers back, they started referring more to us," said Reed.

"It has become a partnership with the bank," he said. The banks said that since MLCC knows more about live stock than the bank, MLCC should take care of that portion. Some banks have even offered financial assistance should MLCC need it.

There are nearly 500 producers currently participating in the program with a live stock portfolio close to $40 million. When the program was started just six years ago, the initial portfolio was $6 million. "There was a period of time over the last two years that it was pretty tight; it barely held its own, but MLCC is making a profit now," noted Reed. "It is actually growing equity now to the point that we have excess money in the corporation that can be loaned.

Reed is optimistic about the future of the LFP and said they are negotiating with banks and farm credit systems to have the financial institutions refer anyone requesting funds for live stock purchases to MLCC. "I believe within the next five years the LFP will be the majority portfolio for live stock in Michigan," he stated. In that event, Reed estimates the current $40 million portfolio would grow into $250 million.

"It's exciting, because we'll have a joint relationship with the banking community," he said. Reed feels the banking community should learn more about the agricultural industry, which may make it easier for farmers to obtain financial assistance. "Any joint venture we can do will build the comfort level of the banking community and provide more money, therefore, helping growth in the industry," explained Reed.

The LFP in Michigan has been so successful that other states are forming programs based on it. Indiana, Ohio, Oklahoma, Wisconsin and Minnesota all have programs similar to the LFP and the Dakotas are beginning a test program. "The program is becoming very widespread and used a great deal around the country," said Reed. "It's a good way for a farmer/owner cooperative to assist a producer in his live stock production."
Livestock Feeding Program: Opportunity for This Producer

Delbert Crumbaugh, an Ashley cattle producer in Gratiot County, is one of 500 live-stock producers involved in the Livestock Feeding Program (LFP) through the Michigan Livestock Exchange (MLESE).

Crumbaugh has been in the cattle business for over 40 years, many of those years with the MLSE, buying and selling cattle. When the LFP was started six years ago, Crumbaugh was one of the first producers to get involved.

The program was started when MLSE noticed that many livestock producers were having difficulties obtaining credit from banks for purchasing cattle. Crumbaugh was having the same difficulties as other producers, and a representative from the MLSE informed him about the LFP.

"The program came at a time when banks were withdrawing from a lot of cattle feeders and all farm operations," said Crumbaugh.

Before the LFP, Crumbaugh relied on a commercial bank for his credit needs. He said the LFP is a good program, because the interest rates have been competitive with many banks and it cuts out an entire set of people he has to work with.

"I was previously financed through the banks, but I like the LFP much better, because the people you are talking with are knowledgeable about cattle," said Crumbaugh. "Most banks do not have people who specialize in livestock or other farm operations."

He added that since he had already been working with MLSE before he was involved in the LFP, he was able to work with people he already knew and had dealt with before.

Crumbaugh is an experienced cattle producer and doesn't require much assistance choosing or managing the cattle he feeds. He can purchase cattle either locally or through the MLSE.

Once he has picked the cattle out, he forms a representative of the Michigan Livestock Credit Corporation, the subsidiary of MLSE that helps producers get the cattle. Crumbaugh is then responsible for the cattle in a very way, just as though he had borrowed money from the bank.

In addition to having good management techniques, cattle producers in the LFP must have adequate production facilities and feed for the cattle.

Each year, Crumbaugh feeds about 500 head of cattle. He sells and adds monthly and has nearly 400 head at any given time. The cattle are at the farm between four and eight months. Crumbaugh buys cattle at an average of $600 per head and keeps them when they reach around 1200 pounds.

His feed ration consists of corn silage, high moisture corn, and hay that he grows on the farm. He also supplements the feed with corn screenings, minerals and protein purchased at a local elevator. Once a year, the LFP verifies that the operation has an adequate feed supply for the cattle.

Each month, Crumbaugh is sent a monthly statement to verify how many cattle he has and report any death losses. Every other month, an LFP representative visits the Crumbaugh farm to make sure operations are running well.

"They come out and check the cattle every other month, and make sure that everything is fine," said Crumbaugh. "That's how cattle operations and banks got into problems in the first place because the banks didn't keep track of their investments."

Although the LFP cattle do not have to be purchased through the MLSE, they must be sold there. When Crumbaugh is ready to sell some cattle, he takes them to the St. Louis MLSE stock yard facility. After the cattle are sold, Crumbaugh reimburses the MLSE for the first cattle he purchased and service charges. This way, Crumbaugh is able to take full advantage of the market fluctuations. At times the program has been quite beneficial for Crumbaugh, but he would like to see the LFP have a running average cost for the cattle, to even out the cash flow.

"With a running average cost, you would just about know what your cash flow would be each month," said Crumbaugh. He has been in the program since it started six years ago, and feels as long as the interest rates are competitive with the banks, he has no reason to go back to traditional financing.

"By financing this way, MLSE did more than help the cattle feeder because everyone they help is their customer, since producers have to sell their cattle back through the MLSE," said Crumbaugh. "They kept business for themselves by doing so, but they did it without jeopardizing my freedom to buy and sell as I had been."
Goodyear’s Trackman - Makes a Great Machine Even Better

One of the world’s most versatile utility vehicles has just become agile with new feet of rubber track that can be fitted on location, assuring The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company.

An endless rubber track, called Trackman, was introduced on the skid-steer loader, a traditionally wheeled vehicle that has become increasingly popular because of its versatility.

"Trackman carries the skid-steer into a new dimension," according to Ned Kendall, vice president of Engineered Products at Goodyear. "Our testing and work with original equipment manufacturers and dealers indicate the track-outfitted vehicles go well beyond the capabilities of conventional wheeled vehicles."

The retrofit version of Trackman made its debut at the Farm Progress Show. The rubber tracks wrap around and are held in place by the vehicle’s tires.

Rain-soaked ground, loosely compacted or rough terrain and fear of turf damage traditionally have been limiting factors for the use of skid-steers, he explained.

"Goodyear rubber track answers those concerns," Kendall said. "Trackman’s wider, softer footprint gives the vehicle access to areas inaccessible to wheeled skid-steers," he said. "Rubber tracks keep the skid-steer on-site working when wheeled versions are sidelined."

Kendall said Goodyear chose the skid-steer as its first application because of the vehicle’s growing popularity as an all-purpose work vehicle on farms, businesses and construction sites. "Goodyear rubber track takes a machine that is praised for its versatility and makes it more nimble, more maneuverable," he explained.

The retrofit version of Trackman is friction driven and easily fits over the skid-steer’s tires. Other construction, agricultural and utility vehicles that currently use steel track or tires are targeted for future Trackman applications in both the original equipment and retrofit markets.

"The retrofit version of the track eventually will be available through Goodyear’s 1,400 Pit Stop servicing dealers," said Ned Kendall, vice president of Engineered Products at Goodyear. "Trackman will be available in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois within 30 days for Melroe loaders and within 60 days in the same states for J I Case loaders," he said.

"The track will be available throughout the U.S. for Melroe loaders as of Jan. 1 and for Case loaders by Feb. 1," Kendall added. He noted that rubber track made for Melroe and Case will fit some competitors’ models.

MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU MEMBERS CARHARTT PURCHASE SALE

DUCK VESTS

DUCK COVERALLS - ZIPPER LEG TO WAIST

DUCK COVERSALLS

WOMEN’S - QUILT LINED - ZIPPER LEG TO WAIST

COVERALL SIZING:

Regular fits 5’7” thru 5’11”

Tall fits 5’11” thru 6’3”

Rugged as the men who wear them.*

Michigan Farm News

October 30, 1992
JOHN DEERE Manure Spreader, 450 Hydra-Push, like new condition, Call 616-978-2777 after 5:00 pm. $3,550.

White 8600 Diesel Combine with 15' grain head, 15' quick out and 4 row narrow corn head Good condition. Call The Farm Fines 517-208-2110.

WANTED Experienced person to do general farm work. Benefits and housing available. Call 517-973-4371.


Contents of just 14 psi. Fully castered front and rear wheels on each side allow for maximum maneuverability, turning ease, and rear lighting package, auger mounted spot- light, twin viewing windows, drop legjack, and custom spraying. Call 616-704-3684.


The Lightfoot also features 1,000 plus bushel capacity and unloads in under four minutes with its computer balanced 17° corner auger for fast return to the combine.

Standard Lightfoot equipment also includes rear lighting package, auger mounted spot- light, twin viewing windows, drop legjack, and custom spraying. Call 616-704-3684.


LINDA J. DODGE, Broker/Owner 1992 Michigan Farm News Classifieds

High Capacity, Low Compaction

The new Brent Lightfoot Corner Auger Grain Cart from Unverferth minimizes compaction, travels smoothly, and carries a 1,000 bushel load.

The Lightfoot's exclusive eight wheel and tire configuration distributes the cart's 64,000 pound load evenly for a "light" foot- print of just 14 psi. Fully castered front and rear wheels on each side allow for maximum maneuverability, turning ease, and eliminates the "berming" of soil associated with tracked vehicles. The eight independ- ently operated wheels provide a smooth, level ride over field furrows and ridges without spilled grain.

The Lightfoot also features 1,000 plus bushel capacity and unloads in under four minutes with its computer balanced 17° corner auger for fast return to the combine.

Standard Lightfoot equipment also includes rear lighting package, auger mounted spot- light, twin viewing windows, drop legjack, and custom spraying. Call 616-704-3684.

This 1,000 bushed Corner Auger Grain Cart is also available in a two wheel model with 35.5-32 tires. Scale packages are available for both units, either factory installed, or as a simple retrofit.

For further information, contact Unver- ferth Manufacturing Company, Inc., P.O. Box 357, Kalida, OH 45853, or phone 1-800-332-6391.
Engineer Starchier Potato Plants

MSU And Monsanto Researchers

Preiss says it would be feasible to engineer other plants to make them produce greater amounts of starch, but there would need to be a desirable goal. For example, high-starch tomatoes containing greater than normal amounts of solids might be very useful for making tomato paste.

In 1990, he was given the Alsberg-Schoch Award by the American Association of Cereal Chemists, Inc., and Corn Refiners Association, Inc., in recognition of contributions to the science of starch.

Preiss is well known internationally for his research on synthesis of starch. He was recently honored for his contributions by the government of Japan and the Japanese Society of Starch Science awarded him a medal for his "distinguished contributions to the mechanism of starch synthesis."

Proper Management

Can Prevent Damage to Stored Grain

Improperly adjusted combines, wet weather and moulds at harvest can all come back to haunt corn growers, with on-farm grain storage. Mechanical damage to grain causes specific storage problems while also acting as a catalyst to moulds and fungi, according to Fran Marier, Northrup King Co. agronomist.

Broken kernels may cause more tightly packed bins as fines fill air spaces. This hampers air movement during drying and cooling, leaving pockets of wet grain and hot spots in the bin.

Marier says broken kernels also prompt an invasion of mold and fungi, in regulatory forays. First, damage to the kernel provides an entry point for infection. In addition, the pathogens causing mold thrive in the moisture and heat generated by pockets of fines. Marier also cautions growers to be on the lookout for ear moulds this fall, especially in fields which received excessive moisture in September.

Corn growers can minimize mechanical damage to their harvest by monitoring and adjusting combine cylinder speed and concave settings when moving from one hybrid to another.

Before growers put the crop into a bin, Marier recommends screening the grain, removing as much mould and as many fines as possible.

After filling, he says some growers remove a load of grain from the bin to draw out fines and broken kernels which tend to fall to the center. Marier also prescribes continual monitoring.