Mexican Growers Equally Nervous About Trade Agreement

MFB President Jack Laurie, a member of the ABRF's International Trade Committee, was in Mexico recently for a firsthand look at agricultural production in that country, as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) talks gain momentum. Laurie said that despite fears and misconceptions, Mexican farmers share many of the same concerns as their U.S. counterparts about NAFTA. "They're afraid that the government negotiating the arrangements will tend to leave out the well-being of the individual grower and make the overall economy more of a focal point," he said. "They feel a lack of representation at the national level."

"They have the same fear that Canadians do - that this big ugly U.S. production machine is going to cover them up," Laurie said. "The - that this big ugly U.S. production machine is going to cover them up," Laurie said. "The sincerity of the Michigan grower. They're concerned about their industry and their own financial future."

"The terms of the agreement are what we need to focus on at this point," Laurie said. "Agriculture's challenge is to assure the end result isn't an immediate implementation of an agreement that doesn't allow growers opportunity for corrections."

"What I've seen up to this point indicates there's significantly more to be gained than there is to be lost," Laurie said. "However, Farm Bureau will not support just any trade pact. The other parties must give us as much as we do, when we do."
North American Free Trade Agreement — a Mexico Perspective

There's nothing like standing in another farmer's field, or walking in his shoes, to really make you appreciate his point of view. That is especially true when it comes to understanding farmers from another culture and country, like Mexico.

That's why I was pleased to have had the opportunity in late February to be part of an American Farm Bureau Federation trade mission to Mexico. We were there to visit farms and find out first hand what Mexican farmers think about the proposed North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

One of the things that stuck me is that they have some of the same concerns about agricultural trade that we do! They are afraid that their government, in the process of negotiating the NAFTA, will tend to neglect the interests of the individual grower in favor of the interests of the overall economy.

We often hear our U.S. growers raise the concern that labor costs less in Mexico. But the bottom line when we talk to Mexican growers is that they, like U.S. farmers, are concerned about how much labor is costing them. Labor makes up about one third of their cost of production, about the same that it does here for U.S. farmers.

Mexican farmers are also worried about competition for their agricultural products. They are worried, much as the Canadians are, about being overwhelmed by a huge U.S. "production machine." It appears to me that there is a great deal of public relations effort to be done in the grower community in all three countries before we can maximize the positive impact of a NAFTA.

It's hard to get a real understanding of these issues unless you can hear a grower, see him in his own field and watch the concern on his face when he talks about "import-sensitive crops should have a type of agreement that addresses market demands and trade in an agreement will benefit farmers in both our countries, but the agreement has to be one that is livable on both sides of the border. One that isn't a win-win situation for producers in both nations.

Farm Bureau supports a free trade agreement with Mexico, but only if such an agreement provides for fair and equal competition. Our policy states that current U.S. grades and standards should not be lowered to accommodate Mexican imports; the agreement should standardize pesticide regulations so they are uniform between the two countries; and especially important for Mexican growers: import-sensitive crops should have a longer phase-in period.

I stood on the shipping dock in Nogales and heard that they normally run 600-700 semis a day into the U.S. through that port of entry. So it's clear that we already have vigorous trade with Mexico. The question is: what will we do if we have some type of agreement that addresses market demands and trade in an effective, controlled manner?

There's significantly more to be gained from a NAFTA than there is to be lost. However, any agreement must be a win-win situation for producers in both nations. A good NAFTA agreement will benefit farmers in both our countries, but the agreement has to be one that is livable on both sides of the border. One that isn't simply won't be accepted.

Jack Laurie
President
Michigan Farm Bureau

Get Rock Solid Value
Without putting your budget on the rocks

Diverging reliability, dependability and durability at a rock-solid value—that's what Haul Master is all about. The three-wheel Original Hauler and four-wheel Mark IV is for today's value conscious buyer.

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- A fifteen-year history of low maintenance
- Our standard safety features are offered as options on other utility vehicles.
- Utility vehicles are our only business. Haul Master is dedicated to providing its customers a rock solid value. Our name says it all.
March 15, 1992

Legal Services Corporation Reform

Congressman Barney Frank (D-MA) has introduced legislation known as the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) Reauthorization Act of 1992, which is supported by Rep. Bill McCollum (R-FL) and Rep. Charlie Stenholm (D-TX). Farm Bureau has long been concerned about the reauthorization of the LSC, which is a major Federal program providing legal services to low-income persons. The LSC program has been criticized for providing legal services to individuals who do not have a strong case, and for not being responsive to the needs of farmers and rural residents. The Farm Bureau believes that the LSC should focus on providing legal services to those who truly need them, particularly those who are struggling with basic legal issues such as housing, family, and consumer protection. The Farm Bureau supports the reauthorization of the LSC, but with some important changes to ensure that it remains focused on providing legal services to those who need them most.

Section 8 - Local Authority

Farm Bureau believes that local authorities should be able to make decisions about important community needs and issues, such as the location of new highways. The Farm Bureau applauds the efforts of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to consult with local communities and stakeholders in the planning and decision-making process.

Section 9 - Regulation of Non-Public Resources

The Farm Bureau supports the enactment of legislation that would provide greater protection for Michigan’s natural resources. This includes legislation that would establish stronger regulations for the use of public lands, such as the Michigan Public Land Act, and legislation that would provide more effective enforcement of existing regulations.

Section 10 - Lobbying

The Farm Bureau supports legislation that would require lobbyists to register with the state and disclose their clients and activities. This includes legislation that would require lobbyists to disclose their clients and activities to the public, to provide more effective oversight of the lobbying process, and to provide greater transparency in the lobbying process.

Section 11 - Attorney's Fees

The Farm Bureau supports legislation that would allow farmers to recover attorney's fees in cases where legal services are provided to them by state or local governments. This includes legislation that would allow farmers to recover attorney's fees in cases where legal services are provided to them by state or local governments.

Section 12 - 时间安排

The Farm Bureau supports legislation that would allow farmers to access important information about their legal rights and obligations. This includes legislation that would provide farmers with access to legal information and resources, such as legal aid programs and legal clinics.

Section 13 - Class Action

The Farm Bureau supports legislation that would allow farmers to participate in class action lawsuits. This includes legislation that would allow farmers to participate in class action lawsuits, and that would provide farmers with the same rights and protections as other class members.

Section 14 - Timekeeping

The Farm Bureau supports legislation that would allow farmers to recover attorney's fees in cases where legal services are provided to them by state or local governments. This includes legislation that would allow farmers to recover attorney's fees in cases where legal services are provided to them by state or local governments.

Section 15 - Statewide

The Farm Bureau supports legislation that would allow farmers to participate in class action lawsuits. This includes legislation that would allow farmers to participate in class action lawsuits, and that would provide farmers with the same rights and protections as other class members.

Scrap Tires

MFB POSITION

Farm Bureau supports the amendment to exempt scrap tires from state fees for storing scrap tires. The amendment to exempt scrap tires from state fees would be a significant step towards reducing the costs of storing scrap tires and preserving the environment.

Local Pesticide Ordinances

MFB POSITION

Farm Bureau opposes the local ordinances that prohibit the use of pesticides. The Farm Bureau believes that local governments should have the authority to regulate pesticide use within their communities, but that the prohibitions against the use of pesticides are not justified.

State Inheritance Tax

MFB POSITION

The Farm Bureau supports legislation that would provide a tax deduction for the value of farmland in the state of Michigan. This includes legislation that would provide a tax deduction for the value of farmland in the state of Michigan, and that would provide farmers with the same tax deduction as other homeowners.

US-23 Highway Bypass

MFB POSITION

Farm Bureau supports the bypass project that would connect US-23 from I-75 south of Standish to M-65, near AuGres. This includes legislation that would provide funding for the bypass project, and that would provide farmers with access to the highway.

MFB CONTACT

Darcy Cypher, Ext. 2048

State Inheritance Tax

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MFB CONTACT

Howard Kelly, Ext. 2044

Northwest Michigan's US-23 highway north of Bay City has, for many years, been recognized as needing improvement. The present highway alignment is not able to safely accommodate the large numbers of vehicles which travel it. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has been completing research to establish the best improvement approach and is considering three alternatives: 1) Long bypass connecting from I-75 south of Standish to the US-23/M-65 junction, near AuGres. 2) Short bypass around the city of Standish. 3) Widening the present US-23 corridor through Standish.

The department has submitted an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) document to the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) and expects to receive approval to proceed with the project soon. After federal approval is received, the EIS will be available for public review. A public hearing dealing with the US-23 project is expected to take place sometime in April.

Improved highway access is critical to northeast Michigan's economic future and has been supported by Governor Engler. Rep. Beverly Bodem (R-Alpena) sponsored legislation, H.B. 5315, which would exempt users of scrap tires from various state regulations. The measure would provide the exemption for those using up to 3,000 tires on a farm for storing scrap tires. The legislation is designed to address concerns with regard to the use and accumulation of scrap tires such as registration, bonding, and mosquito control. The package was passed unanimously in the House, and now goes to the Senate for further action.
Michigan Farm News

March 15, 1992

Weather

Michigan and Major Commodity Area

Extended Weather Outlook

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Michigan Weather Summary

2/29/92

Temperature Change From Normal

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<th>Precipitation Actual From Normal</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ypsilanti</td>
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The latest National Weather Service 30-day and 90-day outlook is calling for continued above normal temperatures through the month of May, thanks to the continuation of El-Nino conditions in the central and eastern Pacific.

Precipitation, which generally begins to increase in March, is expected to remain below normal to slightly above normal. The area is on the verge of a dry period, with only a few days of rain expected in March. However, occasional showers and thunderstorms are possible during the month.

National Forage Meeting Scheduled

The American Forage and Grassland Council’s (AFGC) hay contest will give Michigan farmers the opportunity to prove they can make hay just as well as any potato producer during the AFGC national meeting, April 6-8 in Grand Rapids.

The competition is open to farmers who are AFGC members or AFGC affiliates and can enter their own hay samples. AFGC members, or a hay sample to the competition.

Contest classes include: tropical or semi-tropical perennial grasses (Bermuda grasses and Bahia grasses); tropical or semi-tropical annual grasses (Sugarcane grasses and millet); temperate perennial grasses (fescue, orchard grass or wheat grasses); temperate annual grasses (oats and annual ryegrasses); and alfalfa, clover and legumes.

For further information about ACA, contact Grower Service Corp., toll-free at 1-800-292-2701.

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Entry forms can be obtained by writing to Hay Contest, Outrach Communications, 312 Agriculture Hall, MSU East Lansing, MI 48824. The results of the competition will be announced at the AFGC hay samples will be on display during Tuesday and Wednesday of the competition.

The meeting is expected to attract national and international forage producers, researchers and industry experts, who will provide practical information about improved production, feeding management and marketing of forages.

A highlight of the convention will be the production and marketing roundtable discussion by five of the nation’s top forage experts, who will provide practical information about improved production, feeding management and marketing of forages.

The activities during the first day will also include tours of the Terry Smit dairy operation near Reedsburg and the forage research facilities at the MSU Kellogg Biological Station.

Conference registration, excluding lodging, fees, and meals is $75 for all three days, or $25 for one day. Details about the program and information about the Michigan AFGC membership can be obtained from Darting at MSU by calling (517) 355-0264.

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According to DPS's Lt. William Wardwell, who is heading the investigation along with the Michigan State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigations, the individuals responsible will be facing at least three felony charges, since the group responsible is believed to have crossed state lines.

Legislation pending at the federal level would make such incidence a federal offense, since the group responsible will be facing at least three felony charges, since the group responsible would make such incidence a federal offense. According to Wardwell, "We're finding that university people are now remembering being asked questions about the mink program," said Wardwell. "There were people asking questions about the mink program, probably two or three weeks prior to this event.

"At the time, it didn't seem that unusual to them, but now that this has happened, it appears those questions were connected somehow. Farmers should realize these organized animal terrorist activities involve quite a bit of background work and planning," he concluded.

Below left, investigators sort through the remains of room 132 Anthony Hall to determine how the fire was started. The office housed the mink research center at MSU. Although some of the data was recovered, over 30 years of Dr. Aulerich's research and work was destroyed and cannot be recovered, according to MSU personnel. Animal Science Department Chairperson, Dr. Maynard Hogberg, during a news conference (below), said the mink research program will continue, despite the setback caused by A.L.F. terrorists activities.

Tips to Guard Against Animal Rights Terrorists Activities on Your Farm

Recent events at Michigan State University may cause you to wonder what, if anything, you can do to protect your farmstead from a similar incidence. According to Steve Kopperud of the Animal Industry Foundation, the number of incidences in rural areas is on the rise.

"In the last six months, these types of activities have been particularly unnerving, because they're rural," explained Kopperud. "Farms typically don't have the security found at an urban bio-medical research facility, so consequently that makes those operations more vulnerable to attack."

Kopperud says there are a number of simple, quick and easy steps you can take including:

☐ Take a hard look at your facility and analyze what, if any, security systems you may have now.
☐ Install on-site security systems around livestock facilities.
☐ Install heavier locks on livestock facilities.
☐ Install motion sensors that trip on lights automatically when activated.
☐ Get and keep a good farm-yard watch dog.
☐ Be leery of strangers who may appear to be just curious urban neighbors, who start asking questions that normally don't get asked, such as: what kind of animals are you raising, what kind of facilities do you have, what kind of drugs you use, who do you sell your animals to, etc.?
☐ Encourage your employees to keep an eye open for automobiles spending an extraordinary amount of time driving past your farm, or someone parked, observing your operation.
☐ Get to know your local police a lot better than you currently do. Express your concerns and ask for their input and ideas.
☐ Under no circumstances should you take the law into your own hands.

Kopperud advises that farmers shouldn't over-react, but at the same time they need to take animal rights terrorists seriously.

"They spend as much time as they need to, casing out an operation before initiating their activities," said Kopperud. "Experience has shown that groups like the Animal Liberation Front (A.L.F.) work quickly, in-flict maximum damage, and then get out quickly, leaving as little physical damage as possible."
Market Outlook

Dr. Jim Hilkert, Dept. of Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University

Soybeans

Will the Prospective Planting Report show more or less than 58 million acres of soybeans planted? Last year, 59.1 million acres of soybeans were planted in the U.S. The corn/soybean price ratio would argue we would see a lot less soybean acreage this spring. However, the low planted winter wheat acreage and the low cotton prices would suggest there is a lot of acres to be planted to soybeans.

If we plant around 58 million acres this spring, I would expect prices in 1992-93 to be about the same as this year. At this point, the market offers forward contracts for new crop beans at levels that would suggest expected new crop soybean prices below 1991 or is offering a large weather premium. Strongly consider some new crop soybean forward contracts.

The South American crop seems to being quite well. Argentina is expected to have a large portion of your old crop remaining.

At ICI Seeds We Have Four Good Reasons for Planting Our Alfalfa

Soybeans

New crop corn forward prices are considerably higher than what would be expected with a normal corn yield. While we could see even higher prices this spring with a weather scare, we may also see lower prices. For example, if the March 28 Prospective Planting Report shows over 80 million acres will be planted and we have a good planting season, prices could be significantly lower. The moisture situation looks good over the Corn Belt.

Forward pricing opportunities are around and over $2.50 per bushel for corn as worth strong consideration. Often it is best to price into an up market rather than try to hit the top with everything; too often it never reaches "the top" and it rarely stays there long.

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Wheat

At this point, most of the wheat pricing decisions concern new crop; most or all of the old crop has been moved. As usual, there are two sides to the story in trying to forecast wheat production this year.

Given the higher prices and the lower winter wheat plantings, spring wheat plantings are expected to be up 1-2.5 million acres, or 8-13 percent. On the other hand, the driest part of the country as of the first week in March was the spring wheat areas. In our weather懁.

On the winter wheat side of the equation, we had fewer acres planted and a poor fall.

Hogs

Slaughter was up about 8 percent in February. While down from earlier in the year, it still was considerably above the 5 percent suggested by the December Hogs and Pigs Report. The question now is what will the spring quarter bring.

The December Report showed fall farrowings up 4 percent which would mean prices in the $38-$43 range this spring. However, a survey done out of Missouri covering 10 states and having 93 respondents who worked in the hog area suggests slaughter could be up 12 percent, which would mean prices in the low $30s. While this is not the general consensus of the market, it does show movement indicators. Movement of Eggs into Retail Channels Reports indicate that...
Dairy Outlook - Cautiously Optimistic

Larry Hamm

Although farm prices are falling, there is good news coming out of the dairy product markets. Milk production seems to be under control so that dairy markets are stabilizing above support levels.

The market strength (relative to last year) cations are for prices to hold 50 cents to 75 cents higher this spring over last year. The big pushers in milk production in the past have slowed down. California production is growing at a 2-4 percent increase over the next couple of months. However, the M-W will not likely drop another $1 over the next couple of months. The M-W will likely fall another $1 over the next couple of months. However, the M-W will not likely drop below $10.50. Last spring the M-W did not stop falling until it hit $10.02. All indications are for prices to hold 50 cents to 75 cents higher this spring over last year.

Expansion Slows

The market strength (relative to last year) is due to milk production trends. For all of 1991 milk production was unchanged from 1990. The milking herd is down 2 percent to 9.9 million cows this year over last year. The big pushers in milk production in the past have slowed down. California production is growing at a 2-4 percent increase which reflects productivity gains rather than rapid expansion. The state of Washington is in a similar position. Texas and Wisconsin production was lower in 1991 over 1990.

With cow numbers down, the momentum for big increases in milk production is not there. Milk production is following seasonal patterns. Warmer than normal weather has increased production in some areas. However, the warm weather has also increased ice cream consumption. Demand for most dairy products appears to be seasonally strong. Only butter continues to be a drag on the market.

All these conditions are leading to stronger dairy product markets. Both the cheese markets and the nonfat dry milk markets are trading above their CCC price support levels. Since October, the USDA has purchased virtually no powder or cheese surpluses. Uncommitted CCC inventories of both powder and cheese are very low. Given these market forces, the M-W cannot fall to the support price.

The industry is not out of the woods yet. If production picks up and demand weakens, movement of excess milk to manufacturing plants will increase and could start moving the product markets lower. But, this year's situation appears positive. Because farm prices are lagging behind product prices, mailbox prices will fall the next few months. However, this year these prices seem to be a brighter light at the end of the seasonal price tunnel.

Health care coverage isn't simple anymore. The bottom line, however, remains the same: everybody wants the best possible coverage at the lowest possible rates. This is where Farm Bureau has good news for small business owners.

With over 40 years of experience in providing individual health care plans, Farm Bureau is now offering six Blue Cross Blue Shield plans specially designed for groups with 2 to 99 employees. All plans have no medical underwriting and carry no pre-existing condition clauses. Prescription, dental and vision coverage options are also available to qualified groups.

If you're a small business owner who is dissatisfied with your present employee health care plan — or a small business owner who is ready to initiate your first employee health care plan — contact your local Farm Bureau office. We'll listen to your health care coverage needs, tailor a package to suit your preferences, and then cut to the bottom line.

Farm Bureau, specialists in all business insurance needs, can be depended on to protect the interests of small business because we understand the interests of small business.

What matters to us.

For further information, call 1-800-292-2680 or contact your local Farm Bureau office.

WHERE
BELONGING
MAKES
A
DIFFERENCE.
Why you need protection from pesticides

An agricultural futurist predicted not long ago that by the year 2000, all dangerous jobs on the farm will be handled by robots. Perhaps he's right, but until those robot farmers take to the fields, people will be responsible for the hazardous duties that are a part of farming every day -- and people will have to be responsible for minimizing the risk of the work at hand.

One way to control the risk is to make proper use of personal protective equipment. It is estimated that nearly half of farming injuries -- and nearly all farm-related illnesses -- could be prevented or made less severe with proper protection. Agriculture needs to follow the example of other industries, which have found personal protective equipment to be their best tool for making every job as safe as possible.

What are the hazards you face on the farm? Dust, chemicals, toxic gases, flying or falling objects, hot surfaces, sharp or cutting objects, loud noise, and more. What kind of equipment will help you face those hazards? Here's a brief list:

**Head protection**
Wear a hard hat or bump cap when there's a risk of head injury -- any time you tackle such jobs as building construction, maintenance, or repair; tree trimming or cutting; electrical work (wearing nonconductive headgear); or any work in tight places.

**Eye Protection**
Wear safety goggles, safety glasses, or a face shield when operating shop equipment, spray painting, applying farm chemicals, working in heavy dust, welding, or chipping.

**Hearing Protection**
Wear earmuffs or ear plugs when operating noisy machinery, shooting, using power or chain saws, or when milling feed or grain. Wear them also in confined housing when doing such chores as swine feeding.

**Lung Protection**
Use a filter mask, chemical cartridge respirator, gas mask, or self-contained breathing device when applying toxic chemicals, spray painting, entrapping confined spaces with toxic gases or oxygen deficit, in an enclosed building, or in areas that contain bothersome allergens. Be sure you use the appropriate respirator for the job, and make sure it has been fit-tested for you.

**Skin Protection**
Use protective gloves and barrier creams when handling and applying farm chemicals, performing rough, greasy, or messy jobs, welding, or when using solvents, heavy detergents, or other chemicals. Match your protection to the hazards you're dealing with.

**Foot and Toe Protection**
Wear safety shoes or boots on all jobs, but especially when operating power mowers, moving heavy parts or materials, handling animals, or operating farm equipment.

**Charge-offs of farm non-real estate loans**

- Only 2.2 percent of farm bank loans were non-performing at mid-1991.
- Charge-offs of farm non-real estate loans were only 0.1 percent of all such loans through mid-1991.

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**Four of Farm Bureau's Finest...**

**Rus Gardner**
1991 Distinguished Sales Award

Oakland County agent Rus Gardner continues to break company records with his outstanding sales and service. For the fifth year in a row, he has earned the Distinguished Sales Award, recognizing him as our top agent in the state. He has reached levels of production that are unmatched in company history.

**Charlie Elzinga**
1991 Elton R. Smith Award

Charlie Elzinga, an agent in Charlevoix for over 30 years, received this important award for his dedication to his profession, his community, and Michigan Farm Bureau. The annual award, named in honor of past MFB president, Elton Smith, recognizes Charlie as a highly-regarded leader in Farm Bureau and the community.

**Tom Carter**, ChFC, CLU
1991 Distinguished Management Award

This prestigious award recognizes Tom Carter as our top agency manager in Michigan. Tom, who manages 21 agents in Saginaw, Bay, and Arenac Counties, also earned this top award in 1982 and 1987. Tom's quality management is reflected by his agency's outstanding sales and service, and his development of new agents.

**Margaret Dziadzioła**
1991 Michigan Farm Bureau Membership Award

Wayne County agent Margaret Dziadzioła earned this major award for her outstanding membership work last year. The award honors the agent who produced the most new Michigan Farm Bureau memberships during the past year. As our top membership producer of 1991, Margaret signed up 203 new MFB members last year.
Dairy Refund Program Changes Announced

March 16, Deadline Quickly Approaching, for Signed Applications

Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan has announced a revision of the Dairy Refund Payment Program (DRPP) to allow additional persons to receive payment as long as there's no increase in the dairy operation's production or number of cows.

The revised policy will make those dairy operators previously ineligible for refunds, eligible under the DRPP when another person was added to or removed from the operation.

This change, Madigan said, "will make our rules simpler and more equitable for dairymen who made a good-faith effort to hold the line on production and allow them to receive assessment refunds."

Adding or removing persons to those shown as marketing milk for commercial purposes from the dairy unit will not be considered a change in operation if the persons being added or removed do not have their own dairy cows that will be combined with or removed from the dairy cows already in the operation.

There are two exceptions:
1. A minor child of the dairy owner, who is involved in a 4-H, FFA or other educational project, may be added to the dairy unit along with a small number of dairy cows.
2. Two individual dairy producers who are married during the base or refund period may combine their dairy units and dairy cows without it being considered a new operation.

Also, a transfer of milk marketing history will be permitted if all the dairy cattle and dairy equipment are transferred to a family member. Transfer of the land which provided feed for the dairy operation and the dairy facility is no longer a requirement for a transfer of milk marketing history to occur.

Dairy producers should contact the local Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service office before if they have not applied or been approved because of previous policy. The deadline to file a signed application is March 16, 1992.

53 USDA County Offices Targeted For "Speedy Closure" as the Budget Axe Falls...

Sen. Richard Lugar has identified 53 high-cost USDA county offices which he has recommended to be closed, and said his staff would continue to look for other USDA field operations that could either be consolidated or eliminated.

Lugar, in a letter to Madigan, "AbSENT a compelling reason to continue operating these costly offices, I recommend a speedy closure of these facilities through your administrative powers."

Lugar, the top Republican on the Senate Agriculture Committee, has made reducing waste at USDA one of his top priorities this year. A lot of his motivation, he said, "comes from making sure that friends of the family do at least the first cut" on USDA's budget.

Noting the large U.S. deficit, Lugar said, it is inevitable that USDA will come under further pressure to trim fat. "If we don't do it now, people will come along later and take larger chunks," he said.

Other states with county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices that Lugar has targeted for closing are New York, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

In the most extreme case, the office in Leslie County, Kentucky, spends $20 on administrative costs for each dollar in benefits it pays to farmers. In the remaining 52 offices, the ratio of costs-to-benefits ranges from $1 to $8.50.

USDA spokesman, Roger Runnngen said, Madigan was "grateful" for Lugar's interest "because it will help move the bureaucracy along in the request for information." But, he said he could not "put a timetable" on how quickly USDA would be able to respond to Lugar's recommendation.

"We have to have accurate data," before we can decide whether to close too many offices, Runnngen said. An administrative effort to gather information on USDA county operations has already begun, but, it is a difficult and lengthy task, he said.

USDA has offices in 2,977 counties, or 94 percent of total U.S. counties. That includes ASCS offices, the Soil Conservation Service, Farmers Home Administration and Extension Service.

MSU/Young Farmer Discussion Meet Contest Grows

Approximately 50 Michigan State University students from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources competed in the second annual MSU/MBF Young Farmer Discussion Meet.

At right, animal science major Paul Piel, of Allegan County, shares his views on the impact of a growing federal deficit on American agriculture during final round competition in the four-year contest. Mike Smego, an agri-business major from Cass County, took first place honors. Smego, who also served as the Michigan state FFA President, and seven other finalist discussed the government's role and responsibilities in education.

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Michigan Farm News
March 15, 1992
FELD Drug - High Quality Service at Discount Prices

Next time you look into your medicine chest to take stock, don’t forget to get a copy of the latest FELD Drug discount catalog. It could save you quite a bit of money in the process.

“Our has been a popular program,” says Chuck Cooper, vice president of marketing for FELD Prescription Service, a pharmacy that delivers prescriptions through the mail. “We provide good pricing and convenience seven days a week.”

The company has operated for nearly 30 years with its home office in Omaha, Nebraska. It currently offers discount services to two million Farm Bureau members in 25 states, including Michigan. FELD Drug has offered special rates to Michigan Farm Bureau members for nearly five years.

Not only can prescriptions and non-prescription orders be mailed to the company, but they can be called in as well on the firms toll-free line at 1-800-228-3353.

The service may be best suited for older Farm Bureau members who may need to take regular medication, Cooper explains. “For some one who takes maintenance medication, we provide a service that helps them save money.”

FELD Drug operates a retail pharmacy to serve walk-in customers, but a majority of its business is through mail orders.

Along with the savings, every FELD Drug catalog comes complete with extra discount coupons to earn even more off the price of future orders. Not only are the prescription drugs available, but generic, non-prescription, over the counter medications, vitamins, lotions, braces, heating pads, canes, walkers and other medical devices are available as well.

Cooper states that FELD’s professional service is of the highest standard. “We fill our prescription the same way your local pharmacist does - by hand with a registered pharmacist. We just fill a lot more of them.” The orders are then mailed to customers in heat-sealed, tamper-proof containers.

Cooper estimates that Michigan Farm Bureau members could save from 30 to 50 percent on their generic prescription services with savings also available on all name-brand products.

To receive the latest FELD Drug catalog, call 1-800-228-3353. Cooper is sure MFB families will be pleased with the services and the savings FELD Prescription Service offers.

ADASCO, Inc. announces its new for ‘92 farm-sized seed and grain cleaner model FSZ, with a price tag designed for the average-sized farm as well.

The machine is constructed of sturdy 3/4" exterior grade plywood and painted with enamel. The machine features three screens, two upper scalping and one lower screen for fines removal.

Aspiration is provided by an air current between the upper and lower screens, with dampers to control the airflow. The screens vibrate from side to side allowing maximum exposure of seeds to the screens. All units are shipped fully assembled complete with a 1/2 h.p. motor and are ready to run. The motor is equipped with an adjustable speed pulley to provide the proper cleaning speed for all grains.

The cleaner is rated at 50 bushels per hour for seed, more or less depending on the crop being cleaned. The machine is being offered at an introductory price of $1,495. For additional information contact ADASCO, Inc. at (912) 471-8672.

The Alps of Switzerland & Austria October 1-9, 1992

Get a price as we visit two of the proudest and most picturesque counties in Central Europe. Experience the charm and beauty of Salzburg, Munich, and Oktoberfest, Oberammergau, the Lindau Castle, Lake Lucerne and much more. Our package includes round trip air service, deluxe motor coach transportation, hotel accommodations, European-style buffet breakfast, and a welcome dinner, all for $1,253 per person.

The Farm Bureau Travel Series

Best of Italy, France & Greece Cruise September 15-27, 1992

Sail the brilliant blue Mediterranean, studded with shining islands and gently painted shorelines. Our cruise combines the French and Italian Rivieres with Riopens Athens, the dramatic Corinth Canal, the winter beauty of Venice & Portofino, and the world’s most alluring islands: Sicily, Santorini, GoS, Rhodes, Kusadasi, and quaint Crete. We travel upon the Golden Odyssey—a large enough and luxurious enough to be a cruiserliner, yet small enough for its friendly lifestyle and genuine hospitality of her Greek staff.

Our cruise package includes 15th days on all cabins, all meals and entertainment, free air transportation from the U.S., 855 Bar/Buoncruise credits, group cocktail party, 1 bottle of wine per cabin, plus gratuities, on board buffets and gratuities. Cabin prices begin as low as $3,275.

Canadian Rockies/ Calgary Stampede

July 11-12, 1992

This unforgettable, 12-day time of the Canadian Rockies will not only visit the great and growing states of the northwest and majestic beauty of the Rockies, but also includes unique features designed to give it special appeal. Special attractions include the Calgary Stampede Celebrations— rodeo, chuckwagon trails, you show spectacular, a ride in a giant snowmobile on Athabaska Glacier, a guided ride to the top of Sulphur Mountain, and overnight stays at the beautiful Lake Louise Chateau and Banff Springs Hotel.

Our package includes round trip jet/transportation from Chicago, first class of deluxe hotel accommodations, 20 meals, all sightseeing and admissions, and a professional guide. Member price is $2,449 and nonmember price is $2,649.

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Brochure Request Form

Please send, without obligation, the detailed information for the tours indicated below:

- Canadian Rockies/ Calgary Stampede
- Alaska
- Best of Italy, France & Greece Cruise
- The Alps of Switzerland & Austria

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FEB Travel Program

March 15, 1992

Michigan Farm News
Non-Point Source Pollution - A Source of Concern

You always read that farmers are the best managers of the land, but they're the worst. They know how to manage land for agricultural productivity, but they don't know how to manage land to protect water quality," added Sage. The waterways of Ottawa County have been closely scrutinized lately, due to the large amounts of diluted sewage dumped into the Grand River by the Grand Rapids sewer system. Nearly 380 million gallons of chlorinated sewage were dumped into the waterway in 1991, the most since 1986. Hopefully, by late March, Grand Rapids will have a new $35 million, 30.4 million gallon sewage retention basin on line that is expected to eliminate about 65 percent of all combined sewage overflows. Some of the best management practices encouraged by Sage and the Ottawa SCS are developing waste management plans which aid livestock operators in measuring the amount of fertilizer a crop will use in a year. Ottawa County is starting a residue reduction program this year, working with land owners to do test scouting and soil testing in order to know when to apply pesticides or fertilizers. "It's a checkbook type effect on nutrient management, we take off what has been used by the crops and add in the amounts of nutrients needed," explained Sage. The use of 30 to 60 foot wide strips of land between waterways and agricultural land, known as buffer strips, are becoming more common. Buffer strips are a chance for permanent vegetation on the land to naturally filter out any polluted sediment before entering the waterway. "Some farmers are using buffer strips, but they are getting taxed for every bit of land," said Grand Rapids DNR official Janice Tompkins. "There are programs, such as the conservation reserve, where they (farmers) can put strips along these ditches and waterways into permanent vegetation and the USDA would make payment to them for a ten year period, if they take this land out of production and stabilize it," added Sage.

Develop a Diesel Fuel Protection Plan

With the cost of diesel fuel continuing to rise, its more important than ever to protect it from water, dirt and other contaminants in storage tanks. All above farm storage tanks should have a drain valve at the lowest point for easy draining of water and rust. In tanks where there are no drain valves and in underground storage tanks, it is absolutely necessary that a pump be used to remove water from the bottom of the tank on a regular basis. At least twice a year, the tanks should be completely drained, flushed and refilled because diesel fuel will oxidize and turn dark. It shouldn't be stored over three months in summer or six months in winter. Painting tanks outside will reflect extreme summer heat and help keep the fuel fresh longer.

Farmers Petroleum Cooperative Inc., offers these other helpful reminders for cleaner fuel:

- Nozzles should be capped or covered to keep out dirt and moisture.
- Tanks should be equipped with proper filters and hoses.
- Be certain that no dirt gets into your storage or equipment tanks during filling.

"Don't Miss Your FPC Spring Open House Sales Deals"

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Michigan Farm Bureau has asked Michigan State University's (MSU) Water Research Institute to review the study to verify its findings. Muskegon, Oceana, and Ottawa county SCS offices were also contacted to reveal that over 59 percent of 54,900 acres being used for agricultural purposes are practicing a conservation plan. There are 106 approved animal waste facilities in those three counties as well. Michigan Farm Bureau President Jack Laurie, in response to Bevis' accusations, stated "Most farmers take their responsibility as stewards of the environment very seriously. All farmers, unlike factories, sewage plant or landfill owners, live and raise their families in the same environment in which they work."

According to Jack Sage, Ottawa County Soil Conservation Service, in certain areas there may be a problem and definitely potential for problems. "But, we're working a lot with land owners to try to help solve these problems," added Sage. Some of the best management practices encouraged by Sage and the Ottawa SCS are developing waste management plans which aid livestock operators in measuring the amount of fertilizer a crop will use in a year. Ottawa County is starting a residue reduction program this year, working with land owners to do test scouting and soil testing in order to know when to apply pesticides or fertilizers. "It's a checkbook type effect on nutrient management, we take off what has been used by the crops and add in the amounts of nutrients needed," explained Sage.

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Paul Vleutje and Jerry Dellebecque are partners in F. Peterson Greenhouses, Portage, MI. They have 160,000 sq. ft. of greenhouse growing area and produce 100,000 units of bedding plants - annual flowers and vegetables and hanging baskets.

How These Greenhouse Partners Found A Lender Who Knows Paydirt.

"Back in the late seventies, we were borrowing from a bank but we weren't happy with the way our account was being handled. What appealed to us initially about Farm Credit was a friendly loan officer and an attractive interest rate. Over the years, we've used our line of credit to carry us through our growing season and to do quite a bit of expansion. But more importantly, we discovered that Farm Credit has a solid understanding of the greenhouse and bedding-plant business. Our relationship with Farm Credit has given us a much clearer and in-depth understanding of the financial side of our business. "Our loan officer's grasp of the key ratios for our business - debt per unit sold, debt per square foot, return on assets - has really been valuable. Each year she prepares an analysis on our business and reviews our business trends - where we've been and how we're doing compared to plan. We went to Farm Credit for a loan, but looking back, we ended up with a lot more."
Michigan Apples To Gain International Exposure

Are the traditional strawberries and cream at Wimbledon about to be replaced by Michigan Empire apples? Probably not. But beginning in 1992, this crisp, tasty apple, recently awarded $208,000 to the Michigan groups expand into foreign markets, thanks to a grant from the Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS).

FAS, which spends $200 million a year to help American businesses and commodity groups expand into foreign markets, recently awarded $208,000 to the Michigan Apple Committee (MAC). The MAC is a non-profit organization that develops advertising, promotion and publicity programs to maintain present markets and create new markets for Michigan apples. With help from scientists at Michigan State University's Agricultural Experiment Station, MAC will use the grant funds to promote Michigan Empire apples in the United Kingdom.

"Groups like the MAC don't have a lot of money to use in foreign markets - most of their dollars go into domestic promotion," said Kirk Heinze, co-author of the application that earned the grant. "A Michigan commodity being able to compete in an international market is exciting for the whole industry. It is also exciting for MSU to be part of this global marketplace."

International experience, a strong staff and past state funding were all factors in winning the grant, according to MAC manager Mark Arney.

"The FAS looks at experience, staff and budget to determine if you are a candidate for their funds," Arney said. "Fortunately, we had some previous experience in the U.K. and had received a $15,000 grant from the state last year."

Heinze will conduct the market research that will help the MAC direct its advertising and promotional efforts. Though the $208,000 is a definite boost to the MAC's annual $1 million budget, Heinze said careful spending will be essential to getting the most mileage from the money.

"There isn't a lot of room for waste," Heinze said. "We'll have to be very selective and focused in our efforts."

"About $40,000 will be spent on market research; the rest will go to promotional activities. The market research will look specifically at the huge international importers who control what comes in," Heinze said. "We first need to assess importer attitudes and retail and wholesale attitudes toward Michigan apples."

MSU scientists are an important part of the successful promotion of Michigan apples, said Patrick O'Connor, MAC public relations director.

"Research and insight from the agricultural economists, the horticulturists and the plant pathologists have affected what we do in developing our marketing plans," O'Connor said. "We rely on MSU for insight and direction. MSU scientists have been key to the success of the apple industry in the state."

"This is an example of how AES researchers and state commodities can work hand in hand to the direct benefit of the state," O'Connor said. "Proceeds from increased sales will result in increased profits for the industry."

"Michigan has planted the Empire since the 1970's," said Don Ricks, an AES agricultural economist and ex-officio member of the MAC board. "Expansion is gaining speed, and we expect it to be one of the biggest expansion varieties we have."

"They love this apple over there," Heinze said. "The British like the smaller apple, the crisp apple. The Empire has just appealed to their palates."

The Empire originated in New York and is also grown in Ontario. Western states such as Washington, the nation's leading apple producer, do not grow the Empire. That is good news for the MAC.

"We are competing with Washington in the domestic market in a number of other varieties," O'Connor said. "But they are not in the British market with this apple, so we've got an advantage in the U.K."

"We hope this will open doors for some of our 60 other specialty varieties," O'Connor said. "If we can carve a niche with one variety, that will open doors for others."

For alfalfa growers, April Fools' Day isn't until April 3.

Right now, there's big savings on Northrup King Alfalfa Varieties and Alfalfa Blends you'd be foolish to pass up. Offer ends April 3, 1992.

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The Leader in Alfalfa. Northrup King.

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Michigan Farm News
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