

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS



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Agriculture in the Former U.S.S.R. – 40 to 75 Years Behind

Tremendous Potential, However, if Reforms are Successful

Imagine stepping back in time on your farm operation. If you're a crop farmer, you're just beginning to use fertilizers and experimenting with herbicides and pesticides. If you're a dairy farmer, you haven't even heard of diseases, let alone treatments, for mastitis, milk fever or pneumonia for your dairy herd.

Forty farmers and agribusiness representatives took that trip back in time when they toured the former U.S.S.R. with stops in Russia, the Ukraine and Belyorussia, as part of a People to People International trip coordinated and lead by Michigan Department of Agriculture Director Bill Schuette and his wife Cynthia, May 19 to June 1.

While there, the group had a chance to tour a state-owned farm as well as a privately held farm partially financed by an investment from U.S. agri-business giant, Con-Agra. The difference between the two were night and day, according to Pat Driscoll, executive director of the Michigan Farm Radio Network, and a member of the tour group. Driscoll was sponsored by the Michigan Farm Bureau, Michigan Corn Growers Association and the Michigan Live Stock Exchange.

The privately held farm, named Interferma, was started just four years ago by a former nuclear submarine engineer, named Vahtang Makharadze. Because of constant roadblocks and ridiculously low state prices that were less than half his cost of production, Makharadze turned to outside sources for investment and expansion. Today his operation is a total vertically integrated system from production to processing to marketing.

"His company is currently building a chain of retail stores to sell the products that were produced and processed from his farm, including cheese, butter, vegetables, and livestock," explained Driscoll. "He is also offering a money back guarantee if his customers are not satisfied, which is unheard of in that country."

The success of this enterprising farmer would be the envy of most U.S. farmers,

with the business currently netting over \$200,000 a month, said Driscoll. The farm has over 100 employees and is beginning to offer stock options to the employees to encourage free enterprise.

The farm is also creating a savings account in essence that will be used to finance loan requests of would-be farmers wanting to purchase their own land. The farm's going interest rate? Just 12 percent compared to the going rate of 65 to 70 percent being charged by most other financial institutions.

Russian President Boris Yeltzin was so impressed with Makharadze's accomplishments, that he named him chairman of Russia's Agricultural Reform Committee. That's a good bet, since the state-owned farms have a long way to catch up with modern technology and processes.

See "Russia" and more photos continued on page 8.



Most meat is sold in an open air market without refrigeration or wrapping. All meat is sold as fresh, and what isn't sold one day, is stored beneath the counter and brought back out for the next day's sales, even though no preservatives are used. To purchase meat, one must stand in line to select a piece of meat, receive a ticket, stand in another line and pay for the ticket and get a stamp, and then return to a third line to actually pick up the meat.

Michigan's Tart Cherry Crop – Take Your Pick

What's the size of Michigan's tart cherry crop? Your best bet at this point is to wait out harvest and get a final tally. Three different estimates were given by Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association (MACMA), processors and the USDA. All three were millions of pounds apart in their forecasts, based on final frost damage estimates.

MACMA's estimate for the state of Michigan stood at 135 million pounds, with 50 million projected for the Northwest region, 49 million in the West Central region, and 36 million in the Southwest region.

Processor estimates were nearly 30 million pounds higher, with the biggest discrepancy from MACMA's projection occurring in the Northwest region where they're estimating 73.9 million pounds. For the state's West Central region, they're forecasting 55 million pounds, and only 34.2 million pounds for the Southwest region.

USDA's projections were the most optimistic from a production standpoint, with 90 million pounds forecast for the Northwest region, 55 million pounds forecast for the West Central region and 39 million pounds for the Southwest region. In total, USDA's estimates were 50 million pounds higher than MACMA's, which could mean a significant change in Michigan's tart cherry harvest.

Northwest Michigan saw the biggest disparity in yield estimates, with a 40 million pound difference between MACMA and USDA. According to MACMA's Red Tart Cherry Newsletter, MACMA's estimate, particularly for Northwest Michigan, was based on seasoned estimators who saw blocks of trees with no cherries, and blocks with full crops and everything in between.

Based on the tour, the group estimated this year's crop at somewhere less than half of a full crop. Based on an expected 120 mil-

lion pounds total Northwest region crop, the group's final estimate fell on 50 million pounds.

Nationally, MACMA is projecting a total U.S. crop of 218 million pounds, while USDA is estimating a 270.8 million pound tart cherry crop. Based on national crop projections, inventory of frozen cherries, cost of production and price and supply of competing fruits, MACMA's Red Tart Cherry Growers Marketing Committee is recommending a price of 46 cents per pound at 92 score.

Michigan 1992 Tart Cherry Crop Estimates

Region	MACMA	Proc.	USDA
Northwest	50.0	73.9	90.0
W. Central	49.0	55.0	55.0
Southwest	36.0	34.2	39.0
Other	0	1.0	1.0
Total	135.0	164.1	185.0

MSU Sheep Barn Lost to Fire

This is all that remains of one of the MSU barns used in conjunction with the MSU Sheep Teaching and Research program. The barn, used primarily for housing ewes on pasture, was a total loss due to the fire that took place early Thursday morning, July 2, at approximately 7:45. A passerby noticed the smoke and reported the fire.

No livestock were lost, however, estimated dollar loss for the barn and contents is expected to be approximately \$100,000 dollars. The cause of the fire is still unknown at press time as the investigation continues. Although arson had not been ruled out, investigators do not believe the fire was related to the previous A.L.F. terrorists activities at the MSU Mink Research Center earlier this year.



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Can the Tax and Spend Mentality be Stopped?

Farm Bureau members across the country were deeply disappointed that the U.S. House failed, by 10 votes, to pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. All the Michigan House Republican delegation voted in favor of the amendment, along with Democrat Rep. Bob Carr. The rest of the Michigan House Democratic delegation voted against the amendment.

The amendment, sponsored by Rep. Charles Stenholm (D-Texas), would have required a balanced budget by 1998 and would have mandated a three-fifths majority in the House and Senate to breach a budget or raise the debt ceiling. The plan would also have required a constitutional majority (218 House members, 51 senators) to raise taxes.

Once again, the taxpayers of this nation have been frustrated in their efforts to slow down the runaway federal spending machine. Why does it seem next to impossible for lawmakers to understand the depth of feeling across this country in favor of lower government expenditures?

An insight into this dilemma comes from some research done by economist James Payne of Lytton Research & Analysis. Payne did a study of congressional hearings on spending programs. He examined 14 different hearings on a wide variety of programs and tabulated the orientation of more than 1,000 witnesses. His findings? In favor of spending programs: 1,014 Against spending: 7.

Payne said that letters, phone calls and personal visits to congressmen and congressional aides all run overwhelmingly in favor of specific programs. Government agencies and government officials supplied most of the opinion and information to policymakers. "The city of Washington is overwhelmed by advocates of spending programs," Payne said, "and congressmen are exposed to their one-sided pitches day in and day out. Since there is practically no one in the system who bothers to contradict this propaganda, the result is a considerable degree of brainwashing. In their heart of hearts, most legislators actually believe in spending programs."

The only way to shake this belief is for lawmakers to hear from real citizens out in the country. This summer election season offers a tremendous opportunity for you to make your views known to your local congressman. Tell him that all federal spending, including entitlements, must be reduced by an across-the-board cut or spending freeze. Don't let him get away with trying to blame the executive branch for runaway federal spending. Hold his feet to the fire by reminding him that all expenditure bills originate with Congress.

In addition to talking to your congressman, consider actively working to elect people who are fiscally conservative. One of the criteria used to select the Farm Bureau AgriPAC "Friends of Agriculture" congressional endorsements listed in this issue of Michigan Farm News is commitment to federal spending restraint.

Your Farm Bureau organization will continue to work in support of a balanced budget, across the board spending restraints without new taxes and a presidential line-item veto. These are the elements that will help taxpayers regain control of the federal government and move this country back on track toward economic growth and prosperity.

Jack Laurie
Jack Laurie, President
Michigan Farm Bureau

Balanced Budgets Apparently Don't Apply in D.C.

Although it should come as no surprise, legislators in Washington, D.C., turned their back one more time on fiscal responsibility when the House of Representatives failed to pass a constitutional amendment that would have required a balanced budget.

President Bush blasted the measure's opponents for failing to recognize "the will of the American people." Meanwhile, members of the House criticized the president for never having submitted a balanced budget to Congress. They point out that during Bush's tenure, the national debt has escalated to more than \$4.1 trillion -- more than \$16,500 per U.S. citizen by some estimates.

- How They Voted -

The balanced budget came up just 10 votes short for a needed 290 votes. Nine of Michigan's representatives voted no, and one did not vote. Their collective support would have ensured passage of the amendment. Farm Bureau urged a "Y" vote.

Y - Supported Balanced Budget Amendment
N - Didn't Support Balanced Budget Amendment
? - Did Not Vote

District/Name.....	Vote	District/Name	Vote
1 John Conyers	N	10 David Camp	Y
2 Carl Pursell	Y	11 Robert Davis	Y
3 Howard Wolpe	N	12 David Bonior.....	N
4 Fred Upton.....	Y	13 Barbara Collins.....	N
5 Paul Henry.....	Y	14 Dennis Hertel	N
6 Robert Carr.....	Y	15 William Ford	N
7 Dale Kildee	N	16 John Dingell	N
8 Bob Traxler	?	17 Sander Levin	N
9 Guy Vander Jagt.....	Y	18 William Broomfield	Y

In Brief...

Bush Supports Ethanol Tax Break

President Bush announced his support for legislation that would give ethanol blended fuels with less than 10 percent ethanol a tax break. During his comments to a group of agricultural journalists meeting in Washington, Bush said he favors extending the tax break currently available only to 10 percent blends to blends with less than 10 percent.

Presently, gasohol with 10 percent ethanol is favored with an exemption from the 5.4 cents per gallon gasoline tax, but fuels with low alcohol content cannot qualify. "That change should result in blends that meet the emission guidelines of 1990 clean air legislation," said Clayton Yeutter, White House domestic policy adviser.

Meanwhile, the National Corn Growers said that while the additional tax exemption is positive news, farmers shouldn't confuse the exemption with the still unresolved role of ethanol in the Clean Air Act's reformulated gasoline program (RFG). "Some have confused the RFG program issue with the new tax legislation," warns Tim Trotter, NCGA president. "We want to emphasize that without participation in the RFG program, farmers could have a \$7.54 per planted acre lower return."

CRP Reaches 35.4 Million Acres Nationally

USDA has accepted another 998,211 acres of highly erodible and otherwise environmentally sensitive cropland into the Conservation Reserve Program, bringing total acreage enrolled up to 35.4 million acres nationwide.

In the latest sign-up period for the program, USDA accepted land from 39 states. The most was from Iowa with 100,490 acres, followed by Missouri with 87,992 and Texas with 86,574. Per acre rental payments for the 10 to 15 year contracts averaged \$52.35, USDA said. In Michigan, according to ASCS preliminary estimates, 100,000 acres applied for the CRP, although actual acreage accepted was not known as of press time. Michigan previously had over 250,000 acres enrolled in the CRP at an average rental payment of \$55 to \$58 dollars per acre.

Judge Rules Apple Growers Can Sue CBS

A federal district judge ruled recently that 4,700 Washington state apple growers have grounds to charge CBS, Inc., with disparagement of their product. The suit will be in connection with the network's "60 Minutes" broadcast alleging that the chemical Alar used on apples was harmful to consumers.

The ruling is considered favorable by the farmers but in another part of the ruling, the judge said the plaintiffs would have to prove CBS showed reckless disregard for whether its broadcast was true or false. Since the controversial February 1989 broadcast, federal officials have ruled apples treated with the chemical do not pose a threat to consumers.

Americans on Food Stamps at Record-High Levels

The nation's food stamp rolls grew by about 100,000 during April, setting still another record, USDA reported recently. "Typically when the weather gets warmer, participation drops off because people get seasonal work," said spokesman Phil Shanholtzer.

However, with the new increase, the 25.8 million people on food stamps for the month--about one in every 10 Americans--marked an increase of 2.6 million over the same month last year. Shanholtzer said the number climbed slightly all through 1989 and into 1990. It began to shoot up faster in the summer of 1990, with a slight leveling last summer, followed by steady increases ever since.

USDA says food stamp applications are fueled by the recession and by greater awareness of the program. Expansion of the Medicaid program and improvements in making food stamps accessible also are bringing in more people, says the department.

Mexico's Quickie Meat Inspections a Surprise

The Mexican government has suddenly decided to impose border inspections on all meat entering the country, a move the Meat Export Federation says was done without proper notification.

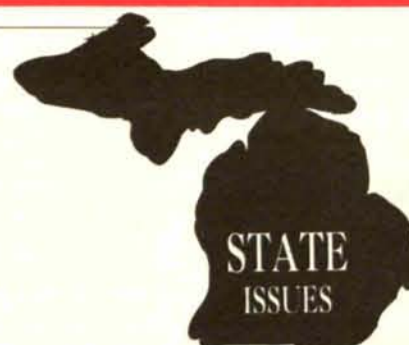
The border inspections apparently apply to boxed and carcass beef, but apparently do not apply to variety meats or processed meats. The new requirement is that samples of all meat entering the country be submitted for inspection at border facilities.

Mexico has promised that turn around time on the inspections will be no more than 10 hours, but has not specified what aspects authorities will be testing for. U.S. authorities were surprised by the quick decision by Mexico, and said they should have been given 45 days notice before a border is closed. Mexican officials say they were not required to give notice because the border is not officially closed.

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Ethanol

MFB Position

Strongly supports tax incentives to expand the use of ethanol.

MFB Contact

Al Almy, Ext. 2040

During consideration of a national energy strategy, the Senate Finance Committee approved an amendment that would allow an excise tax exemption on gasohol containing less than 10 percent ethanol. The amendment provides for the following excise tax exemption:

%Ethanol By Volume	Excise Tax Exemption
10.0% (3.5% oxygen)	5.400 cents per gallon
7.7% (2.7% oxygen)	4.158 cents per gallon
5.7% (2.0% oxygen)	3.078 cents per gallon

The amendment will assist in the use of ethanol in implementing the Clean Air Act by allowing tax exemptions for fuels containing less than 10 percent ethanol. It would provide more flexibility for ethanol use in states that might adopt clean air strategies calling for fuel with less than 10 percent ethanol.

The Senate Finance Committee also included language to allow the alcohol fuels credit to offset up to 50 percent of the alternative minimum tax for corporations and other taxpayers.

Health Insurance Deduction

MFB Position

Strongly supports continuation of the 25 percent health insurance tax deduction for self-employed persons and increasing the deduction to 100 percent.

MFB Contact

Al Almy, Ext. 2040

Legislation to extend the 25 percent health insurance tax deduction for self-employed persons has received initial approval by House and Senate committees. The deduction expired June 30, 1992.

The Senate Finance Committee has approved an 18-month extension of the health insurance tax deduction for self-employed persons. If enacted, the deduction would be reinstated and remain in effect through Dec. 31, 1993. The House Ways and Means Committee has also voted to extend the deduction by six months. Under the House version, the deduction would be in effect through Dec. 31, 1992.

Farm Truck Regulations – Know Your Obligations?

The Michigan Motor Vehicle Code is the body of law that regulates traffic on Michigan highways. Farmers have a number of exemptions because of the unique aspects of agriculture but there are, a number of laws that farmers need to be aware of and comply with.

The federal government allows the states to waive the requirements for the Commercial Drivers License (CDL). The state of Michigan exempts a farmer within 150 miles of home, operating in the farmer's own farming operation and not hauling hazardous material. The exemption includes all trucks regardless of size. However, any truck over 26,001 pounds GVWR pulling a trailer or a semi, the operator is required to obtain an "F" endorsement.

The Covered Load Law also exempts agriculture but requires that the load be secured and not allowed to escape from the vehicle. If, for instance, chaff from corn should escape, that is exempt, but if the corn itself escapes, that is a violation. Further exemptions are provided for hay, straw, silage and water used to transport agricultural commodities. In the case of water, the amount is limited to an amount which would not cause a traffic hazard and does not include the product itself.

The transport of hazardous material (HAZ MAT) is creating some confusion. For a farmer transporting anhydrous ammonia, if the tank is towed by a vehicle less than 26,001 pounds GVWR, for instance, a pick-up, the farmer is exempt from the CDL, although placards are required for the hazardous material. If the vehicle is larger than 26,001 GVWR, a full CDL with a HAZ MAT endorsement is required.

Bumpers are required on all trucks when the bed extends more than 30 inches above the road surface and the rear axle is set in 36 inches or more than an underride carriage, a bumper, is required to extend to within at least 30 inches of the road surface to protect smaller vehicles, such as cars, from driving underneath the truck.

Farmers are exempt from logbook requirements and many other regulations. Before traveling out of state with a truck, it is recommended to review the laws of those states. In most cases, reciprocity is extended and if the vehicle and driver were legal in Michigan, they would be legal in that state. This usually also extends to the license plate although may not include the special farm plate, which is the \$15 plate used for the transport of the crop from field to storage and for the transport of seed, fertilizer, and spray material from the farm to the field. The regular farm plate allows the farmer to operate the truck for any purposes related to the farming operation and is honored in most states.

Questions regarding equipment required on trucks may be directed to Motor Carrier Division, Department of State Police. Through the county Farm Bureau, an inspection day may be organized to allow farmers to have their vehicles inspected with a motor carrier officer checking the vehicles for required equipment and assure that it is in compliance with all laws and regulations. This is a brief summary of laws affecting farmers operating farm trucks. **For more information, contact Ron Nelson, 517/323-6560.**

**Michigan Farm Bureau
(517) 323-7000**

Animal Industry Initiative

MFB Position

Farm Bureau continues to strongly support the Animal Industry Initiative at MSU.

MFB Contact

Ron Nelson, Ext. 2043

The Joint Capital Outlay Committee approved funding for the MSU Animal Industry Initiative. The funding of \$500,000 will assure that the planning process begins immediately. The lengthy procedure to approve funding for any major project at any of the universities must take place prior to money being allocated for planning or construction. The approval of the Joint Capital Outlay Committee, with the continued support of the governor, provides the necessary funds for the first major step in hiring architects and consultants to develop the specific site plans prior to the beginning of construction. With this effort, the \$67,000,000 Animal Industry Initiative is truly underway.

Agriculture Budget for Fiscal Year 92 - 93

MFB Position

MFB continues to support necessary funds to help provide for a strong production agriculture in Michigan.

MFB Contact

Ron Nelson, Ext. 2043

The \$27,000,000 Michigan Department of Agriculture budget provides protection to Michigan consumers and ensures the continued level of food safety in Michigan.

Some of the programs incorporated within the budget include ensuring accurate weights and measures for buyers and sellers of all types of commodities plus monitoring and enforcement of regulations that protect livestock from disease. The MDA budget passed both houses and is on its way to the governor's desk.

Implementation of the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance - PMO

MFB Position

Farm Bureau supports the legislation. The adoption of the PMO by states is voluntary but extremely important in that a shipment of milk destined for out of state is restricted unless the individual states have adopted and are following the recommendations as detailed in the current PMO.

MFB Contact

Ron Nelson, Ext. 2043

H.B. 5990, sponsored by Rep. Harder (D-Owosso), and S.B. 1058, sponsored by Sen. McManus (R-Traverse City), have been introduced in each respective House. H.B. 5990 has been referred to the House State Affairs Committee.

The revised version of the PMO will assure that consumers will have the highest quality products available and allow Michigan dairy producers to ship milk out of state during surplus times. The recommendations include temperature requirements for both raw and processed milk, lowered antibiotic residues, handling procedures, carton size and markings and revises the financial security standards established for the buyer to assure that the producers and dairies are paid in a timely fashion.

The new PMO was effective July 1, 1992. Michigan frequently ships fluid milk out of state, especially during August when relatively large amounts are transported to other states where the demand is greater.

Local Pesticide Ordinances

MFB Position

Farm Bureau policy opposes local regulation of pesticides and, therefore, strongly supported S.B. 643 as introduced. In an effort to move the bill through the Legislature, Farm Bureau agreed to support the substitute and will be seeking amendments in the House to establish standards for certification and training of local officials to ensure accurate and consistent enforcement across the state.

S.B. 643, as introduced by Sen. Nick Smith (R-Addison), would preempt a local unit of government from enacting or enforcing an ordinance that contradicts or conflicts with the Michigan Pesticide Control Act.

Amendments added in Senate substitute #4 would allow a local unit of government to pass a pesticide ordinance if unreasonable, adverse effects on the public health or environment will exist within the local unit of government. The ordinance must be approved by the director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture within 90 days.

The substitute also allows the director of MDA to contract with a local unit of government to act as its agent for the purpose of enforcing the Michigan Pesticide Control Act. S.B. 643 (S-4) passed the full Senate and was referred to the House Agriculture Committee. The House Agriculture Committee has met to receive testimony on the bill. A subcommittee has been appointed to work on the bill, and is expected to hold hearings around the state over the summer recess. A vote isn't expected until this fall.

Statewide Trail System

MFB Position

Farm Bureau offered several amendments to the package consistent with MFB policy on abandoned railroads, working closely with the sponsors of the legislation to address concerns of adjacent private property owners and did not oppose the package of bills.

MFB Contact

Vicki Pontz, Ext. 2046

A package of bills, known as the Michigan Trailways Act, providing for a system of state trailways to be used for public recreation activities has passed the Senate. The language in SB 834 (S-2) allows the Natural Resources Commission to designate a Michigan trailway only if potential negative impacts of trailway development on owners or residents of adjacent property are minimized through all of the following: adequate enforcement; maintenance of trailway crossings for agricultural and other purposes; construction and maintenance of fencing at the expense of the trail owner or operator; temporary closure of trailways by the entity operating the trailway to allow pesticide application on lands adjoining the trailway, including the posting of signs or the closure of the trailway during pesticide application and appropriate reentry periods. The bills have been referred to the House Conservation Committee.

Weather

A second abnormally strong arctic air mass settled over the Great Lakes region in late June, resulting in frost and scattered freezing minimum temperatures on June 21 and 22. The record cold temperatures were even accompanied by a light snow in northeastern sections of Lower Michigan.

Frost damage was dependent on location, with the worst problems in low lying areas, especially on the muck soils. Temperatures for June averaged below normal at most sites, putting degree day accumulations significantly behind normal, with northern areas about two to five days behind and southern areas by as much as six to 10 days.

As was the case in May, precipitation was below normal in nearly all areas. Precipitation deficits since March 1 have now grown to nearly 6 inches in some northwestern Lower Peninsula locations, with drought stress a growing problem.

Earlier forecasts this summer had called for warmer and drier than normal weather in June and July. While the growing season has certainly been drier in almost all locations, temperatures have trended below normal, especially in the last four to eight weeks.

The latest National Weather Service extended outlook calls for a continuation of cooler than normal temperatures through

30-Day Outlook, Temperatures Normal With Below Normal Rainfall

6/1/92 to 6/30/92	Temperature		Growing Degree Days		Precipitation	
	Observed Mean	Dev. From Normal	Actual Accum.	Normal Accum.	Actual (inch.)	Normal (inch.)
Alpena	59.2	-3.0	559	685	1.69	2.90
Bad Axe	60.4	-4.9	650	881	2.74	3.08
Detroit	65.5	-2.2	907	971	2.35	3.36
Escanaba	58.7	-2.0	390	471	2.83	3.26
Flint	64.2	-2.1	851	971	2.26	3.36
Grand Rapids	64.3	-2.8	857	1005	1.61	3.55
Houghton	58.0	-1.4	546	618	2.39	3.61
Houghton Lake	60.9	-2.8	658	685	1.78	2.90
Jackson	63.7	-4.6	826	991	3.06	3.57
Lansing	63.3	-3.8	815	991	2.04	3.57
Marquette	56.7	-2.7	526	618	0.69	3.61
Muskegon	62.0	-3.7	707	832	1.50	2.94
Pellston	59.6	-1.5	631	721	1.26	3.03
Saginaw	64.2	-2.7	816	881	2.38	3.08
Sault Ste. Marie	56.9	-1.8	456	471	1.55	3.26
South Bend	65.1	-3.3	959	1005	1.54	3.55
Traverse City	61.9	-2.0	708	721	1.42	3.03
Vestaburg	62.9	-4.2	743	885	1.08	3.36

Observed and normal growing degree day totals are accumulated from March 1. Normals are based on district averages. Jeff Andresen, Ag Meteorologist, MSU

July and normal temperatures through September. Precipitation is expected to be on the increase over the same period with normal to above normal amounts expected.

This is good news for most parts of the state, however, given the below degree day accumulations and the extended outlook for below normal temperatures, some heat-sensitive, or late maturing crops may have difficulty reaching full maturity before the end of the growing season.

Michigan and Major Commodity Area Extended Weather Outlook

T - Temp.	7/15.....7/31	7/15.....9/30
P - Precip.	T.....P	T.....P
Michigan	B.....N	N.....A
W. Corn Belt	N/B.....N/A	N.....N
E. Corn Belt	N/B.....N	N.....N
Wint. Wheat Belt	N.....N/A	N/B.....N/A
Spr. Wheat Belt	B.....A	N.....N
Pac. NW Wheat	N.....A	A.....N/B
Delta	A.....B	N.....N
Southeast	N/A.....N/B	N.....N
San Joaquin	B.....B	A.....N

A-Above Average, B-Below Average, N-Normal, MA-Much Above, MB-Much Below, NP-No Precip. Source: National Weather Office

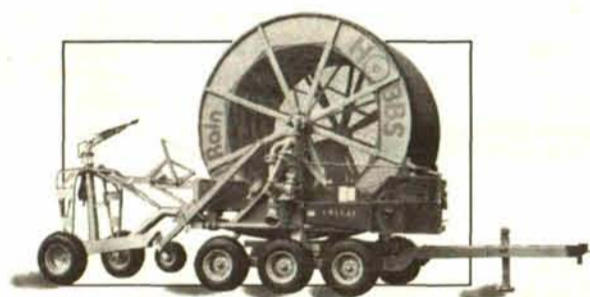
Michigan Corn, Soybean, Sugarbeet and Wheat Acreages Up

Michigan farmers are estimated to have planted more acres of corn, soybeans, wheat, sugarbeets and summer potatoes this year, according to the Federal/State Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service. While a dry, cool spring allowed planting to progress at normal rates, it also slowed development in all the major field crops. Unseasonable late spring freezes have further hampered development.

In Michigan, corn planted is estimated to be 2.7 million acres, up 4 percent from

1991. Corn expected to be harvested for grain is 2.4 million acres. Soybeans planted increased 4 percent to 1.45 million acres. Sugarbeets planted, at 177,000 acres, is up 4 percent from last year. Acres expected to be harvested are up 5 percent of 174,000 acres. If these acres are realized, this will set a record for acres planted and harvested. Dry bean planted and harvested acreage is down 9 percent, at 320,000 and 310,000 acres respectively. Acreage planted to summer potatoes is estimated 12,500 acres, up 500 acres from last year.

Winter wheat planted is estimated at 650,000 acres, up 14 percent from 1991. Harvested acreage is expected to total 630,000 acres. Oat seedings are down to a low of 140,000 acres, down 7 percent from last year's all-time low. Barley planted is estimated at 30,000 acres, down 5,000 acres from 1991. Rye acreage intended for harvest is down 11 percent from last year. All hay, at 1.4 million acres, is down 50,000 acres from 1991. Alfalfa hay is down 50,000 acres, while other hay remains at 250,000 acres.



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MICHIGAN 1991 YIELDS

ACA-treated wheat had an average increase of 4.68 bu/acre with the highest yield increase at 7.82 bu/acre.

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Michigan Hay Status Varies Considerably

A phone conference call was held June 22 with MSU Extension campus and field staff from across the state regarding conditions of Michigan's first-cutting hay crop. The conference call was held at the request of the Michigan Hay and Forage Council.

The council felt this information was vital to Michigan producers because of the disparity of the hay crop due to weather factors of late spring frosts, winterkill and drought. The results of the conference call were:

If Hay Crop is Going to be Short, Try Planting a Short-Season Forage

A shortfall in the amount of hay put up as haylage or as baled hay can be supplemented by forage sorghums, hybrid sudangrasses or sorghum-sudangrass.

When these crops are planted during late spring or early summer, they usually produce from 750 to 1,750 pounds per acre, depending on the variety grown.

Forage sorghum can produce between 1,150 and 1,750 pounds per acre, sorghum sudangrass, between 875 and 1,200 pounds per acre and sudangrass, between 750 and 1,150 pounds per acre.

According to MSU agronomists, the fertility requirements of these crops is similar to corn but they do not need a starter fertilizer (other than initial N) because the planting dates usually avoid cool, wet soils.

Forage sorghums can withstand acid soils better than corn and lime is needed only if the soil pH is 5.5. The ideal pH for these crops is in the range of 5.5 to 7.5.

The crops can be established through broadcasting the seed or by drilling to a depth of two inches on sandy soils and one inch on heavier textured soils.

All three of the crops are well suited for pasture, greenchop, hay, or silage production and will continue to grow after grazing or harvesting for hay or silage until frost.

The best time to harvest forage sorghums and sudangrasses for maximum hay yields is in the vegetative or boot stages. The feed value and dry matter yields of these forages preserved as hay in the vegetative stage are about equal to high quality hay.

Herb Bucholtz, MSU Extension dairy specialist, says that the only drawback to these forages is the potential for prussic acid poisoning.

However, most of that risk can be avoided if the crop is allowed to grow to 18 inches or taller before allowing livestock to graze. Poisoning potential increases when plants are grown under adverse environmental conditions -- drought, flood, cold -- and on soil that is high in N and deficient in P and K. Be wary also of forage that has been frosted.

Silage made from sorghum, sudangrass and sorghum-sudangrass is usually safe from prussic acid poisoning when it is ensiled or put up as baled hay.

More information about managing these forages as a supplement or a substitute in the ration can be obtained from the county MSU Cooperative Extension Service office.

Southeast Lower Peninsula - Some winterkill. Good quality harvested, with yield at 60 to 70 percent of normal. First cutting averaging \$45 to \$85 per ton.

Southwest Lower Peninsula - Some winterkill and drought conditions reported, with yields ranging from 70 to 75 percent of normal. First cutting averaging \$65 to \$100 per ton.

Central Lower Peninsula - Timely rainfall in the Lansing area, resulting in near normal yields. First cutting averaging \$45 to \$80 per ton.

East Central Lower Peninsula - Some winterkill reported, with most areas experiencing drought conditions, resulting in yields 50 to 70 percent of normal. Standing hay going at \$40 per acre for first cutting, \$125 per acre for all cuttings.

Northwest Lower Peninsula - Some winterkill reported along with very dry conditions, resulting in yields 25 to 60 percent of normal yields. First cutting hay averaging \$50 to \$95 per ton.

Northeast Lower Peninsula - Winterkill and drought conditions reported with yields running 50 to 75 percent of normal. Few sales were being reported; however, standing hay was going at \$90 per acre for first cutting.

Eastern Upper Peninsula - Dry and cold conditions had prevailed at the time of the conference call, with little winterkill reported. Yields were expected to run 50 percent of normal.

Western Upper Peninsula - Dry and cold conditions were also reported, with little winterkill noticed. Alfalfa yields were predicted to be 50 to 60 percent of normal, while alfalfa-grass at 60 to 70 percent of normal. Standing alfalfa was averaging \$30 to \$40 per acre for first cutting, while mixed alfalfa and grass was getting \$15 per acre.

Midwest Region Hay Stocks

A report from Dr. David Petritz, agricultural economist from Purdue University, highlights the recent USDA Hay Stock Report.

As of May 1, hay stocks were reported down 1.5 percent in Michigan, down 74 percent in Ohio, down 73 percent in Indiana, down 31 percent in Illinois, and down 12 percent in Wisconsin.

The phone conferees offered the following recommendations:

1. Be patient with spring seeded hay crops as rainfall in late summer can still make them productive.

2. Prepare summer seedings of alfalfa to be seeded in late July to early August. As in the last five years, these seedings have done very well.

3. If purchasing hay, base the price on forage quality determined by a feed test. Not all hay is \$90 per ton hay, even in a dry year.

In normal years, hay will range in price per ton from \$0.60 to \$0.70 per point of relative feed value test. In drought years, it has gone as high as \$0.90 to \$1.05 per point of relative feed value.

Reprinted from the June 24 CAT Alert

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Market Outlook

Dr. Jim Hilker, Dept. of Agricultural Economics, MSU

Writing an outlook the first part of July to be read the middle of July may be a foolish endeavor, especially given the potential of a weather market in either direction. However, there is some important information that needs to be considered as we are continually updated on yield potential. On June 30, the USDA released the June 1 Quarterly Stocks Reports, the June 1 Acreage Planted Reports, and the June 1 Quarterly Hogs and Pigs Report. This information is discussed below in the appropriate sections and is incorporated in the Supply/Demand Balance Sheets shown in Tables 1-3. The columns under Hilker are my projections of what the reports mean. The USDA will give its version on July 9 and we will report them in the next issue.

Corn

Both the corn stocks and corn acreage reports were seen as positive for corn prices. The stocks report showed the U.S. had 2.74 billion bushels of corn stocks on June 1. This was well below expectations and showed strong use in the third quarter. To account for this, I increased the 91-92 feed use, which in turn lowered the already low 91-92 ending stocks figure. This low potential carryover into next year is what makes the weather markets so volatile. The one worrisome part of the 91-92 use figures is the export projection. Exports will have to average over 29 million bushels per week the last nine weeks of the marketing year to reach the projection. The last week of June, they were 24 million.

Acres planted to corn for 1992 were reported as 79.3 million acres. While this was 300,000 above the March intentions, it was below the average expectations of 80 million acres. The next part of the equation is guessing the yield. Usually at this time of the year, we would still use a trend yield, which would be 119.6 bu./ac. However, in Table 1, I used 118 bu./ac as the early weather has taken away some of the yield

Seasonal Commodity Price Trends

Wheat	?
Corn	?
Soybeans	?
Hogs	↓
Cattle	↓?

Index: ↑ = Higher Prices; ↓ = Lower Prices; TP= Topping; BT= Bottoming; ? = Unsure

Corn used for feed is projected to increase in 92-93 as the Hogs and Pigs Report showed, there will be an increase in year to year hog numbers through at least the spring of 1993. FSI use is expected to continue its positive trend and exports are projected to remain level. Given this scenario, ending stocks would increase significantly as shown in Table 1, and 92-93 prices would average below this year. In order to justify the \$2.40/bu. new crop prices, we saw the first of July yield in 92-93 would have to drop into the 113-114 bu./ac. range, which is a definite possibility as of this writing, or demand would have to pick up significantly.

How do you use this information in your pricing plan? Calculate your yield risk (how much are you willing to price), project your U.S. yield "guess" and risk, then do some forward pricing when you feel the price is higher than the odds would project. Is this easy? No. Is it necessary? Yes. Remember what a good price has been historically and how short a time period it tends to stay there. Use the price rallies.

Wheat

The stocks and acreage reports for wheat were negative. The ending stocks number for 91-92 wheat of 472 was way above last month's USDA projection of 423. And the total wheat planted acres of 72.3 million were 2.3 million higher than intentions. The good news is the Michigan wheat crop has shown improvement over the last several months.

The higher than expected 91-92 ending stocks figure could be due to a combination of lower use and perhaps larger production last year than previously thought. Exports appeared to have ended up slightly below expectations, perhaps 10 million bushels. The remainder must be a combination of lower feed use and higher production. My estimates are incorporated into Table 2.

Planted winter wheat acreage was 0.8 million acres higher than the January winter wheat planting report had indicated. On top of that, spring and durum planted acreage in the June report was 1.5 million acres higher than the March planting intentions.

Soybeans

The news the reports brought for soys was somewhat negative. Stocks were slightly higher than expected, but not enough to cause much worry. The bearishness came from the 1.6 million more acres of soybeans planted this spring than the March intentions report listed.

It would take almost a bushel decrease in yield from the trend (34bu./ac. to 33.1bu./ac.) to make up for the increase in acreage. As seen in Table 3, where I lower the yield about half that from trend, you'd see adequate stocks and an average price for the 92-93 crop near the 91-92 levels.

Cattle

The June 7-State Cattle-On-Feed Report showed the total on feed down 9 percent, placements down 3 percent, and marketing down 3 percent all compared to the same period a year ago. These numbers were near expectations and should keep the market above the disastrously low prices we had last summer and fall. However, we would expect placements to begin to pick up late summer and fall and next year's prices are expected to be somewhat lower. At this point keep current, the July Inventory Report should give us more information.

FARM BUSINESS OUTLOOK

This unexpected acreage would make up for a 1-2 bushel drop in yields.

It appears to me that the market has already incorporated the negative information into its price and, therefore, has not left any great forward pricing opportunities. Watch for rallies to consider selling some out of the field. Other alternatives include storage, if the basis is fairly wide, delayed pricing, or storage and put options. We would need a narrowing of the basis to consider basis contracts, minimum price contracts, or selling cash and buying a call.

Obviously, the yield could go lower, and if the yield dropped to near the 32 bu./acre level, we could be above \$6.00/bu. all year.

For at least some of your production, go with the odds and consider doing some pricing of new crop at levels over \$6 on weather, rallies if you have not already done so.

Soybeans have amazing comeback potential as we saw last year. The South American crop is very good, and the export projection of 650 million bushels is somewhat optimistic.

Table 1
Supply/Demand Balance Sheet For
CORN

	Hilker Proj. 1990-91	Hilker Proj. 91-92	Hilker Proj. 92-93
Corn Acreage (Million Acres)			
Acres Set-Aside and Diverted	6.3	4.7	3.5
Acres Planted	74.2	76.0	79.3
Acres Harvested	67.0	68.8	72.2
Bu./A. Harvested	118.5	108.6	118.0
Stocks (Million Bushels)			
Beg. Stocks	1345	1521	1100
Production	7934	7474	8520
Imports	3	20	10
Total Supply	9282	9016	9630
Use:			
Feed	4669	4921	5025
Food/Seed	1367	1445	1485
Total Domestic	6036	6345	6510
Exports	1725	1550	1550
Total Use	7761	7916	8060
Ending Stocks	1521	1100	1570
Ending Stocks Percent of Use	19.6%	13.9%	19.5%
Regular Loan Rate	\$1.57	\$1.62	\$1.72
U.S. Season Average			
Farm Price, \$/Bu.	\$2.28	\$2.40	\$2.30

Source: USDA & Hilker

Table 2
Supply/Demand Balance Sheet For
WHEAT

	Hilker Proj. 1990-91	Hilker Proj. 91-92	Hilker Proj. 92-93
Wheat Acreage (Million Acres)			
Acres Set-Aside and Diverted	3.2	10.0	3.5
Acres Planted	77.3	69.9	72.3
Acres Harvested	69.4	57.7	63.1
Bu./A. Harvested	39.5	34.5	35.3
Stocks (Million Bushels)			
Beg. Stocks	536	866	472
Production	2736	1994	2227
Imports	37	37	36
Total Supply	3309	2897	2735
Use:			
Food	796	785	800
Seed	90	90	95
Feed	489	300	165
Total Domestic	1375	1175	1060
Exports	1068	1250	1200
Total Use	2444	2425	2260
Ending Stocks	866	472	475
Ending Stocks Percent of Use	35.4%	19.5%	21.0%
Regular Loan Rate	\$1.95	\$2.04	\$2.21
U.S. Season Average			
Farm Price, \$/Bu.	\$2.61	\$3.00	\$3.65

Source: USDA & Hilker

Table 3
Supply/Demand Balance Sheet For
SOYBEANS

	Hilker Proj. 1990-91	Hilker Proj. 91-92	Hilker Proj. 92-93
Soybean Acreage (Million Acres)			
Acres Planted	57.8	59.1	59.0
Acres Harvested	56.5	58.0	58.0
Bu./Harvested Acre	34.1	34.3	33.6
Stocks (Million Bushels)			
Beg. Stocks	239	329	300
Production	1926	1986	1949
Imports	2	5	6
Total Supply	2167	2320	2255
Use:			
Crushings	1187	1235	1235
Exports	557	690	650
Seed, Feed and Residuals	94	95	95
Total Use	1838	2020	1980
Ending Stocks	329	300	275
Ending Stocks, Percent of Use	17.9%	14.9%	13.9%
Regular Loan Rate	\$4.50	\$5.02	\$5.02
U.S. Season Average			
Farm Price, \$/Bu.	\$5.75	\$5.60	\$6.00

Source: USDA & Hilker

HEALTH HARVEST

A Health and Wellness Publication of Michigan Farm Bureau

July 1992 VOL 4, No. 1

from prickly heat to heat stroke



what they should have told

MAD DOGS ENGLISHMEN

The body rids itself of excess heat by sweating, by exhaling air warmed in the lungs and by increasing blood flow to the skin which allows heat to escape. Hot weather can overwhelm those mechanisms, especially if you, like mad dogs and Englishmen, go out in the midday sun.

Sometimes failure of the body's cooling system leads to relatively minor reactions you can care for yourself. Sometimes, however, it leads to serious harm, even death. Heat illness can develop over several days or can strike during a single burst of strenuous activity in hot weather.

Here, in order of increasing seriousness, are various ailments associated with overheating.

Heat edema, swelling of the hands and feet when blood vessels expand and allow blood to pool near the skin. The swelling usually starts to go away after a few hours out of the heat.

Prickly heat, a rash caused by blocked sweat pores. The rash, usually on clothed parts of the body, generally disappears within two or three days if you keep the affected skin cool and dry.

Although neither heat edema nor prickly heat is serious, you should take them as a

warning that your ventilation system is under stress. And since prickly heat indicates blocked sweat pores, the condition actually makes you susceptible to more serious harm from the heat. Cool off to avoid worse trouble, which can include:

Heat syncope, fainting caused by decreased blood flow to the brain when blood pools near the skin. Most victims regain consciousness quickly and feel better after spending a few minutes in a cool place.

Heat exhaustion, marked by muscle aches, nausea, and feverishness. Symptoms can

also include clammy skin, diarrhea, rapid pulse, vomiting and weakness. Most people feel better after a few hours of rest and plenty of water.

Heat stroke, a potentially fatal failure of the body's temperature-control system. Symptoms can include confusion, agitation, hyperventilation, racing pulse, lethargy, convulsions, and prolonged unconsciousness. Body temperature soars, sometimes above 110 degrees Fahrenheit. Heat stroke can damage virtually every major organ. Doctors treat heat stroke by administering intravenous fluids and cooling the body rapidly.



from prickly heat to heat stroke



BEAT THE HEAT

A FLUID OUNCE OF PREVENTION

Since it can be hard to distinguish heat syncope or exhaustion from heat stroke, seek immediate medical attention if you or someone else develops any of these symptoms during hot weather:

Confusion, lethargy, or agitation. Intense muscle aches, feverishness, or nausea. Convulsions or even a fleeting loss of consciousness.

While you're waiting for assistance, a few immediate steps can save the life of someone overcome by the heat:

Get the victim out of the heat. Sprinkle the person with water. If the victim is unconscious, elevate the feet to move blood back toward the head. Fan the victim with a newspaper or a towel. If the victim is fully conscious, offer plenty of fluids. Use a sports drink such as Gatorade if there's one handy, since salt depletion may be part of the problem. But don't waste time looking for a sports drink if water — or in a pinch, any non-alcoholic drink — is more readily available.

Heat stroke and the less serious heat ailments needn't occur at all. Here's how to prevent them:

Wear loose-fitting, lightweight, light-colored clothing. Limit vigorous activity during hot, humid weather. People at high risk for heat ailments should exercise in air conditioned places. (Some people, for example, walk in shopping malls.)

If you plan to exercise in the heat, start with brief workouts and increase them gradually over two weeks or more. Drink water before, during and after exertion in the heat. Only people doing intense exercise like running a marathon may need a sports drink. After a workout in the heat, drink more than you need to satisfy your thirst — up to half again as much. Avoid alcohol before, during and immediately after exercising in the heat. Alcohol causes you to lose more fluid than you drink.

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WHO'S AT GREATEST RISK OF HEAT ILLNESS?

Various medical conditions can increase your risk of heat illness. Those include coronary heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, hyperthyroidism, and disorders of the kidneys, lungs, skin, or sweat glands.

Those conditions may increase the likelihood of heat illness in several ways by interfering with sweating, by causing the body to generate more heat, by depleting water or salt supplies, or by dulling the sense of thirst.

Certain medications also increase the risk from heat, in much the same way. Some drugs — such as alcohol, antidepressants, and other psychoactive drugs — are doubly dangerous because they may hamper the body's cooling system and also produce abnormal behavior that can be hard to distinguish from severe heat illness.

The following commonly used drugs may predispose you to heat illness:

Alcohol

Gastrointestinal drugs such as those containing atropine (Donnatal, Lomotil).

Antidepressants or antipsychotics, such as chlorpromazine (Thorazine), haloperidol (Haldol), or fluoxetine (Prozac).

Antihistamines such as the over-the-counter medication diphenhydramine (Benadryl, Nytol).

Certain cardiovascular medications including beta-blockers such as timolol (Blocadren) and diuretics such as chlorothiazide (Diuril).

Oral medications for diabetes, such as chlorpropamide (Diabinese).

Parkinson's disease medications such as selegiline (Deprenyl, Eldepryl).

If you use any of those medications, be especially careful to limit your exertion, drink plenty of water during hot, humid weather. If you plan to exercise in the heat, ask your physician whether you should adjust the amount and timing of your medication.

Life



De-stressing Family Vacations

Travel Tips

When planning your vacation, remember that good vacations offer a balance between familiar things and new experiences.

Provide plenty of back-seat activities & car snacks. A walkman is good for kids who get carsick and cannot read or play in the car.

Consider renting a small trailer or roof-top carrier to keep the passenger area comfortable (and to keep it free of heavy objects that could become launched in a crash).

Anticipate problems & make written ground rules as a family. Example: window seats will be alternated on an equal basis by days.

Alternate busy days & rest days; or plan busy mornings and restful afternoons.

Another idea: try mental activities such as museums and sight-seeing in the morning and physical activities in the evening.

Return home a day or two early to adjust, catch up on mail, do laundry, etc.

Safety and Health

Prepare a simple medical kit for city/town travel. If you won't have easy access to drug stores or medical care, get professional advice or read travel books on how to prepare a more extensive medical kit.

Carry an extra pair of prescription eyeglasses.

Have your car in good repair. Check your spare tire, flares and other emergency equipment.

Check with your health insurance carrier about out-of-town coverage.

Never leave kids or pets waiting in a hot car.

Buckle up.

Protect from sunburn.

Don't drive after drinking.

Style

We all love the warm weather fun and novelty of amusement rides at theme parks, water parks, county fairs or hometown festivals. And you'll have more fun if you follow some simple safety guidelines for selecting rides and supervising young children.

If your family's vacation plans take you to another state, check to see if it is one of the approximately half in the nation that requires inspection. In Michigan, the Carnival and Amusement Safety Inspection Unit of the Department of Licensing and Regulation requires annual inspections of every ride. Similar inspections are required in neighboring Ohio which attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors to Cedar Point and Kings Island each season.

Vivian Kramer Fancher, author of *Safe Kids—A Complete Child Safety Handbook and Resource Guide for Parents*, advises parents to respect the ride guidelines established by the park. "If your children don't meet the height and weight requirements for boarding a ride, don't try to sneak them on.

Explain the reasons for the rules," Ms. Kramer Fancher writes. "Likewise, adults should not attempt to board rides that have been designed for children. The size of the seats and motions of the ride as well as the restraint system, might not be appropriate for adults.

Even when children do meet the minimum requirements to board an amusement ride, take time to consider whether the ride is appropriate for your child. Also, most parks recommend that elderly people, expectant mothers, and those with heart or back problems, or other physical limitation not board certain rides. Generally signs are posted near the ride attraction.

wandered off. Tell children to get help from a park employee if they can't find you. (Note: Some pre-school educators advise lost or separated children to look for "a mom with children.")

Riding safely on amusement and carnival attractions means following these basis safety rules:

Here are some tips from *Safe Kids* for choosing rides:

- Watch people getting off the ride. Look for their expression. Ask them about the ride.
- Don't take children on a ride that you feel uncomfortable about. A scared or nervous adult is no help to a youngster.
- Take time to observe the ride operator. Be alert for safety practices such as making sure the restraining device is properly secured, and proper screening of riders with regard to age or condition.
- Ask the operator questions before boarding if you are uncertain about the advisability of a ride.
- Delay riding during periods of inclement weather such as rainstorms or high winds.
- Help children select rides. It is unwise and unsafe to let children loose in an amusement park. For their personal safety, provide supervision throughout the visit.
- Select a prominent place to meet in case you are separated from your family or group. Notify park authorities immediately if one of your group has

- Make sure your ride has a working seat belt or lap bar and that the door of the vehicle or ride gondola is shut securely.
- Secure all loose garments, glasses, hats, cameras, etc., while riding.
- Use the ride equipment as indicated. Never change seats while the ride is in motion. Don't stand up on roller coasters, rock the ferris wheel, etc. Keep your hands inside the ride and always wait until the ride comes to a complete stop before getting off.
- Major rides that run multiple vehicles simultaneously operate with automatic spacing. It is likely that your vehicle will stop at another area than where you boarded. Stay seated and listen to the public address system or ride operator until your vehicle is unloaded.
- Be careful when getting on or off rides.
- Don't use a water slide with one person sliding between another's legs. It increases the risk of injury.
- When visiting a fair or an amusement park, watch where you walk and don't run. If you run, you may trip over electrical cables or ropes on the ground that provide support or power to the rides.

True or False: Smokeless tobacco is less harmful to your body than the tobacco in cigarettes?

If you said false, you are correct. Most smokeless tobacco users absorb as much nicotine as a one-pack-a-day cigarette smoker. This craving for nicotine is actually a drug addiction.

According to Dr. Marie Swanson, director of Michigan State University's Cancer Center, smokeless tobacco has ten times the amount of cancer-producing elements found in cigarettes. The risk of mouth cancer also increases by 50 percent with long-term use.

The body rapidly absorbs the nicotine through the lining of the mouth. Within 30 minutes, the heart rate and blood pressure rise and the blood vessels constrict.

After only three to four months, users of chewing tobacco report experiencing bad breath, the need to spit, white patches in the mouth, receding gums, tooth staining and bone and tooth loss. Worse, says Swanson, are the 9,000 cases of oral cancer that result in death each year.

Oral cancers have increased by 35 percent since 1980 and by 50 percent for men. Also oral cancers occur at earlier ages than most cancers.

CHEWING TOBACCO & CANCER

1 leaves

3

don't touch me!

Avoiding the Villaneous Vine

If you are allergic to poison ivy, learn to recognize the plant and avoid touching it. The surest method is to cover up: wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. If you are gardening, wear gloves as well. Afterward wash the clothing to reduce the risk of being exposed to any poison ivy oil clinging to the clothing.

Act quickly if you suspect that you have been exposed. Even an hour gives the urushiol time to react with the skin. Wash with a strong soap. Laundry soap is best. Work up lots of lather and rinse; repeat this three or four times. You may apply ordinary rubbing alcohol to the exposed areas and then pat dry with a soft cloth or cotton pads. Rubbing alcohol dissolves urushiol, but be sure to remove the alcohol or it will actually spread the poison ivy oil.

Immunizing shots or pills are available through your doctor, but there is no conclusive evidence that the immunization is effective in preventing an allergic reaction to poison ivy, and in the case of people who are especially sensitive to ivy poisoning, the immunization could cause a severe systemic reaction.

Poison ivy pointers for the regularly, and recently, allergic.

You may be surprised to learn that poison ivy is the most common allergy, affecting about three out of four people in the United States. Each year over two million Americans of all ages come down with a case of ivy poisoning. Some are bothered by uncomfortable itching and others become very sick and may even need to be hospitalized. There are a lucky few who are unaffected by contact with poison ivy, however, a person can lose his immunity at any time and without warning.

The allergen is urushiol, a very powerful, oily substance present in every part of the poison ivy plant — leaves, sap, flowers, berries, branches and stems, and roots. As little as one part per million will cause an allergic reaction in some people.

The plant is most dangerous when it is "leafed out," but even the dormant plant contains urushiol and can cause a bad case of poison ivy. In fact, researchers at Cornell University cut branches of poison ivy and exposed them to the elements for 18 months. When taken into the laboratory and tested on volunteers, they found that the "dead" branches were still poisonous.

Without exception, there must be contact with the skin for the body to react, however, contact may be indirect. For example, clothing may pick up traces of

urushiol. Dogs and cats are unaffected by poison ivy, but they can carry the oily substance on their fur. Tools and garden equipment can also be "contaminated" for many months. Burning poison ivy can be very dangerous since burning turns urushiol into a smoke that travels through the air.

If you are allergic to poison ivy, contact will cause the body to release a strong chemical called histamine. Histamine is found in certain cells of the body and is perfectly harmless until it is released into the blood stream. Histamine causes the body to react in the same way it reacts against germs and injuries — inflammation.

Symptoms usually appear twenty-four to forty-eight hours after contact although the reaction may be evident in just a few hours or appear after a week. The first indication is a red, itchy rash and some swelling of the skin, sometimes in raised streaks.

As the allergic reaction progresses, the affected area will raise little, fluid-filled blisters often in short, straight rows. In severe cases, the blisters grow large and may run together forming a patch of blisters and more pronounced swelling. Although only a few people have very severe reactions to poison ivy, they may experience fever, swollen glands, muscle aches and pains, and there is also the possibility of kidney damage.

See a doctor at once if you have swelling or large blistered patches, or if the rash appears on the face or genitals. Physician's

treatment may include steroid medication by injection or a tapering dose of oral steroids over a week to 10 day period; prescription-strength topical steroid medication; and/or antibiotics if infection has developed in the blistered area.

For milder cases of ivy poisoning rinsing the affected area under cold water or using cold compresses should offer temporary relief, but be sure to use fresh cloths and wash the used compresses as a precaution against spreading any residual urushiol that may have been on the skin.

Tried and true home remedies of baking soda and water paste, or a solution of 1-2 teaspoons of baking soda or Epsom salts mixed with one cup of water applied to the skin also provide relief. Commercial preparations, such as calamine lotion or Burow solution, can help relieve the symptoms. Contact your doctor before using over-the-counter medications containing antihistamines.

Take tepid showers, not baths. Do not apply greasy or oily products to the skin. **AND DON'T SCRATCH!** You cannot get poison ivy from touching the rash of another person, but if you have it your whole body will be sensitized and scratching or touching the rash can contribute to the spread of the blisters. If you must, scratch very gently through a layer of clothing. Wash your hands frequently.

The symptoms will last for approximately two weeks.



MEDICAL FOCUS

Market Outlook Continued...

DAIRY

Larry Hamm

The strength in the dairy product markets continues. Therefore, the basic milk price mover, the Minnesota-Wisconsin (M-W) price will likely continue to increase over the next few months. The June M-W announced is \$12.46, \$.40 higher than May's M-W of \$12.06.

This makes the third month in a row that the M-W has increased and assures that farm milk prices will continue to increase over the next few months. Since the M-W sets all the federal order minimum milk prices, increases in farm milk prices over the next few months will largely be the result of the national market trends.

Dairy market strength continues because milk production is static. Production for May was even compared to last year. Total natural American cheese and nonfat dry

milk powder inventories are lower in 1992 than last year with powder inventories being at half the levels they were last year.

Tighter inventories and stagnant milk supply may have dairy product buyers nervous about the availability of supplies. This suggests that this spring's price strength may be coming at next fall's price increases. Some trade information suggests that milk supplies are starting to build in the Upper Midwest. If so, then the M-W may peak early.

Milk Processors Declining in Numbers

Farm numbers continue to drop. However, so do plant numbers. The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) recently released their estimates of the number of plants manufacturing selected dairy products.

With the exception of a few whey products, the number of dairy plants operating in 1991 was significantly lower than the num-

ber operating in 1990. For example, 44 cheese plants closed during 1991. These comprised 8.5 percent of all cheese plants in the U.S. Current estimates are that there are only 472 cheese plants operating in the U.S.

The number of human grade nonfat dry milk plants dropped by an even greater percentage than cheese plants. An estimated 9.2 percent of the dry milk powder plants went out of business in 1991.

Butter plants declined almost five percent. In most major product categories, the volume of milk processed equalled the amount processed in 1990. Like dairy farms, dairy product plants are becoming fewer and larger.

If anything, proportionally the number of plants is declining faster than the number of dairy farms. Financial stresses, are therefore being experienced by producer and plant operator alike. Because the milk industry is an interconnected system, the implications of financial stresses are felt by all parts of the dairy industry.

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Hogs

It looks like the expansion phase of the hog cycle is still underway although at a slower rate. The June Hogs and Pigs Report was viewed as somewhat negative, especially in the farrowing intentions. All hogs and pigs were up 5 percent, kept for market were up 6 percent, and kept for breeding were up 1 percent, all relative to a year ago. While these were all in the range of expectations, they were on the higher side.

Market hogs over 120 lbs. in the report were nine percent higher than a year ago. These are the hogs we will see this summer and this will definitely limit upside potential. As we go into late summer and this fall we will see the hogs reported as under 120 lbs. and they are up four-five percent over last year. In order to keep prices over \$40/cwt. this fall, we will need strong demand.

To get an estimate of supply next winter, we can look at the June - Aug. farrowing intentions which are one percent higher than last year. To get a handle on the spring of 93 numbers, we can use the Sept.-Nov. intentions which are projected to be three percent higher. The pigs per litter continue to increase and is a significant part of the increased production along with the higher farrowings.

At this point, there is little pricing advice other than to keep very current. If we have some rallies, one may consider pricing small portions of their future production to take away some of the downside price risk.

Table Eggs

Allan Rahn and Henry Larzelere

Egg prices in late June were trading in 67 cent range (New York, Grade A, Large White, in cartons, to retailers), about 3 cents per dozen below 1991 levels. This price level reflects a rebound from a plunge in late May and early June that took prices into the mid 50 cents per dozen area. Higher feed ingredient costs, however, have also pushed egg production costs around 1.5 cents per dozen higher and are still reducing net returns further.

The size of the table egg laying flock on June 1, 1992 was 230.3 million birds, 1 percent more than on this date last year. Egg production numbers have been running 2 to 3 percent over year ago levels and reflect a more productive flock.

The number of egg type hatching eggs in incubators on June 1 was down 6 percent from a year ago, but the pullet chick hatch during May was down only 1 percent. Spent hen slaughter rates in late June are above a year ago but totals for the year are only 5 percent greater.

Egg prices are expected to gradually advance from their current levels into the mid 70 cents per dozen range during the upcoming third quarter of the year.

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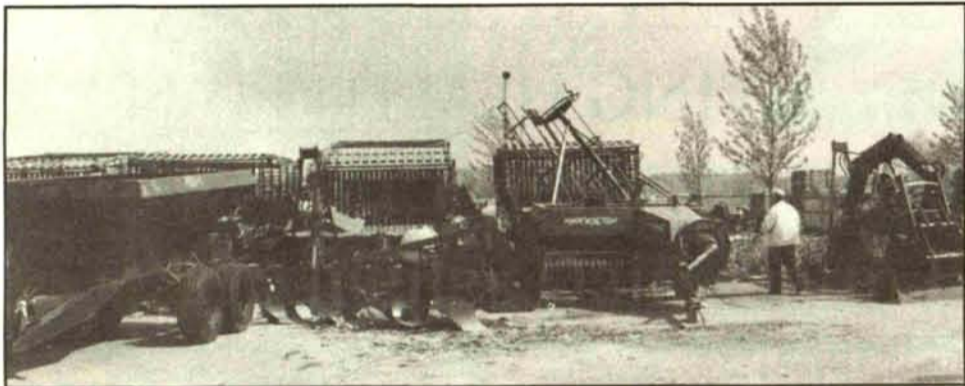
2-4 5-9

10-24 25 and over

8

Photos Courtesy of Pat Driscoll

Below is a close-up look at a cow from one of the best herds in Russia. The neck chain is attached to a lead ball that is used as a restraining device that hits the cow in the knees if and when it tries to run, since the pastures don't have any fencing to speak of. Driscoll said that a vet on tour with the group diagnosed several cases of pneumonia in the herd.



Pictured above is part of the relatively new line-up of farm equipment on the privately held and operated Interferma farm, which has experienced tremendous success during its four-year existence. The farm still must sell 25 percent of its product output to the state at state-mandated prices.

Russia continued from page 1

The group toured one of those state-owned farms known as Red October, so named in honor of the Russian Revolution in October of 1917. The 12,000 acre farm, located in the former USSR breadbasket now known as the Ukraine, is claimed to be one of the best and largest farms in the world.

What the tour group saw, however, was a farm operation plagued with inefficiencies and outdated technology that, in Driscoll's words, "put their agricultural industry a good 40 to 75 years behind the U.S. in many respects." Over 350 workers are employed on the state farm that consists of a dairy operation as well as field crops of rye, canola and sugar beets and other livestock enterprises.

The farm's dairy herd was housed in pre-cast concrete buildings, without benefit of ventilation, open windows, or fans. Freestalls and milk parlors were unheard of and the milk pipelines were a combination of lead pipes, plastic tubing and cast iron pipes.

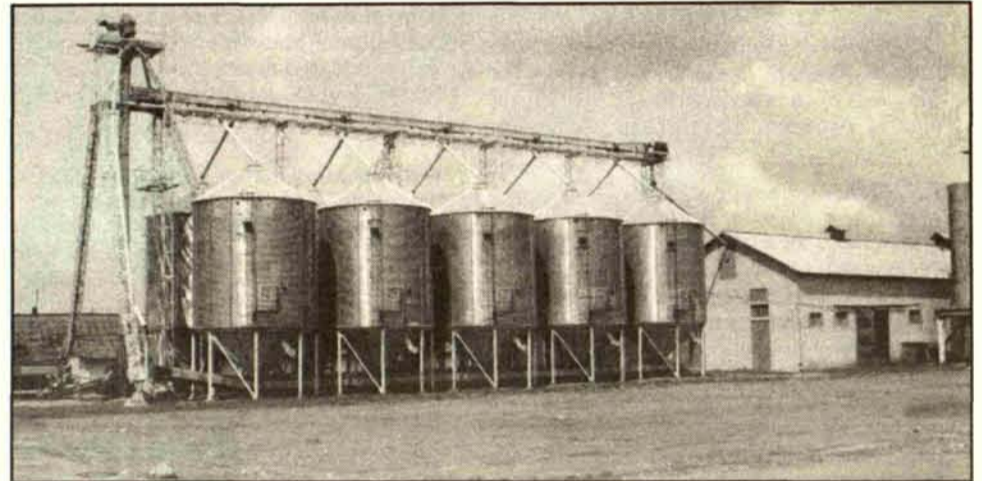
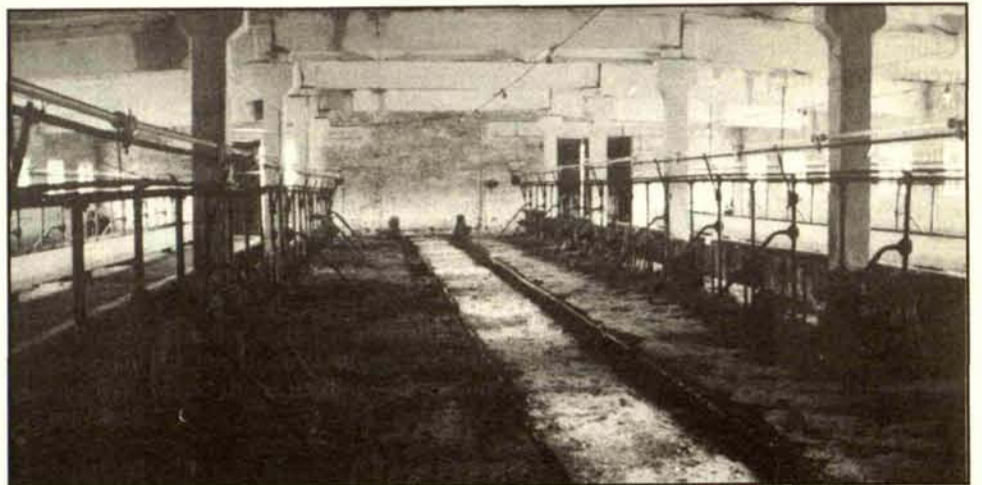
Feed rations consisted primarily of pastures and sugar beets, said Driscoll, who added that the group never saw a field of corn or soybeans during the two week period. Milk production averaged 8,000 pounds from one of the "best herds."

Milk pasteurization was crude at best, with limited cooling available at the dairy processing operation, and none of the fat was ever removed from the milk. No artificial insemination was used, although the herd was reported to be a cross between holsteins and zebras that produce milk that allegedly prevented tooth and gum decay.

The herd the group saw exhibited signs of pneumonia, although workers were not even familiar with what the disease was, said Driscoll. Calves were housed in poorly ventilated facilities as well, with the bull calves accounting for the country's beef production, since there were no common beef breeds available.

Driscoll said the overall consensus of the group was that the agricultural industry in all three countries was as bad off, if not worse, than what most had suspected. "If these countries can ever get their act together in terms of free enterprise and privatization, they'll be major competitors from an agricultural standpoint," he said.

Below is an inside look at one of the Red October Farm dairy barns that housed approximately 250 cows. Construction consisted of pre-cast concrete forms and brick. Summer temperatures in the barns averaged 95 to 100 degrees.



These feed mixing facilities pictured above were constructed over two years ago at the Red October Farm, but have not been used as yet because no one clearly understands how to use the equipment or how to calculate rations. Their goal is to hopefully begin using the equipment next year.



Most all of the tractors used are Belarus models, such as this one at the Red October Farm. Planter and equipment technology was way behind U.S. technology, although some items such as combines appeared to be relatively current. The Belarus tractor plant was to have been toured by the group, but it had been closed indefinitely because the plant was not able to get raw product necessary for building the tractors.

What about all the aid the U.S. has been sending over to the Commonwealth of Independent States? "The U.S. should limit its donations and loans to a bare minimum and let them work out their own problems," said Driscoll. "We cannot provide them with what they need. All we're doing with our aid is prolonging their transition and growing pains. If we really want to help them, we should leave them alone."

Driscoll based his views on the fact that over 85 percent of the old guard from the former Communist Party are still in place, and that individual creativity and choices are still being discouraged. The definition of privatization consists of leasing property rights, but the state still owns the property.

"Their definition of private and ours is entirely different," explained Driscoll. "There's not a generation alive over there that understands risk taking and making decisions for themselves. They basically want the U.S. to bring them up to current industrialized standards without truly going through the required reform process to make it happen."

"The president of the Ukrainian Academy of Science explained that in 1933 the 'greatest USSR calamity in history took place' when the government took farmers from their land," Driscoll said. "He told us that the government took away the individual's incentive to produce and forced agriculture and society in general to become inefficient to create more jobs. They continue to do that today in every industry to employ their growing population."

Driscoll said a new organizational structure is desperately needed in the CIS to allow people to think and reason for themselves, as is an effective leadership structure that has the best interest of the country in mind when making decisions.

In general, Driscoll said the people they encountered were very friendly and had a real desire for independence. "We had people who came up to us in Red Square and wanted to shake our hands simply because they wanted to shake hands with an American."

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Key Issues Analyzed During "Friends of Ag" Endorsement Process

County Farm Bureaus reviewed the voting records of incumbents on 10 key issues for both the U.S. House of Representatives and the Michigan House of Representatives. Those issues and subsequent voting records include the following:

National Issues

Handgun Waiting Period - Vote on passage of a bill to require a seven-day waiting period for handgun purchases. The U.S. House approved the bill May 8, 1991. Farm Bureau opposes a waiting period for purchases of firearms and favored a "N" vote.

Budget Conference Report - Vote on adoption of a conference report to set budget levels for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 1992. The U.S. House approved the measure May 22, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "N" vote because the measure did not prohibit the use of tax increases to fund higher levels of entitlement spending.

Disapproval of Fast Track Procedures - Vote on adoption of resolution to disapprove a two-year extension of fast track procedures that would require Congress to approve or disapprove trade agreements but not allow consideration of amendments to the trade agreements. The U.S. House defeated the resolution May 23, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "N" vote.

Striker Replacement - Vote on passage of a bill to prohibit employers from hiring permanent replacements for union workers on strike over economic issues. The U.S. House approved the bill July 17, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "N" vote.

Agricultural Disaster Assistance - Vote on passage of a bill to provide a disaster assistance program to crop producers for 1990 or 1991 crop losses. The U.S. House approved the bill July 25, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "Y" vote.

Wetlands Study Amendment - Vote on adoption of an amendment to provide \$500,000 to the National Academy of Sciences for a study of the scientific basis of the 1991 proposed wetlands delineation manual. The U.S. House defeated the amendment Oct. 29, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "N" vote because the amendment was an effort by environmentalists to delay reform of wetlands regulations.

Emergency Appropriations - Vote on a bill to provide funds for various emergency programs including \$1.75 billion for 1991 agricultural disaster relief. The U.S. House approved the bill Oct. 29, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "N" vote.

Transportation Funding - Vote on adoption of conference report to provide \$151 billion for surface transportation programs through fiscal year 1997 and give states greater flexibility to decide how their transportation funds are spent. The U.S. House approved the conference report Nov. 27, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "Y" vote.

Economic Stimulus - Vote on an amendment to implement a plan to stimulate the economy. The plan would cut the capital gains tax, allow a \$5,000 tax credit and penalty-free withdrawals from an IRA for first-time home buyers, passive loss deductions for real estate developers, increase the depreciation for business equipment, and new rules encouraging real estate investment by pension funds. The U.S. House defeated the amendment Feb. 27, 1992. Farm Bureau favored a "Y" vote because the plan used economic incentives to help the economy without imposing tax increases.

Legal Services Corporation - Vote on a bill to substitute a package of amendments providing meaningful reform to an original Legal Service Corporation bill that contained many objectionable provisions for agricultural employers. The U.S. House defeated the substitute amendments May 12, 1992. Farm Bureau favored a "Y" vote.

State Issues

Off-Road Vehicles - Vote on passage of a bill to provide a comprehensive system for the use of off-road vehicles including a "closed unless posted open" policy on state owned lands, funds earmarked for increased enforcement, and penalties for restoration of damage to land or water caused by ORVs. The Michigan House passed the bill Feb 13, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "Y" vote.

Property Assessments - Vote on passage of a bill to freeze property assessments for 1992 at 1991 levels. The Michigan House passed the bill April 18, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "Y" vote.

Sales Tax Exemption - Vote on passage of a bill to exempt the purchase of livestock sold at auction from the state sales tax. The Michigan House passed the bill June 20, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "Y" vote.

Tax Base Sharing - Vote on passage of a conference report to permit tax base shar-

ing by all Michigan school districts. The Michigan House passed the bill Sept. 12, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "Y" vote.

Farmland and Open Space - Vote on passage of a bill to amend P.A. 116 so that proceeds from lien payments by landowners would be used by the DNR not only for the purchase of development rights on unique and critical lands, but also for the administration of the act. The Michigan House passed the bill Sept. 26, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "Y" vote.

MIOSHA Standards - Vote on passage of a bill to require state health and safety rules be identical to federal OSHA standards and increase penalties for violations. The Michigan House passed the bill Sept. 26, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "Y" vote.

Agriculture Budget - Vote on passage of a bill to provide a 1991-92 budget for the Michigan Department of Agriculture which provided continued/expanded funding for important programs. The Michigan

House passed the bill Sept. 27, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "Y" vote.

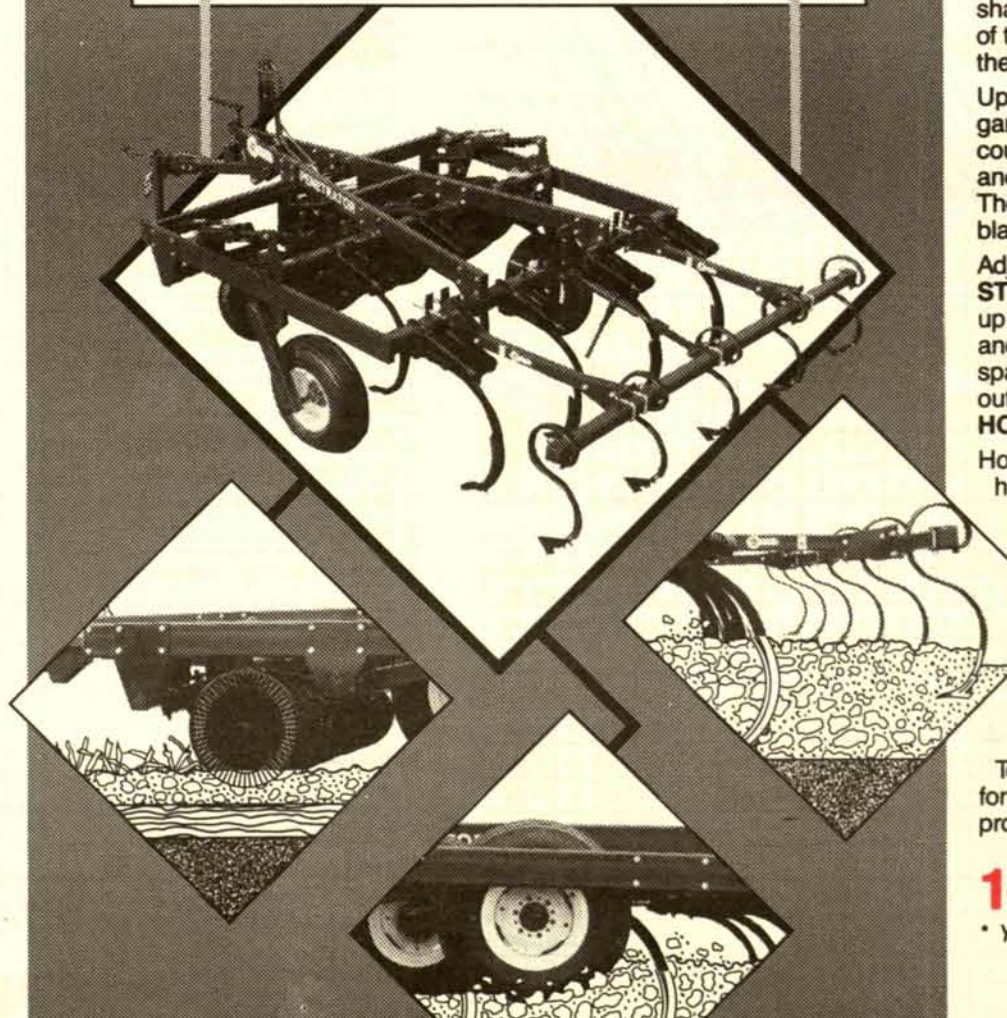
No-Fault Insurance Territories - Vote on passage of a conference report to extend rating territories for no-fault auto insurance for an additional one year period. The Michigan House defeated the conference report Dec. 17, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "Y" vote.

No-Fault Insurance Extension - Vote on passage of a bill to extend the expiration date of the no-fault automobile law by 90 days to March 31, 1992. The Michigan House approved the bill Dec. 18, 1991. Farm Bureau favored a "Y" vote.

No-Fault Insurance Reform - Vote on passage of a bill to roll back auto insurance rates 15 percent, following a one year rate freeze, without necessary reforms to offset the rollback. The Michigan House passed the bill May 14, 1992. Farm Bureau favored a "N" vote.

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10

"Friends of Agriculture" Primary Endorsements

U.S. House of Representative Endorsements and Voting Records

Michigan House of Representative Endorsements and Voting Records

KEY: y or n Voted "yes" or "no" and against Farm Bureau position. Y or N Voted "YES" or "NO" and for Farm Bureau position. ? Did not vote. * Not elected to

Table with 11 columns for legislative items and 13 rows of representatives including 4 Camp, David, 10 Carl, Doug, 16 Dingell, John, etc.

Michigan House of Representative Endorsements and Voting Records

KEY: y or n Voted "yes" or "no" and against Farm Bureau position. Y or N Voted "YES" or "NO" and for Farm Bureau position. ? Did not vote. * Not elected to House at time of

Large table with 11 columns for legislative items and 50 rows of representatives including 108 Anthony, David, 75 Bandstra, Richard, 56 Bartnik, Jerry, etc.

KEY: y or n Voted "yes" or "no" and against Farm Bureau position. Y or N Voted "YES" or "NO" and for Farm Bureau position. ? Did not vote. * Not elected to House at time of vote.

Table with 11 columns for legislative items and 50 rows of representatives including 47 Hill, Sandra, 88 Hillegonds, Paul, 65 Hoffman, Philip, etc.

State Court of Appeals

Table with 2 rows: Martin Doctoroff (Birmingham), Clifford Taylor (East Lansing)

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Discussion Topic – "Biodiversity"

Biodiversity is a nebulous term that means different things to different people. Recently passed state legislation defines it as "the full range of variety and variability within and among living organisms and the natural associations in which they occur. Biological diversity includes ecosystem diversity, species diversity and genetic diversity."

The Michigan Legislature addressed the biodiversity issue this spring when Rep. Jerry Bartnick sponsored a bill calling for the conservation of biological diversity in the state in order to avoid the loss of plant and animal species.

The legislation, which passed the House and Senate, asks several state agencies to identify questions, concerns and issues related to biological diversity across a range of resource management practices and recommend alternatives to current practices. A two-year legislative committee of three members each from the House and Senate would review reports from departments and devise a state strategy for conservation of biological diversity.

Michigan Farm Bureau was successful in adding several amendments to the legislation to clarify that it is non-regulatory. The amendments also ensure that economic studies and sound science are included in any future state strategy to conserve biological diversity.

Other Farm Bureau amendments will ensure that the study committee includes someone from the House or Senate Agriculture Committee, and that the committee must also report on the costs, benefits and implications of the strategy on human habitat. The committee was also asked to consider the effects of conserving biological diversity on agriculture and forestry.

On the national level, the House Science Committee last year approved a bill aimed at creating a comprehensive federal program to study and develop guidelines for preserving biological diversity.

The bill would require the Council on Environmental Quality to prepare a coordinated federal strategy for conservation of biological diversity. It would create a National Center for Biological Diversity and Conservation Research at the Smithsonian Institute. The center would serve as an information clearing house on biodiversity.

Some environmental groups blame the agricultural industry for wrecking our planet's environmental resources. Biological diversity, they claim, is threatened by overharvesting of plants and animals, drainage of wetlands and conversion of wild lands to agricultural uses.

But farmers care deeply about the environment in which they live and work. They recognize that there is some value to having a variety of abundant and diverse life in the countryside.

However, that value should not overshadow the need for profitable agriculture and economic growth. Schemes to preserve biological diversity must be cost effective, economically sound and based on scientific facts.

A cross section of groups and government agencies concerned about biological diversity on federal lands report that "biological diversity is a key part of a healthy land. The ultimate challenge facing a growing human population is to meet its material needs while maintaining a diverse, productive and resilient living environment.

"This challenge will force a shift in the attitude that one must decide between people and nature, and instead calls upon the entire landscape. Both lands and management practices are key elements in meeting the goal of a biologically diverse world that sustains human development."

Discussion Questions:

1. Are members of your group familiar with how the term "biodiversity" is used by the media?
2. What impacts would a law to conserve biodiversity have on agriculture?
3. How do we balance the desire to protect all species, plus maintain a viable and productive agriculture?
4. What practices are utilized in agriculture that defend the statement "farmers are the original environmentalists"?
5. What role can farmers play in getting out the message that a balance between conserving biodiversity and productive agriculture can be achieved?

Larry Hamm Appointed MSU Ag Economics Department Chairperson

Larry G. Hamm, whose areas of specialty include analyzing the dairy industry, has been named chairperson of the Michigan State University Department of Agricultural Economics, effective July 1, subject to approval by the MSU Board of Trustees.


Hamm, who began his career with MSU as an adjunct instructor in agricultural economics in 1981, served as an agricultural economist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture for nine years.

Hamm is recognized as a national expert on the dairy industry. He has briefed U.S. legislators on dairy marketing and made numerous national presentations on the state of the industry. He received the Distinguished Group Extension Program Award from the American Agricultural Economics Association in 1987.

Hamm said he will continue some of his responsibilities as a dairy economist, but that those duties will be reconfigured as his departmental administrative duties increase. Hamm received his bachelor's degree from Pennsylvania State University,


his master's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and his doctoral degree from MSU, in agricultural economics.

He succeeds Lester Manderscheid, who has been chairperson since 1987 and will return to teaching in July.



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	200 mg	100's	89.25	59.95		600 mg	100's	20.25	10.95
Coumadin Tabs	2 mg	100's	39.95		Ortho-Novum Tabs	800 mg	100's	24.75	15.95
	2.5 mg	100's	41.25			1-35 21 or 28	19.50	8.95	
	5 mg	100's	41.75		1-50 21 or 28	19.50	8.95		
	7.5 mg	100's	63.75		Persantine Tabs	25 mg	100's	25.95	5.95
10 mg	100's	65.75		50 mg		100's	39.25	7.95	
E.E.S. Tabs	400 mg	100's	19.95	15.25	Premarin Tabs	75 mg	100's	51.95	9.95
Entex LA Tabs		100's	49.95	12.95		0.3 mg	100's	20.25	10.95
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	20 mg	100's	28.25	6.95		2 mg	100's	30.75	10.95
	40 mg	100's	35.95	7.95	4 mg	100's	43.25	15.95	
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120 mg	100's	48.75	15.95	0.05 mg		100's	14.50	7.95	
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Kissane July Volunteer of the Month

Clinton County farmer Robert Kissane has been selected as the July Volunteer of the Month, based upon his involvement in a unique FFA funding project in cooperation with the Clinton County Farm Bureau's Young Farmers. Kissane and his wife Marilyn operate a cash crop and hog operation near St. Johns. They donated the use of their equipment, labor and time to plant a 15 acre plot of soybeans and corn for the county's local FFA chapters, and will take care of the harvest this fall.

In addition to Kissane's donated labor and equipment, the land and all other needed inputs are donated by local agri-businesses, leaving the FFA chapters with a 100 percent profit margin. Proceeds from the plot are used by the chapters to finance field trips and other activities. The Kissanes are also active in local 4-H activities and the county fair, in addition to being active in the St. Joseph Church, local township and county activities, and serving as members of various county Farm Bureau committees and the board of directors.

Machinery Purchase Trends Considered Unsafe

An improving farm economy hasn't helped farm machinery sales. And that's bringing more hazardous working conditions to the nation's most dangerous occupation.

"Our aging farm equipment base has become a big concern from both the efficiency and safety standpoints," says Tom Bean, safety specialist at Ohio State University.

The bulk of the machinery used on the nation's farms was purchased in the 1970s or earlier. Equipment sales grew rapidly during that period and peaked at \$14 billion in 1979.

However, during the farm financial depression of the 1980s, sales bottomed out at \$6.1 billion in 1986. Tractor and other equipment sales were around \$7.6 billion last year, off slightly from 1990, and are expected to be in the \$7.2 billion to \$7.7 billion range for 1992.

Despite an improving farm outlook and indications of a rebounding general economy, economists report that farmers are being cautious about major purchases as memories of the 1980s linger.

An increasingly older farm equipment fleet is an accident waiting for a place to happen, Bean says. Using older equipment can be safe, but it takes more time and precautions to avoid injuries.

"Ideally, you'd like to see farmers have lots of new equipment with the latest safety devices," Bean says. "But that's just not feasible financially. So we have to encourage them to take greater precautions with the equipment they have."



In some cases, it's a matter of adding safety features. In others, it's improved maintenance. Bean suggests several areas where farmers should spend the time or money to save their lives:

ROPS. Roll-over-protective structures weren't standard on tractors until the mid 1980s. But most older tractors can be fitted with some type of protective roll bar and accompanying seat belts.

Many farmers can't see spending several hundred dollars on these protective devices, Bean says. But tractor deaths account for 40 percent of all farm accidents and 52 percent of fatalities.

Shields. Older equipment may not have as many protective shields on moving parts or the original shields may be long gone. Bean recommends auditing the moving parts on all machinery, replacing missing shields and adding protective devices where there's a danger of moving parts catching clothing or body parts.

Brakes. Tractors, combines and other self-propelled equipment are more likely to have worn brakes. A regular check and maintenance schedule will prevent a "run-away."

Safety shutoffs. Newer equipment has automatic "kill" switches that shut it down when the farmer leaves the cab or releases pressure on the operating lever. For equipment without "kill" switches, farmers should take extra care to turn off the machine before working on it.

The Chicago-based National Safety Council estimated 1,300 deaths and 120,000 disabling injuries from farm accidents in 1990. The 1991 numbers aren't available yet, but are expected to be slightly higher.

Dry Beans May Be Headed for Tough Year

With record yields last year, Michigan's dry bean crop seemed headed in the same direction earlier this spring, but with cold, wet conditions persisting across the bean production area, Greg Varner, director of research for Michigan's Dry Edible Bean Production Research Advisory Board, says that beans may be in for some tough times.

"Cold, wet weather causes root rot in dry beans, and because beans aren't growing very fast, other problems can also develop such as diseases and chemical damage," he said.

Varner also mentioned that insects were a problem even before the storms late June, and he expects these pests to be with us throughout the season.

"Just because the weather took a turn for the worse doesn't mean the bugs will go away. Growers will still have to keep watch of their fields to make sure they treat when insects appear," said Varner.

With these problems, Varner says it will take an excellent summer to bring beans along to reach last year's yield levels. "Timely rains, a clear fall and moderate temperatures during blossom will be necessary for beans to perform well this season," Varner said. Reports also indicate that the same problems exist in the Canadian and North Dakota production areas.

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