The study, funded by the Environmental Protection Agency and administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, identified 24 priority environmental issues after a consensus building process by the three committees, said Engler. "Everyone involved - scientists, agency representatives, and concerned citizens - were in consensus on how these risks should be ranked," said Engler. "As we move forward in an era of limited state financial resources, it's imperative that we make reasoned decisions based on fact. The Relative Risk Analysis Project will help make sure we're getting the best value for our environmental dollar."

Engler asked the Natural Resource, the Agriculture, Public Service and Transportation Commission to take the recommendations back to their respective departments for further development and public hearings and offer plans to implement the resulting strategies. That may be easier said than done, since a recent Roper survey of the general public about what they perceived as emerging environmental issues were quite different than those identified by the RRAP.

"Farmers should take advantage of these opportunities for input because this state's environmental policies could very well be driven by this report," she said.

Michigan's Crop Outlook - Cautiously Optimistic

Michigan has experienced a summer of record cool temperatures and perhaps the wettest July in recent memory. Crops that had starved for rain seemed to be reaching for the sky with the first downpour. However, with as much as seven inches of rainfall in four weeks, crops are showing signs of stress from too much water.

What this means to Michigan's final crop outlook is as varied as the weather itself has been this growing season. Michigan Farm News contacted a number of individuals on August 3 for their crop outlooks. (Bear in mind that we're in Michigan. We may be in the midst of a record-breaking heat wave by the time you read this!)

Robert Young, Executive Vice President, Great Lakes Sugar Beet Growers Association

"If we'd had warmer temperatures, the beet crop would be further ahead than what it is. We're hopeful that we won't have an early frost and that we'll get some warmer weather. We've got plenty of moisture right now, so we don't have to worry about that. It's hard to guess what tonnage is. We usually take tests in early September or late August. But different ones are saying 18 to 19 ton. We'll probably come in with an average of about 18 1/2 ton, which is different than those identified by the RRAP, there will likely be a compromise and blending of priorities," said MBP Legislative Counsel Vicki Pontz.

"Farmers should take advantage of these opportunities for input because this state's environmental policies could very well be driven by this report," she said.

See "Relative Risk Analysis" continued on page 11
Russia’s Grain Harvest Not Up to Par

The earlier predictions of a much improved grain harvest in Russia seem to have gone into a tailspin, according to a recent story in the Wall Street Journal.

The Russians lowered their estimate of the fall harvest, twice in one week, bringing it down to around 96 million metric tons, a little less than last year’s crop of 97.1 million metric tons.

Previously, Russian President Boris Yeltsin was forecasting a crop of 110 million tons. However, seeing the prospects of a crop shortened by drought and fuel shortages, are now reluctant to sell grain to the state at the stipulated price of 8000 rubles ($59) per metric ton, the Journal said.

In recent years, Russia has imported about 18 million tons of grain at a price of around 1000 per ton. The country’s leaders would want to see self-sufficiency guarantees and lacks trade efficiency, storage and transportation to do much better at filling its own needs, according to the Journal.

Early Frost a Potential Crop Danger

With the drought apparently broken in the Midwest, corn and soybean farmers now have something else to worry about, an early frost, according to Norton Strommen, chief meteorologist of the Washington-based World Agricultural Outlook Board.

Strommen bases his forecast of a first Midwest freeze sometime in September on a June 21-22 freeze and the effects of last year’s eruption of the Mount Pinatubo volcano in the Philippines, according to a Knight-Ridder News report.

Soy Diesel on the Way Around the World

A 24-foot boat, powered by fuel made from soybeans, is on a two-year trip around the world to promote the use of soybean-based diesel fuel, which has about the same performance capabilities as petroleum-based diesel fuel, according to a story in the Illinois Soybean Farmer, a publication of the Land of Lincoln Soybean Association.

The voyage is a project funded, in part, by the Illinois soybean checkoff. The journey began in San Francisco, July 4, after press previews in Chicago, St. Louis and Peoria. City buses and airport maintenance vehicles in the St. Louis area already are using soy diesel in tests funded, in part, by the Illinois Soybean Program Operating Board.

Soy diesel is a bio-diesel fuel, meaning it is developed from a non-petroleum source. One of its benefits is that it is a home-grown, renewable source. Bio-diesels are popular in Europe with tax exemptions in many countries. Its use is mandatory in some water recreation areas to stop fuel pollution, according to the article.

EPA’s Decision on Fuel Program in Clean Air Act Not Seen Until December

The Environmental Protection Agency probably will not announce a final decision until December on a rule that could determine the fate of ethanol within the Clean Air Act, according to Knight Ridder News.

William Rosenberg, EPA assistant administrator, while speaking at a biofuel conference at the William Region Research Institute, said there needs to be more consistent research data before a final ruling can be achieved on the reformulated fuel program in the Clean Air Act. Ethanol is a corn-based fuel additive.

The EPA has proposed regulations that could severely limit the use of ethanol-blended fuels. Although ethanol reduces carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides, EPA said, releases volatile organic compounds into the atmosphere.

Under the Clean Air Act, U.S. gasoline in nine-major cities must contain 15 percent less ozone-causing compounds by 1995. Supporters of the ethanol industry, such as the National Corn Growers Association and Farm Bureau, say that the EPA’s proposed rules for implementing the new clean fuel program would severely limit ethanol’s role in the Clean Air Act and reduce its demand.

Rosenberg said he recognized the economic importance of alternative fuels in agricultural as well as petroleum industries. He was quick to point out that government and industry groups last August signed an agreement to support EPA’s proposal. However, some of those participants now are having second thoughts, he said, apparently referring to the NCGA and other groups that support an expanded role for ethanol.

Chippewa Farmers Welcome Tourists to the U.P.

"Farmers - Professional From the Ground Up" welcome tourists to Sault Ste. Marie and the Soo Locks for a week during June. The signs, located on the Ashmun Street bridge in downtown Sault Ste. Marie, was sponsored by the Chippewa County Farm Bureau in honor of June Dairy month and Eastern Upper Peninsula farmers in general.

Tough Times for Farm Equipment Manufacturers

Deere and Co. plans to reduce its production of large tractors and combines by 9 percent this year. In remarks to the Wall Street Journal, Emmett Barker of the Equipment Manufacturers Institute, reports sales of combines have fallen 49 percent in the first half of 1992, while sales of 100-plus horsepower tractors have fallen 31 percent in the first half.

Barker and others claim the poor sales are not so much the result of a faltering economy, but instead the result of cautious buying by the nation’s farmers. It appears some of the money that would otherwise be spent buying tractors and combines is being spent on no-till equipment needed to meet the 1995 conservation requirement.
Farm Animal and Research Facilities Protection Act

MFB Position
Opposes the Judiciary Committee substitute and supports the Agriculture Committee version. Farm Bureau will support efforts to win House approval of the Agriculture Committee version.

MFB Contact
Al Almy, Ext. 2040

Early this year, the House Agriculture Committee approved H.R. 2407 with strong provisions imposing federal penalties for criminal acts involving damage to facilities housing animals, such as farms and research laboratories. The bill was then referred to the House Judiciary Committee, which has jurisdiction over legislation with criminal penalty provisions.

The Judiciary Committee approved H.R. 2407 after several damaging amendments were added. The Judiciary Committee limits application of the bill only to commercial enterprises as compared to the Agriculture Committee version which covers attacks on any animal enterprise including farms, rodeos, fairs, 4-H and IFA events. The Judiciary Committee also limits the bill only to those incidents where damage to animal facilities exceeds $25,000 or more. This damage threshold would allow devastating crimes to occur against animal facilities without triggering federal jurisdiction.

Minor Use Pesticides

MFB Position
Michigan Farm Bureau strongly supports S. 2980 and has asked Sens. Don Riegle and Carl Levin to cosponsor S. 2980, but neither has joined as a cosponsor.

MFB Contact
Al Almy, Ext. 2040

Sens. Inouye (D-Hawaii) and Lugar (R-Indiana) are sponsoring S.B. 2980, which would implement the chances that safe pesticides will be available for fruits, vegetables, nursery stock and other so-called specialty or minor crops. It is very important to a large number of Michigan farmers.

Under the current Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), manufacturers of pesticides must submit comprehensive data to EPA to register or reregister pesticides. This does not pose a major problem for the manufacturers of pesticides used on major crops such as corn, because the volume of such pesticides is large enough to recover the large cost of supplying the data to EPA.

However, this is not the case for many fruits and vegetables which are considered “minor crops,” because the total acreage grown is not large. Pesticide manufacturers are reluctant to pay the large cost of registering or reregistering minor crop pesticides, because the volume sold to producers will not be adequate to recover the cost. Therefore, these important pesticides become unavailable to producers of the minor crops.

S. 2980 would streamline the registration process for minor crop pesticides and thus reduce the cost to manufacturers while still maintaining the safety of the pesticides. The result will be that manufacturers will be more likely to undertake registration or reregistration of minor crop pesticides and producers of these commodities will be able to continue producing the commodities.

Fire Blight Reimbursement Amendment

MFB Position
Supports the fire blight amendment approved by the Senate.

MFB Contact
Al Almy, Ext. 2040

During consideration of legislation to provide aid to Russia, Sen. Riegle offered an amendment to reimburse fruit farmers for replacing trees destroyed by fire blight. Fruit growers affected by fire blight, a bacteria that attacks fruit trees such as apple and pear, would be eligible for reimbursement.

The amendment was approved by the Senate as was the Russian aid bill. A Russian aid bill is currently pending in the House.

Wetlands Delineation Manual Revisions

Revisions proposed in the Federal Wetlands Delineation Manual last year would provide meaningful, reasonable and common sense regulation of wetlands by federal agencies. The revisions are strongly supported by Farm Bureau and members throughout the nation submitted thousands of supportive comments to EPA.

However, environmental groups and state agencies responsible for regulating wetlands strongly oppose the proposed revisions. An example of such opposition to common sense submitted thousands of supportive comments to EPA.

This discussion obviously indicates the sponsors of the report believe areas that are dry more often than wet should be regulated as wetlands. Their view that 21 days of saturation would allow devastating crimes to occur against animal facilities without triggering federal jurisdiction.

US-23 Highway Bypass

MFB Position
Farm Bureau continues to support both S.B. 249 and H.B. 5435, which would reform the medical malpractice laws in Michigan. S.B. 249 was introduced in the Senate on April 11, 1991, and passed the Senate Nov. 6, 1991, before being sent to the House Judiciary Committee. H.B. 5435 was introduced in the House on Mar. 8, 1992, and was also sent to the House Judiciary Committee.

Unfortunately, the House Judiciary Committee never considered either bill. A large coalition of organizations joined in support of these bills and pushed for the bills to be debated by all members of the House.

On June 9, 1992, a representative group from the coalition, including Farm Bureau, met with the Speaker of the House in an attempt to persuade him to allow the reform bill to be put on the House floor for a vote. The Speaker did not agree to the proposal, but did authorize Rep. Gubow to chair a committee to negotiate with the Michigan State Bar Association and the Michigan Trial Lawyers Association. Unfortunately, they both remain opposed to medical malpractice or tort reform in Michigan.

The legislators and representatives of the coalition negotiated for over 60 hours with the Trial Lawyers without agreeing to a package. The coalition had agreed not to push for a discharge vote to report the bill out for consideration by all members of the House while the negotiations were in progress.

On June 30, the bills were scheduled for a hearing by the Judiciary Committee, but the meeting never took place. This was the first time the bill had been scheduled to be considered since it passed the Senate in November of 1991.

A vote was then taken on the floor to discharge the bill from committee, but it failed on a 51 to 52 vote. The bill had bipartisan support during the negotiations commenced, with several Democrats in support of a discharge. Leadership, however, indicated this issue needed more time for progress.

This was one of the most coordinated and strong efforts to get a bill that would lower health care costs in recent years. Its failure seriously dims the prospects of passing any kind of health care reform or other health reforms proposed by Farm Bureau members in their current policy efforts. Progress will continue.

The report says personal knowledge or detailed water level records would be required to determine an area’s status. The report concludes that not only is this type of information unavailable or extremely expensive, but in year-to-year fluctuations, such observations are of limited utility, even when available.

This discussion obviously indicates the sponsors of the report believe areas that are dry more often than wet should be regulated as wetlands. Their view that 21 days of saturation at soil surface level or 15 days of standing water cannot be measured is equally interesting. If so, how can the Corps determine the threshold for wetland designations unless the Corps can determine such saturation, it should be no less difficult to determine the 21 day saturation or 15 day standing water criteria have been met.

The report concludes by calling for an independent advisory panel, such as the National Academy of Sciences, to provide a comprehensive basis for delineating wetlands.

MFB Position: Farm Bureau continues to strongly support the wetlands definition in the proposed Federal Wetlands Delineation Manual.

MFB Contact: Al Almy, Ext. 2040
Abnormally cool weather continued during July, with no record low monthly temperatures set at several stations in Michigan and across the northern Great Plains and New England. The cool temperatures greatly slowed growth and development of most summer crops, with seasonal growing degree day total snow lagging from 1-2 weeks behind normal in most locations. Accompanying the cool temperatures in southern Lower Michigan were exces­sively heavy rains, which exceeded six inches in many locations and over 10 inches in a few spots. In northern sections of the state, heavy rains early in the month helped reduce the effects of two or more months of persistent dryness, although dryness and moisture shortages returned by the end of the month.

The cause of the abnormal weather so far this summer? A jetstream pattern running much too far south for this time of year is the primary factor (the pattern over the last few weeks has been much more typical of September or October than July). A dip in the jetstream over the Great Lakes and New England led to frequent invasions of cool Canadian air and periods of showers and thunderstorms.

Whether or not the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in the Philippines is a factor shift of the jetstream is not clear. Past studies of volcanic eruptions and subsequent impacts on climate have revealed only a weak correlation between the two.

Possibly more importantly, we must also remember that many of the last several summers have averaged warmer than nor­mal, and that climatological statistics have a way of "evening out" sooner or later (again, along the same line, remember also that the colder than normal winter was back in 1985-1986).

The outlook for Michigan calls mostly for a wet winter to start the same way of weather. Specifi­cally, the National Weather Service 30- and 90-day extended outlooks for August and the period August through October both call for cooler and wetter than normal conditions to continue in the Lower Peninsula, with cooler than normal temperatures and near normal precipitation in the Upper Peninsula.

While some summer crops, such as peppers and tomatoes, may never reach maturity given this scenario (especially for sections of the state in the right-hand column), most of our summer seasons show that for crops such as corn and soybeans, abundant precipitation (and not temperatures of one category or another) is the key to high yields. It thus appears one of the most important unknown factors in determining yields this season will be the date of first frost/freeze.

### Michigan's Crop Outlook ...

#### Michigan's Crop Outlook continued from page 1

Certainly much better than last year. The beets are long, the roots extended them­selves earlier in the season, but we need warmer temperatures. I think that goes for most crops.

Ben Kidwai, Executive Director, Michigan Potato Industry Commission

"Potato acres for 1992 are down signifi­cantly for 1991. In fact, they're down 71,000 acres nationally. Unfortunately, that hasn't resulted in increased prices right now for growers."

"We started harvesting our summer crop and we were in the market the same time as some of the Eastern states, so our summer market prices have really taken a nose­down recently. We expect that the fewer acres are going to translate to higher prices, but that probably won't occur until later in the sea­son.

"Michigan is having a good crop. We've been pleased with what we see, in spite of the cool weather. This season, being a cool weather crop, are responding very well even though it's been one of the coolest growing seasons on record. We started late in almost every area; putting in the crop many weeks to three weeks later than we normally would be."

"We always have the threat of an early frost which would hurt potatoes. There's no question about it. That's the kind of thing you really can't predict."

"It looks like Idaho is very dry and the dry weather that they had out there this past winter has caused a decrease in snowpack, resulting in less accumulated water in some of those big watersheds. As a result, they're having some concern about allowing enough water to finish out this crop."

Keith Reinhold, Executive Director, Michigan Soybean Committee

"There are areas that seem to have been hit harder by standing water and late planting. There are other areas that seem to have a nice stand. Maturity is far behind, remember also that the first frost/freeze was in the high 70's, low 80's, while we were in the high 60's to low 70's and that saved the central Michigan wheat quality to this point by slowing down its maturity and making it less susceptible to sprout."

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Now is the time to treat wheat with ACA to gain your advantage. ACA can be impregnated on your fall starter fertilizer or topdressed in the spring to boost your yields.

**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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**Healthier Plants**

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**Increased Profits**

**Increased Yields**

**Proven Performance**

To see the difference apply ACA with anyhydrad, liquid

28% N. Liquid Starter, impregnated on dry or sprayed

### Michigan Weather Summary

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Observed and normal growing degree day totals are accumulated from March 1. Normal temperatures are based on district averages.

Jeff Andresen, Ag Meteorologist, MSU
Michigan Farm News

MFB and Easter Seals Launch FaRM Fund Drive

Each year in Michigan, 350 farmers on average experience disabling injuries. A majority of people who experience those injuries want to continue farming, but lack of adequate rehabilitation services and limited financial resources can often stand in their way.

MFB and the National Easter Seal Society have launched a fundraising campaign for the Family Farm Rehabilitation of Michigan (FaRM) program to meet that need. FaRM is modeled after an extremely successful rural rehabilitation program in Iowa, in operation since 1986, according to MFB Promotion and Education Department Manager Julie Chamberlain.

"FaRM is designed to help farmers with disabilities return to a full life of farming, and family life," explained Chamberlain. "The FaRM program, once fully funded, will allow farm accident victims to receive health care services, vocational counseling, with emphasis on family involvement and the practical use of low-cost assistive devices, home and agricultural worksite modifications, and follow-up referral services."

The aspect of a peer support group and the referral services can often make or break the success of a rehabilitation program for an accident victim, said Chamberlain. "It often comes right down to farmers helping farmers, and once a handicapped farmer witnesses what can be done by another farmer with similar problems, the road to independence seems much easier," she said.

The Iowa program has helped a total of 274 farmers. In Michigan, it's expected that FaRM will assist 120 farm families in the first full year of operation. An established FaRM program would include a coordinator who would travel throughout the state to work directly with farmers to help them become more independent.

The Michigan Easter Seal Society has estimated that $20,000 of seed money will be needed to launch the program in Michigan. Michigan Farm Bureau has initiated a fund raising program among employees with a challenge to raise $15,000 of the needed $30,000. Since April of this year, fundraising activities from the MFB Family of Companies staff have raised an estimated $9,000.

County Farm Bureaus have been challenged with raising the additional $15,000 needed with the entire fundraising effort culminating during the Easter Seal Telethon in March of 1993. Individual members can contact either their county Farm Bureau office for more information and/or to make a donation to the FaRM program, or contact Julie Chamberlain at 1-800-292-2680, ext. 3213.

The FaRM program is designed to help accident victims such as Dale Wood. Dale, pictured with his wife, referee, and mother and father Dorothy and Oliver, is a 27 year old cash crop and dairy farmer in partnership with his father. He was injured in a truck accident six years ago leaving him a quadriplegic. Dale is still actively involved in the farm operation, doing fieldwork in a specially equipped tractor. He is also responsible for the farm's record keeping and also serves as the property tax assessor for the city of Marlette.

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- Michigan Cash Grain Analysis
- Grain Market News
- 11 Major Market and Michigan Cash Livestock Reports
- Chicago Mercantile Exchange Analysis and Prices
- Livestock Market News
- Michigan Ag Weather Forecasts
- Daily Market Reports for Potatoes, Fruit, Dry Beans
- State, Regional and National Agricultural News
- Weekly and Daily Dairy Market Reports
- Farm Classifieds

Michigan Farm Radio Network

Serving Michigan Farm Families is Our Only Business
Market Outlook

Corn

The August 12 USDA Crop Report will have been released by the time you read this article. August is the first month each year when the USDA goes out and does a comprehensive field survey for corn and soybeans to come up with the production estimate. The estimate was larger than expected, new crop prices will be under $2.00 per bushel for a while this fall. In this case, unless there is an unexpected rally, consider holding further new crop pricing for more information. It will be difficult to justify holding any remaining old crop. If the estimate was smaller than expected, consider finishing remaining old crop sales and pricing some new crop if you have not done much up to this point.

While there is little doubt that the rains that came across the Corn Belt last month turned the U.S. corn crop from a potential disaster into a large crop, some states, including large parts of Michigan, are not out of the woods yet. The cool summer has left crop development 3-5 weeks behind normal. An early frost could be trouble.

Exports have been running a little stronger than expected the last few weeks so there should be no problem in reaching, or possibly exceeding, the USDA 1991-92 export projection by August 31. However, the export forecast for 1992-93 is still a big question. Feed use this summer is a big question; on the one side, a lot more hogs are being brought to slaughter than expected, indicating that feed use might be higher than expected; on the other side, the cool summer has probably meant high feed efficiency for both hogs and cattle.

Soybeans

Since soybeans are generally made in August, and they're already harvested, the information for the August 12 Crop Report was collected the first of August, we may not have a good handle on soybean production before the September Crop Report.

This means that unless we have a sharp price rally for some reason, there probably won't be a clear new crop pricing decision to be made at this time—especially here in Michigan where we are so late an early freeze could be a disaster.

Wheat

A decent acre wheat crop, poor export demand, and low corn prices do not add up to done so. However, there is room for about pricing a significant portion on any near-the-wheat price and the basis. Consider beans to come up with the production estimate when the USDA goes out and does a comprehensive field survey for corn and soybeans.

Cattle

On July 24, the USDA released the mid-year cattle inventory Report, the quarterly 13-State Cattle-On-Feed Report, and the monthly 7-State Cattle-On-Feed Report. And the news was more positive than negative.

Total cattle numbers were unchanged from last year. Beef cow numbers were up 4 percent and the calf crop was up 6 percent. However, beef cow replacements were up 7.5 percent, which will mean a larger calf crop in 1993.

Total feeder supply the second half of 1992 appears to be under a year ago by 1 percent. Basically, this means that we will not see much increase in beef production until 1994.

The 13-state quarterly report showed cattle on feed July 1, 6 percent below last year and the 7-state monthly report showed July numbers on feed down 7 percent. Marketings were down as well as the July placement over the winter.

July Farm Prices Down From June

USDA's monthly Agricultural Prices Report showed prices received by farmers for their products in July was down 2.1 percent from June and 7.4 percent from July 1991, according to a recent Knight Ridder Financial News report.

Lower prices in July for oranges, hogs, corn and soybeans were tempered by increased prices for potatoes, cattle, broilers and milk. USDA said a decline in prices for oranges accounted for most of the drop from year ago levels, with lower prices for hogs, peanuts and milk also hurt. The index of prices paid by farmers for commodities and services, interest, taxes and farm wage rates for July was 5 percent higher than in April and 1.6 percent above July 1991.

Table Egg Market

Allan Rahm, MSU Ag Econ. Dept.

Egg prices have been running atdisastrous levels for producers and averaged 58 cents per dozen (New York, Grade A, large white, in cartons, to retailers), 22 cents below a year ago during the month of July.

However, June placements were up 22 percent in the 7-state report. But with low placements earlier and not a lot of feeders available now, that 22 percent will not hit until next fall.

Cattle over 900 pounds were down 15 percent on July 1, which means we should not have the horrible August-September period we had last year. Steers in the 700-900 pound range were up 7 percent which means production will pick up some this fall.

At this point, keep feedlot prices. If October or December futures bounce up into the mid 70's, consider some forward pricing. Feedlot cattle are expected to remain tight. If there is a break in feeder prices for the fall period, feedlots may want to due some forward pricing.

If feeder steer futures for this fall are still in the 82-84 range, feeder producers may want to take advantage of these strong prices to price some of their fall sales.

Dairy Outlook

Larry Hamm, MSU Ag Econ. Dept.

The weather pattern is not only unusual this year, but we can't call it unusual. Dairy markets are beset by unusual conditions which make forecasting very problematic this year. A few of the unusual factors affecting current dairy markets are enumerated below.

The weather is causing an increase in milk production and increased milk production was up 2 percent over last year. The unseasonably cool weather in the traditional dairy regions and price uncertainty may have caused some producers to stay rather than ship because of the traditional hot humid weather in July and August.

The result is that milk processing plants are running extended schedules. Also, no milk is moving South out of Michigan and Wisconsin put upward price pressure on the Minnesota-Wisconsin-MN-W price and last year in also contributing. The index of prices for milk products bought to be very cautious about putting in inventories of cheese and nonfat dry milk powder.

Another unusual condition has been export sales. Through the first half of 1992, export sales were running 20 percent below last year. Most of the increased activity has been through the Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP) sales. Although exports took

July Farm Prices Down From June

USDA’s monthly Agricultural Prices Report showed prices received by farmers for their products in July was down 2.1 percent from June and 7.4 percent from July 1991, according to a recent Knight Ridder Financial News report.

Lower prices in July for oranges, hogs, corn and soybeans were tempered by increased prices for potatoes, cattle, broilers and milk. USDA said a decline in prices for oranges accounted for most of the drop from year ago levels, with lower prices for hogs, peanuts and milk also hurt. The index of prices paid by farmers for commodities and services, interest, taxes and farm wage rates for July was 5 percent higher than in April and 1.6 percent above July 1991.

Table Egg Market

Allan Rahm, MSU Ag Econ. Dept.

Egg prices have been running at disastrous levels for producers and averaged 58 cents per dozen (New York, Grade A, large white, in cartons, to retailers), 22 cents below a year ago during the month of July.

However, June placements were up 22 percent in the 7-state report. But with low placements earlier and not a lot of feeders available now, that 22 percent will not hit until next fall.

Cattle over 900 pounds were down 15 percent on July 1, which means we should not have the horrible August-September period we had last year. Steers in the 700-900 pound range were up 7 percent which means production will pick up some this fall.

At this point, keep feedlot prices. If October or December futures bounce up into the mid 70's, consider some forward pricing. Feedlot cattle are expected to remain tight. If there is a break in feeder prices for the fall period, feedlots may want to due some forward pricing.

If feeder steer futures for this fall are still in the 82-84 range, feeder producers may want to take advantage of these strong prices to price some of their fall sales.

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In a move to streamline the U.S. Department of Agriculture and save millions of tax dollars on computer purchases, officials have decided to revamp failed nationwide computer systems throughout the $61 billion, 135,000-employee department.

Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan, in a letter to Sen. Richard Lugar (Ind.), agreed that USDA should stop a previous plan to ultimately spend $2 billion on the largely independent agencies.

In addition to saving at least $20 million over the next five years by streamlining USDA computers, the department is consolidating its computer procurement process for three field agencies: the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, the Farmers Home Administration and the Soil Conservation Service.

According to Lugar, with this action, USDA is ushering a long-needed unified computer system that will make possible greater efficiency, better service to farmers and intra-departmental cooperation.

Michigan ASCS Director Dave Conklin said that despite the delay in implementing a new computer system scheduled for 1995 or 1996, Lugar's plans may pay big dividends for the USDA and the producer.

"It would have been folly to go ahead with such a large purchase when the structure of the agency may be radically altered by the time the equipment arrives. With this decision, Secretary Madigan has demonstrated his commitment to make real change in the agency so that it can be a better service to farmers while saving precious public dollars."

"USDA should now make a down payment of good faith to the American people by issuing an interim report before the November election on its plans for merging costly agency field offices and providing one-stop shopping for customers," said Lugar, who manages his family's corn, soybean and tree farm in central Indiana.

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Doug Landis and Mike Haas, Entomology, MSU
Reprinted from the July MSU Field Crops CAT Alert

Now is the time to prepare bins for on-farm storage of harvested grain. It is critical that growers take steps to prevent stored grain insect problems, since measures to correct an existing infestation are frequently very costly and may not be completely effective.

The key to preventing stored grain insect infestations is through a program of sanitation, cleaning, drying and proper management of the stored grain mass. These practices are outlined in Extension bulletin E-934, "Protecting Stored Grains from Insects." We recommend that this program be followed and the following update be used as an appendix to the general bulletin.

Two Important Notes
1. Not all formulations of the insecticides noted here are intended for use in stored grains. Read the label to be sure that the product to be used is specifically registered for use in stored grains.
2. Insecticides and fumigants are effective only in properly dried and cleaned grain. Check the grain and clean and dry it if needed before applying the chemical.

Preventing Insect Infestations in Stored Grain
Sanitary Sprays
Thorough cleaning in and around the bin and all grain handling equipment (combine, trailers, cleaners, dryers and augers) is strongly recommended. A spray of an insecticide in cracks, corners and other hidden places that cannot be adequately cleaned is also recommended.

The accumulated debris in the space under the false flooring of the bin is an especially good place for insects to breed. A special effort should be made to clean and spray this area. These sanitary sprays can be used in any empty bin regardless of the grain that will be stored later in the bin.

Special products registered for use on stored grains are listed in Extension bulletin E-1582, "Chemical Control of Insects and Nematodes in Field and Forage Crops."

Surface Sprays
Sprays of insecticides applied and raked in the surface of the grain are used in new grain to aid in preventing insects from getting into the grain and also to control surface feeding caterpillars such as meal moth or Indian meal moth.

The caterpillars are often abundant in poorly ventilated grain where moisture has condensed at the surface. Remove the damaged grain before spraying, then keep the grain well-ventilated.

Grain Protectants
Sprays or dusts of some insecticides can be mixed directly with new grain as it goes into the bin to protect the grain from insects. A grain protectant is especially recommended if the grain is to be stored longer than one year.

Grain protectants can also be used to control low infestations of insects. This involves moving the grain and requires an empty bin or other space to put the grain in as it is treated. Grain protectants are not reliable against established infestations (where insects can be found with little searching) and therefore a fumigant, must be used.

Sanitary Sprays
Fumigants are gases that penetrate through the grain mass and the grain itself to kill insects. They are most commonly used to control established infestations of insects in the grain mass. They are sometimes applied to newly-binned grain in place of sanitary sprays and grain protectants. Fumigants are fairly costly and difficult to apply safely.

Analysis of the cost of the fumigant and its application versus the value in protecting grain quality should be made before they are used. An important point is that, while fumigation kills all stages of the insects, they do not repair damaged grain nor remove the dead insect bodies. There are times when feeding the infested grain or selling it at a discount outweigh the return from the cost of fumigation.

Growers must be certified by the Michigan Department of Agriculture in the fumigation standard to buy and use fumigants. New restrictive standards on the use of fumigants have been established. These include the use of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA gear) in place of a gas mask and the use of gas detection devices in some situations.

PLA Revisions Needed for Speedier Harvest
Price Later Agreements (PLAs) have been available for several years, providing an attractive marketing option to growers. They’re a tool of the grain trade which is provided under the Uniform Commercial Code and offer producers an opportunity to deliver grain to an elevator and pass title to the commodity to the elevator while retaining the privilege to price the commodity at a future date.

Currently, producers are required to sign a price later agreement on the individual deliveries of grain to their elevator. Elevators must have a signed PLA prior to shipping the grain from their facilities.

The law provides up to 30 days for an agreement to be signed. However, during peak harvest time, elevators could potentially reach capacity before obtaining all the necessary signatures. Combined with the fact that this is a busy time for both the elevator and the producer, the person delivering the grain to the elevator is often not the legal owner, and therefore is unable to sign the PLA.

This causes the elevator added expenses and time in trying to contact the producer individually. At a recent meeting at the Michigan Agri Business Association, attended by representatives from Michigan Department of Agriculture, as well as Michigan Farm Bureau, several ideas were discussed to further streamline the PLA process.

The elevator industry is proposing a revised price later agreement that would be signed prior to delivery and be an all-encompassing agreement. The new agreement would cover all future deliveries of a particular commodity to an elevator.

This would be a voluntary option to be used in place of individual agreements by farmers who have made their plan for marketing in the season and wish to avoid the hassle of signing multiple agreements.

The agreement would allow the farmer to change his marketing plans at any time by simply notifying the elevator before delivery took place. The new agreement would require amending the Grain Dealers Act, according to MDA representative Jane Mosier.

In order to obtain producer comments, this issue will be a topic at the summer Michigan Farm Bureau Commodity Advisory Committee meetings. Your comments on this subject are welcome at Michigan Agri Business Association, Michigan Farm Bureau Commodity Activities and Research Division, as well as Michigan Department of Agriculture Food Division.
Young Farmer Discussion Meet District Contests Scheduled

Michigan Farm Bureau’s State Young Farmer Committee has announced the discussion topic, “How does our public’s environmental concerns affect agriculture?” will be used for the 11 district discussion meets. Farmers, scheduled to kick off Aug. 20 in Midland.

District contests mark the beginning for one state winner who will receive the grand prize, a Honda FourTrax 300 ATV, compliments of the Honda Motor Corporation. Of the 11 district contests, 3 winners will be selected for state level competition in December during the MBF State Annual in Grand Rapids.

Other discussion topics at state level competition will include:
• How will the state meet the demands of the U.S. agriculture regarding foreign aid?
• Term Limitation - Should terms of office be limited in the American system of government?
• Can agriculture be assured of a reliable labor supply?

The Young Farmer Discussion Meet contest is not a debate, but rather a discussion about the issue and possible solutions. Contestants are expected to prepare their opening statements, their delivery, their problem solving and implementation suggestions, their cooperative attitude, analysis of the topic or problem, and finally their closing statements. The contest is open to young farmers between the ages of 18 and 30 who are either regular members themselves, or through their parents if under 21 years of age.

For more contest information, contact either your county Farm Bureau office or MBF’s Young Farmer Department at 1-800-292-2680, ext. 3234.

District Date Location
1 Sept. 1 Kalamaazoo (Berrien, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph and Van Buren)
2 Sept. 23 Jackson (Branch, Calhoun, Hillsdale, Jackson and Lenawee)
3 Sept. 3 Ann Arbor (Livingston, Monroe, Oakland, Washtenaw and Wayne)
4 Oct. 1 Middleville (Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent and Ottawa)
5 Sept. 12 Lansing (Clinton, Eaton, Genesee, Ingham and Shiawassee)
6 Sept. 8 Sandusky (Churhn, Lapeer, Macomb, Sanilac, St. Clair and Tuscola)
7 Sept. 28 Stanwood (Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana and Osceola)
8 Aug. 20 Midland (Arenac, Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot, Isabella, Midland and Saginaw)
9 Aug. 21 Cadillac (Benzie, Kalkaska, Manistee, Missaukee, N.W. Mich. and Wexford)
10 Sept. 10 Gaylord (Alcona, Alpena, Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Otsego and Presque Isle)
11 Aug. 31 Escanaba (Chippewa, Copper Country, Huron, Iron Range, Mackinac and Menominee)

Sustainable Agricultural Grants Available

The North Central Region of the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program will be awarding about $100,000 in new mini grants to help farmers and ranchers change from conventional to sustainable agriculture systems.

The group expects to fund nearly 20, one-year grants through the competitive program, "Implementing Sustainable Agriculture Practices." The north-central region includes Michigan as well as Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin. Projects may be just beginning the transition to more sustainable agriculture or they may have incorporated some sustainable practices and need assistance overcoming barriers to other sustainable practices.

A final report and evaluation will be required of all projects. Application deadline is Sept. 4 with grants winner to be announced in November. Grant application forms are available from the North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Office, 207 Agriculture Hall, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Neb., 68583. For more information, contact Steve Waller, at the University of Nebraska, at (402) 472-7081.

Canola Planting Window Quickly Approaching

Below are a few reminders which may help with canola planting this year:

**Planting Tips**

- Moisture management will improve canola stands. As soon as possible after harvesting small grains, plan to till small grain residue into the soil. This will allow rainfall to recharge the soil before planting canola. This will allow rainfall to recharge the soil before planting canola. The use of a chisel disk or offset disk will leave enough residue to control erosion. Early use of a chisel disk or offset disk will leave

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  - **Planting Tips**

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    - Field selection and seed bed preparation are very important. Fields that are rolling and have good internal and external drainage usually produce the best yields. Canola does not like wet soils and, like alfalfa, will not survive under these conditions. Prepare the seed bed carefully; it should not be cloddy or have an excess of plant residue that will interfere with seed and soil contact.

    - Drilling canola gives best stands. Over the past five years, we have seen canola seeded with a drill gets off to a much faster and more uniform start due to better seeded soil contact and placement 1/4 to 3/4 inch deep allows for better moisture access. If a drill is unavailable, broadcast planting can work, but often results in less than optimum stands and possible chemical carryover. Some damage has been noted in fields where canola followed corn or grain sorghum when the Atrazine rate exceeded two pounds per acre. In general, canola can follow these crops in years of normal rainfall. Chemicals have plant-back restrictions which should be reviewed including: Pursuit, Command, Scepter, Glean, Ally and Princep. Please follow label instructions carefully.

    - **Preferred Varieties for North Central Region**

      - Ceres is known for its high yields. Ceres has good resistance to lodging and pod shatter. It is a medium height variety and stands well under high nitrogen fertility. Ceres is the most widely grown variety in the U.S.

      - Falcon is a medium early winter variety with good lodging resistance and excellent yield potential. It is similar to Ceres for agronomic characteristics but shows increased disease resistance.

    - Fields that have heavy residues of wheat straw or set-aside residue fall into the soil prior to planting may tie up nitrogen and require fall applied nitrogen. Canola nitrogen uptake and usage occurs in the spring months.

    - Continue to apply phosphate (PK) and other micro nutrients, when needed, in the fall. High residual phosphate levels have proven beneficial for winter survival.

    - Don’t forget to examine your fields for possible chemical carryover. Some damage has been noted in fields where canola followed corn or grain sorghum when the Atrazine rate exceeded two pounds per acre. In general, canola can follow these crops in years of normal rainfall. Chemicals have plant-back restrictions which should be reviewed including: Pursuit, Command, Scepter, Glean, Ally and Princep. Please follow label instructions carefully.

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Wisconsin Cranberry Production - Exploring Michigan's Potential

Will cranberries be the newest entry to the list of diverse agricultural commodities produced in Michigan? It could be if a group that toured Wisconsin's cranberry country recently has anything to say about it. Western Michigan University staff, farmers and representatives from Michigan Farm Bureau, Cooperative Extension Service and Michigan Department of Agriculture spent several days there in July. The tour, organized by Western Michigan University's Horticultural Economic Development Center, was intended to provide growers an opportunity to explore the feasibility of commercial cranberry production in Michigan first hand, according to MEB commodity specialist Bob Boehm, who participated in the tour.

Over 40 percent of the nation’s cranberries are produced in Wisconsin, in an area that was once abandoned by would-be-row crop farmers due to frost and acidic soil problems. Eventually, wild cranberries took over the cleared ground, starting what is today a $80 million industry, making Wisconsin second in the nation for cranberry production.

Common production units are based on 100 pound barrels, with yields ranging from 100 to 400 barrels per acre, depending on plant variety, age of the marsh and weather conditions. Prices over a ten-year period have averaged $48.

Before pulling out the calculator and getting big ideas, however, you should realize that the cost to establish a new marsh will average an estimated $10,000 per acre, and the first fall harvest normally isn't expected until the fifth year. "The construction of dikes, dams and ditches, as well as irrigation equipment, represent a significant portion of the investment," said Boehm.

Cranberry plants are a relatively short plant, critical ingredient to successful production. They can accommodate six to 10 acres of water reservoir area for irrigation during the summer as well as for frost protection and to assist with harvesting.

The cranberry market is characterized by strong demand and a short supply according to Boehm. "Growing consumption of bottled juice, canned sauce, and frozen concentrate now account for about 90 percent of the total market," he said. "Ocean Spray Cooperative is the dominant player in the cranberry industry, controlling 80 to 85 percent of the total crop.''

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Potential in Michigan?

Water, the most critical ingredient for cranberry production, will likely be the biggest hindrance to production in the state of Michigan. Western Michigan University and MSU's CES are exploring potential production areas, but obtaining the necessary permits to construct the marshes is a significant hindrance to production in the state of Michigan. Western Michigan University and MSU's CES are exploring potential production areas, but obtaining the necessary permits to construct the marshes is a significant hindrance to production in the state of Michigan.

"There are several farmers in Michigan attempting to establish commercial operations. One farmer near Paw Paw has actually received the necessary permits to begin construction of the marshes and Boehm says that several blueberry growers have expressed interest in cranberry production. "The acidic soil type needed for blueberries, as well as the similarities in handling and processing equipment, have prompted several blueberry growers to look to cranberries as a potential alternative," he said. The group that attended the Wisconsin tour is now attempting to form an association to direct efforts of creating a cranberry industry in Michigan.
Court ruling on "Lucas vs. South Carolina"

Preserving private property rights were de­
taken of his two beachfront lots if it could under existing state law.

court said that the state should compensate

lighted with this summer's U.S. Supreme

Lucas, who had planned to build a home for

landowner David Lucas for the "regulatory

taking" of his two beachfront lots if it could not be proved that the taking was justified under existing state law.

The Lucas case stemmed from regulations imposed by South Carolina that rendered worthless two lots purchased by David Lucas, who had planned to build a home for his family on one and sell the other. Before he could do either, the state enacted the Beachfront Management Act, which left Lucas's plans, and a sizeable investment, in confusion.

However, the U.S. Supreme Court also asked the South Carolina Supreme Court to review the question of whether Lucas knew about the beachfront regulations when he purchased his lots.

"Relative Risk Analysis"
The top priority identified by the RRAP, Absence of Land Use Planning, will surely spark a great deal of discussion, and an opportunity to improve issues. The "Regulatory Taking" of your property, which means the taking of your property, cannot be used for anything and it is absolutely valueless, at that point compensation must be paid, said Wyckoff. However, the U.S. Supreme Court also imposed by South Carolina that rendered Lucas's plan to build a home on a lot adjacent to existing homes clearly should not have been an activity considered to be a nuisance, and we take heart in the fact that the U.S. Supreme Court agreed, said Rademacher. "We believe this case will dissuade regulators from applying the nuisance doctrine on a whim. That is very supportive of agriculture."

However, the Lucas decision did not change the way that "regulatory taking" applies to local zoning decisions, according to Mark Wyckoff, editor of Michigan's Planning and Zoning News. "The Supreme Court has said that under the Fifth Amend­ment to the Constitution, any time public activity or regulation has the effect of re­ducing property value to the point that the property cannot be used for anything and it is absolutely valueless, at that point com­pensation must be paid," said Wyckoff. However, the Court noted several times in its Lucas opinion that local regulations would rarely, if ever, have that effect. That means that government could go a long way with a regulation that had the effect of re­ducing value without being liable for any compensation.

In light of the Lucas decision, as well as several other recent Supreme Court rulings, local planning commissions should make sure their regulations provide reasonable use of some type for all property owners, according to Wyckoff. "The Lucas case reaffirms three prior Supreme Court rulings that said compensation would be available in the event of 100 percent taking of prop­erty. Prior to those decisions, the Court simply invalidated the regulations," he said.

The Lucas case ruling did not go as far as private property rights advocates would have liked. However, it clearly strengthens language in the Constitution's Fifth Amendment which states that private property shall not be taken for public use without "just compensation." Future court decisions will likely clarify the level of compensation that will be available to property owners.

Discussion Questions
1. On what grounds or for what purposes should a "taking" of private property be allowed?
2. Who should make the final determination as to the best and most prudent use of the private property in a question dealing with regulations to benefit the public?
3. How should compensation for the prop­erty be computed in a taking?
4. Although the Supreme Court ruling will have little affect on local planning, what can Farm Bureau members do to keep abreast of future community blueprints for private property?

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Michigan Cattlemen's Summer Round-Up a Grand Success

Kurt Hrabal Young Cattlemen of the Year

Kurt Hrabal of St. Louis, Michigan, was recognized as the Young Cattlemen of the Year by the Michigan Cattlemen's Association (M.C.A.) at the Sault Ste. Marie 1992 Summer Round-Up. Kurt feeds 1,200 head of cattle in partnership with his father, Dick and also farms 1,500 acres raising cash crops and feed. Kurt began working with cattle through 4-H and after graduating, he took on more responsibility at the feedlot.

This past winter, he was elected to the M.C.A. Board of Directors. The Hrabal operation was featured during M.C.A.'s Greatest County Cattle Tour in February of 1992. Kurt says he likes to show people around the feedlot and share ideas on management techniques. Hrabal is also a member of ProFILE - Farm Bureau's Institute for Leadership Education program.

He believes the M.C.A. should encourage young people to choose a career in the cattle business by showing them how to secure financing to feed cattle and educate producers about the different ways to feed and house their animals.

At right Hrabal and his wife Cynthia accept their award from M.C.A. President Larry Cotton.

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Michigan Farm News
July 15, 1992