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AT PRESS TIME: Winter wheat crop insurance application deadline extended from Sept. 30 to Oct. 31 for all growers. Contact your insurance agent today!

Michigan Farm News
October 15, 1993
Vol. 70, No.15

Seed Corn and Soybean Seed Supply Good for Michigan

Michigan corn and soybean growers should have little to worry about in securing ample supplies of corn and soybean seed for the 1994 season, although several company representatives suggest that the sooner growers place their orders the better, especially for soybeans.

Michigan Farm News spoke with seed company representatives from Northrup King, Cargill, ICI Seeds, and Great Lakes. Hybrids about seed availability in light of this past summer's flooding in the Midwest, and frosts this fall on immature crops. What follows are comments from each.

Northrup King
According to Northrup King Soybean Product Manager Tom Morgan, supplies of soybeans from group 2.0 maturities and later should be adequate, while earlier maturities could be facing a somewhat tighter supply situation, mostly due to frost damage.

"Most of the Midwest is predominately late than a 2.0 maturity," Morgan said. "Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin typically get the frost somewhat earlier than that. So I wouldn't say there's going to be a shortage, but I think there's going to be a tight supply and people are going to have to get their material ordered to make sure they're getting the variety they want."

Northrup's seed corn supplies, on the other hand, are pretty much normal according to Lonn Stuckish, regional sales manager for the Great Lakes Region, although he suggests farmers get their orders in early.

"We've got the bulk of our corn crop already in the dryers and things look real good at this point," said Stuckish. "There's still the concern that if you've got a particular variety, especially some of the newer ones, or specific grade size needs, that you get your order in early to protect the inventory of the seed you want. With some of the weather that's been out there in the last week or two, there's probably going to be some definite concerns on some maturities."

ICl Seeds
Thanks to scattered growing areas and planting dates, ICl Seeds doesn't foresee seed corn shortages for Michigan producers, according to Becky Greenwall, ICl corn products manager.

"We're in a good position and should have plenty of seed for Michigan," said Greenwall. "In some cases, there may not be a particular variety available, but basically we're in a good situation."

Continued on page 8 see "Seed Supply..."

Enough Pumpkin Pie for Everyone!

A new state record was set in The World Pumpkin Weigh-Off held recently in St. Johns at Andy T's Farm Market. The 692-pound pumpkin, grown by Armada farmer Don Vani-Houte, broke the old state record by a whopping 127 pounds, according to Andy Todosciuk, owner of Andy T's, host site of the Michigan Weigh-Off.

The weigh-off, started in 1982, attracted 30 Michigan growers who competed in attempting to grow the state's largest pumpkin. Weigh-offs were held elsewhere across the country on the same day.

All weigh-off statistics were faxed to New York from all of the locations so that a world winner could be determined. A new world record was established with an Ontario, Canada, farmer growing an 836 pounder, breaking the old world record by nine pounds. So what's the secret to growing these monsters?

"You've got to have the right kind of seed, and start early," Todosciuk said. "We start growing them in early April in a greenhouse, and then transfer them outside in the middle of May under these little hot tents until the end of May."

Squash lovers will be happy to know that a new state record was also set in the squash division, with a 447-1/2 pound entry grown by David Wheeler, of Osseo. The large pumpkins are more watery than your standard sized pumpkins, but Todosciuk says they're still good eating. In case you're wondering, Todosciuk estimates the average pumpkin pie uses 2-1/2 pounds of pumpkin. That's a lot of pie!
New EPA Chemical Fees Would Raise Red Flag

New fees the Environmental Protection Agency proposes to impose on chemical companies to pay for additional paperwork could add millions to the cost of pesticide products. Chemical users are already dropping chemicals from registration because of the cost of maintaining the data needed for approval. Adding another fee on top of that would only complicate the problem.

EPA says it is behind in the process of reassessment of all pesticides required by the 1988 Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act governing the farm use of pesticides. The agency is proposing to assess chemical companies' special fees totaling $20 million in a one-time charge for speeding up the process.

Corn Set-Aside at 5 Percent for '94

The USDA will require corn farmers to idle 5 percent of their corn base acres to remain eligible for farm program benefits next year. The set-aside is set at zero for grain sorghum and oats as well as to allow farmers to plant all acres designated for those crops and still qualify for program payments.

AFBF had recommended zero set-aside for all three crops, while the National Corn Growers Association had urged the USDA to call for 7.5 percent of the corn acres to be idled next year. The announcement did not include price-support loan rates for the 1994 crop. Ag Secretary Mike Espy said other provisions of the 1994 feed grain program would be announced later.

First Hearing Held on USDA Reorganization

Following the Senate Agriculture Committee's cancellation of its planned hearing on USDA reorganization, the House Agriculture Committee took the first shot at examining the USDA's reorganization. It schedules a hearing for Thursday, Oct. 14, in the Capitol Visitor Center, Room G. Cuts in agency field offices and personnel will result in overall savings of $2.3 billion over the next five years, according to Espy. Among the biggest changes would be a plan to combine the Soil Conservation Service with the conservation programs of ASCS.

During the House hearing, Espy was put on the spot regarding his stance on food inspection services. He was an initial critic of Vice President Gore's plan to transfer all food inspection services to the USDA, but now he supports the idea. He said he wants to be a "team" player, and the issue now is how to combine, which is a "very" complex task. He added that Sen. Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., is "hot" on the USDA reorganization.

MFB Membership Bills on Their Way

You may have noticed that you haven't yet received your 1994 membership renewal notice in the mail. That's because MFB's membership billing system has been converted to an "anniversary date system," according to MFB Member Services Dept. Manager Doug Fleming.

"Renewing members will get their annual dues notice in December and January under the new system as opposed to October under the old system," Fleming explained. "Members will now be making payments directly to Michigan Farm Bureau, which will allow for better efficiencies throughout the system in terms of processing, service and costs."

Fleming said that MFB will then reimburse the local county Farm Bureau for the county dues portion. The county will continue to send new membership identification cards and additional member service information to members within two to three weeks after their dues are paid. Members have 21 days to renew their membership without loss of service.

Under the new system, new members will be billed for renewal at the end of a 12-month cycle and normal billings in October for every member. "This means a new member will get a full 12 months of membership privileges before receiving another dues notice," Fleming said. "This automated billing system will reduce costs while ultimately improving service to the member."

Second Annual Michigan Crop Management Conference Set

Reserve the dates of Dec. 15 and 16 on your calendar for the second annual Michigan Crop Management Conference. This conference is sponsored jointly by Michigan State University, Extension (Crop and Soil Sciences Department) and the Michigan Ag-Business Association and will be held at the Holiday Inn South in Lansing.

On Wednesday, the general session will address regulatory issues associated with maintaining farm programs, such as product registration, protection and bulk storage. An overview and update on the certified Crop Advisory program will also be presented.

During Wednesday afternoon, there will be three concurrent sessions:

A) Field Crop Management
B) Record Keeping
C) Pest Management in Field Crops.

The Thursday morning program will begin with a general session speaker talking about his experiences dealing with environmental issues.

Four concurrent sessions will round out the second annual conference. Topic areas for these sessions are:

A) Applicator Training
B) Fruit and Vegetable Management
C) Pest Management in Field Crops
D) Current Technologies for Agribusiness and Farm Operations (Soil Nutrate Testing and Site Specific Management).

At the Michigan Crop Management Conference, new crop management information and technology of interest to the entire agricultural sector, agribusinesses, consultants and employees of governmental agencies will be presented.

For additional meeting information and/or registration details, contact the Michigan Ag-Business Association at (517) 485-8500.

Food Industry Wants More Time on Labeling

Food industry groups have filed suit against the Department of Agriculture to block the agency's latest requirement to handle labels on uncooked meat and poultry products by Oct. 15. The groups, the National Grocers Association, the National-American Wholesale Grocers' Association and the Texas Food Industry Association, said the department did not give them timely notice of the labeling requirement, depriving affected groups an opportunity to comment on a requirement that will have a serious economic impact.

They say the new packaging requirement will force them to develop new packaging and new labels; to discard current inventories of packages and labels. The new labels are being developed by USDA in consultation with Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., a strong advocate for food safety.

Rifkin's group also is unhappy with the labeling order, claiming the labels in the present form are complicated and do not perform to the standards of the terms of the May 5 court settlement, according to an Associated Press report.

Small Businesses Express Concerns Over Clinton Health Care Plan

Small businesses seem to be speaking out the loudest against the new Clinton health care proposal. The federal government estimates there are 5 million small businesses firms that employ fewer than 500 employees, the majority employing fewer than 25. More than a third do not provide health insurance for any of their workers.

The small business operators say they are not being cold-heated in not extending health care coverage; they say they can't afford to do so. The new employer mandate says that only "large" employers must cover employees. The article reports no wholesale business closures, but reports significant shifts in employer practices. Employers are hiring a greater number of part-time workers, who did not have to be covered. Small firms reported lower turnover and more member or selectively hired individuals, who had spouses already covered by health insurance.

September Farm Prices Up 2.1 Percent from August

Boosted by a surge in orange prices, the index of prices received by U.S. farmers for their products in September was up 2.1 percent from the August level and up 4.3 percent from a year earlier, USDA said. Price gains in September for oranges, lettuce, wheat and apples more than offset price declines for soybeans, eggs, eggs and corn.

Most of the index change was attributed to a 93 percent upward bounce in orange prices, USDA said. Within the index, the price increase for oranges, hogs, soybeans and broilers more than offset price decreases for milk, apples, tobacco and wheat.

USDA Researcher's Find Clues in Search for Fatal Pig Disease Cure

A USDA researcher has genetically altered and weakened a virus that causes pseudorabies, a fatal disease in young pigs, according to Knight Ridder News. The development, by Animal Biotechnology Laboratory with USDA's Agricultural Research Service, brings scientists closer to a discovery of a new vaccine against a disease that costs U.S. pork producers about $60 million each year, according to USDA.

In pig trials at the National Animal Disease Center in Ames, Iowa, the recombinant virus did not become active after being injected into animals, the department added. Pseudorabies is fatal to young pigs and causes reproductive failure in pregnant cows. Humans are not susceptible to the disease. Several states, including Iowa, the nation's leading producer of hogs, have regulations that prohibit the movement of pigs infected with the pseudorabies virus.

Hog Breeding Herd Takes a Dip

Tighter profit margins and the prospect of higher feed costs prompted the nation's hog farmers to ship some pigs that may have been earmarked earlier for the breeding herd, analysts said after the release of the Sept. 1 hog inventory report.

In its quarterly survey, the USDA pegged the total hog herd at 96 percent of year-ago levels, while hogs kept for breeding were down 5 percent from the same period a year earlier. Wet weather in the Midwest and the extreme heat and drought in the Southeast cut into average litter size, said Dale Durchole, analyst with AgriVisor Services, Inc., an affiliate of the Illinois Farm Bureau.

That should mean fewer hogs coming to market in the second and third quarters of next year, analysts said. The report could mean seasonal lows will now be $44 to $45 per cwt., rather than the earlier forecasts of $42 to $43, said John Lawrence, Iowa Extension economist. See page 6 for MSU Ag Economist Jim Hilker's interpretation of the report.
Michigan Farm News

October 15, 1993

Agricultural Worker Protection Reform Act of 1993

MFB POSITION
This bill is in direct opposition to Farm Bureau policy in every respect and is being vigorously opposed. Congressman Ford's office has admitted that the package, as currently written, would apply to all farm workers. They plan to introduce language to make the act applicable only to workers currently subject to the Migrant and Seasonal Worker Protection Act.

They have also indicated that they will give the bill a fair hearing. This is the reason they are not opposing this bill, the Migrant and Seasonal Worker Protection Act.

H.R. 1173, co-sponsored by Congressman William Ford (D-Mich.) amends the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act to make the Act applicable to all agricultural workers.

The proposal makes radical changes in the present federal migrant and seasonal agricultural worker law by removing all references to migrant and seasonal, and replacing them with the words "agricultural workers."

Some of the key provisions are as follows:

- The bill would cover all farm employment, whether temporary or full-time, migrant or local, regardless of size of farm or commodity produced.
- Eliminates current exemptions, including family farms, small business, small employers, livestock, poultry, hay harvesting, sheep shearing, fox, processing, canning, gin, packing shed, or nursery.
- Requires all farm employment be by written contract, specifying the precise term of employment and pay rates.
- Farmers would be obliged to pay workers for the entire term of employment, regardless of conditions such as weather or market conditions that prevented workers from working during that period.
- The bill effectively outlaw the farm labor contractor system by holding farm employers strictly liable for all acts of farm labor contractors. Fines of up to $250,000 per person are authorized for use of unlicensed workers.
- Farmers would be legally liable for compliance with federal sanitation, hazard communication, heat stress and EPA farmworker pesticide protection regulations. The small farm exemptions are eliminated.
- Workers are given a private right of action to sue employers for violations of these, as well as local and state safety and health regulations.
- Employers of 25 or more farmworkers would be required to provide free child care and free transportation to and from the farm workplace.
- Forbids the transportation of farmworkers by drivers impaired by drugs or alcohol or in unsafe vehicles.
- Increases in labor costs and farm liability would be significant if the bill is enacted. The bill provides for damages up to $25,000 per person, as well as attorney fees and costs.
- The bill would put into law the Supreme Court decision in the Adams Fruit case which permits a court to consider workers' compensation benefits in awarding actual damages. This means that agricultural workers would be the only workers ill that could sue the employer and also collect workers' compensation benefits.

The bill has been referred to the subcommittee on Labor Standards, Occupational Health and Safety of the House Education and Labor Committee. The subcommittee has held one public hearing on this bill in California with more expected to be held in January of 1994. MFB and the Governor's Interagency Committee on Migrant Affairs requested one of the hearings be held in Michigan, since the state has the fourth largest utilization of migrant labor.

ACTION NEEDED
Advise your representative in Congress that this bill must be defeated.

MFB CONTACT
Howard Kelly, Ext. 2044

Land Application of Fruit and Vegetable Residue

MFB POSITION
Farm Bureau supported the passage of this act.

MFB CONTACT
Ron Nelson, Ext. 2043

Public Act 102 of 1993, passed by the Legislature and signed by the governor, allows the land application of food by-products at agronomic rates consistent with practices outlined in the Right to Farm Act.

By-products are limited to fruit, vegetable or sugar beet processing; typically peeling, pith, pulp and the residue from processing of the fruits and vegetables.

Prior to the act, in some cases, the DNR had required a formal written plan for disposal or simply prohibited food processors from land application of the by-products.

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

MFB POSITION
Strongly favors action by Congress to ratify NAFTA. It's estimated that NAFTA will generate $20 - $40 million of additional income to Michigan farmers when fully implemented. Farmers should consider this carefully as there is no other single event likely to happen in the next 10 years, that could generate this much additional income.

ACTION NEEDED
Members are urged to contact their congressional representative and recommend support for NAFTA.

MFB CONTACT
Al Almy, Ext. 2400

Senate Votes to Eliminate Wool Act Funding

The U.S. Senate voted to eliminate the Wool Act during voting on appropriations, dealing a serious blow to U.S. sheep industry efforts to stabilize their industry. The loss of the Wool Act incentive payments will financially devastate the industry, which already is staggering under three years of record low lamb and wool prices, according to American Sheep Industry Association President Gene Brune. He estimates that 25 to 30 percent of the sheep producers under three years of record low lamb and wool prices, according to American Sheep Industry Act incentive payments will financially devastate the industry. Which already is staggering

Kirk said. "Lamb imports into the U.S. over the last three years have grown steadily, and imports of lamb into the U.S. will only increase. "With less financial incentive for sheep producers, you can expect the number of producers and U.S. produced lambs to decrease." According to MFB Livestock Specialist Kevin Kirk, if the Wool Act is not reinstated, payments could be received in 1994 only, but then discontinue thereafter. Funding for the honey program has already been eliminated.

The U.S. House voted to restore the funding for fiscal year 1993, meaning if the Senate will accelerate without the Wool Act."

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Michigan Farm News

30-Day and 90-Day Forecast - Cooler and Wetter Than Normal

September weather averaged significantly cooler and wetter than normal across most sections of the state, causing harvest delays for a wide variety of crops. The cause of the unseasonable weather was a persistent jet stream troughing pattern across much of the midwestern and eastern states, which is further below than normal for this time of year. Fortunately, a combination of clouds and wind prevented freezing temperatures from materializing except across the Upper and northern lower Peninsula, where first freeze normally occurs by the end of the month. On the negative side, this pattern is expected to persist for the rest of the harvest season.

The National Weather Service 30-day and 90-day (for October through December) outlooks both call for a continuation of cooler and wetter than normal weather across the state. The type of pattern would likely lead to lower than normal lake-effect snow in affected areas and also suggests further problems with harvest and fall field work. It goes without saying that any periods of favorable weather, however short, should be used as efficiently as possible.

A Cold Wet September Hinders Harvest Activity

Persistent rain showers have brought soil moisture levels to 35 percent adequate and 65 percent surplus, according to Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service. The first week of October finally brought some welcomed-long and tiring weather for many Michigan fields.

The corn crop had progressed to 35 percent mature as of Oct. 5, compared to 15 percent last year. Seventy-five percent of the soybean crop was rated good to excellent. Corn silage harvest continued despite wet field conditions. Harvest was reported 80 percent complete, 20 percent behind normal.

Soybeans advanced to 95 percent shedding leaves and 35 percent mature, compared to a normal of 80 percent and 40 percent respectively. Condition was rated 75 percent good to excellent.

Dry beans were harvested reportedly close to wrapping up in many parts of the state, while others were just getting started, according to Michigan Bean Commission Extension Secretary Dale Kuenzli. Washtenaw and Huron counties are nearing 90 percent complete while Gratiot, Montcalm and Ionia are just getting started," he said. Overall the crop was reported 45 percent harvested.

Kuenzli said that white mold was showing up in several fields, and that Montcalm and Ionia were seeing significant damage because of heavy foliage and excess moisture. The condition of Michigan's southern bean crops were quickly deteriorating.

Pumpkin harvest had started, but production was reported low for some varieties. Onion harvest was delayed by the rains, with over half the crop still waiting to be harvested. Squash harvest was complete with yields and quality both reported good. Processing tomato harvest was complete in most areas.

Agricultural Outlook for Next Year

The national weather service outlooks call for a continuation of cooler and wetter than normal weather across the state. The type of pattern would likely lead to lower than normal lake-effect snow in affected areas and also suggests further problems with harvest and fall field work. It goes without saying that any periods of favorable weather, however short, should be used as efficiently as possible.

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DODGE JUST CAME UP WITH 500 MORE REASONS FOR BELONGING TO YOUR FARM BUREAU.

FARM BUREAU MEMBERS ARE NOW ELIGIBLE FOR $500 CASH BACK FROM DODGE.

Overall, Dodge offers the most powerful line of trucks in America. Courtesy of our Magnum V-6, V-8 and Cummins diesel engines. So shopping Dodge makes sense right from the start. But now, Farm Bureau members have an extra incentive. Either $500 cash back on select Magnum powered Dodge trucks. Or up to $1,000 worth of DeWalt tools. And that's on top of any other national offer.* So be smart. Get a certificate from your Farm Bureau and go see your nearest Dodge dealer. Any color Dodge truck you want, you'll save a lot of green.

THE NEW DODGE

*This offer is valid for members of participating Farm Bureaus, expires 12/31/93, and may not be used in combination with any other Chrysler Corporation certificate offer or certain other special offers. Ask for restrictions & details.
Market Outlook...

Seasonal Commodity Price Trends

**WHEAT**

The Sept. 1 USDA Wheat Supply and Demand Report released Sept. 20 showed stock levels in the U.S. were at 2.156 billion bushels. The wheat stock market is expected to start the first quarter of 1993 at 2.5 billion bushels. The USDA calendar stock estimate is 2.6 billion bushels. The Sept. 1 USDA Wheat Supply and Demand Report released Sept. 20 showed stock levels in the U.S. were at 2.156 billion bushels. The wheat stock market is expected to start the first quarter of 1993 at 2.5 billion bushels. The USDA calendar stock estimate is 2.6 billion bushels.

**SOYBEANS**

The stocks showed 292 million bushels of soybeans in storage as of Sept. 1, which was almost exactly at trade expectations and the August USDA estimate of 290 million bushels. The USDA estimate for the December 1992 crop was 1.615 billion bushels. The difference is due to the July 1st estimate which was 1.615 billion bushels. The USDA estimate for the December 1992 crop was 1.615 billion bushels. The difference is due to the July 1st estimate. The USDA estimate for the December 1992 crop was 1.615 billion bushels.

**CATTLE**

The Sept. 1 quarterly USDA Cattle Supply and Demand Report released Sept. 20 showed that the supply of market hogs was estimated to be 93.2 million hogs. The USDA estimate for the December 1992 crop was 1.615 billion bushels. The difference is due to the July 1st estimate which was 1.615 billion bushels. The USDA estimate for the December 1992 crop was 1.615 billion bushels.
Understanding Michigan's New Estate Tax

The death tax law in Michigan has been changed from an inheritance tax to an estate tax, thanks to legislation passed by the Legislature as Act No. 54, Public Acts of 1993, and took effect on Oct. 1, 1993. The inheritance tax will be applicable for resident or nonresident decedent estates before Oct. 1, 1993.

Ralph E. Hepp and Myron P. Kelsey
Department of Agricultural Economics
Michigan State University

Estate Tax Provisions

There are two fundamental changes in the way the state of Michigan applies the death tax. First, the basis for the taxation of property from a decedent has been changed from a tax on the inheritance received to a tax on the total estate of the decedent.

Second, the rules for the tax are not defined in state legislation, but are detailed in the Federal Estate and Gift Tax law. Michigan, like most other states, is taxing estates at the maximum allowable federal credit for state death taxes under the Federal Estate and Gift Tax law. Therefore, to understand the Michigan estate tax, the Federal Estate and Gift Tax law must be explained.

Credit For State Death Taxes

The credit for state death taxes is applicable if the decedent’s estate is required to pay a federal estate tax. There is no obligation to file a Federal Estate Tax return (no tax would be due) unless the gross estate is over $600,000.

Even if the estate is required to file a return, there may not be a taxable estate under the Federal Estate Tax law if debts, expenses, deductions, and other allowable exemptions reduce the adjusted gross estate to under $600,000 (the law allows a unified tax credit of $592,900 against the tentative tax for the lifetime gifts and death tax when transfers of less than $600,000 are excluded).

If the estate has adequate value to pay a federal estate tax after the unified credit, the adjusted taxable estate for the state tax is calculated by subtracting $50,000 from the taxable estate and that value is used to determine the state death tax credit according to the rates given in Table 1.

If the decedent’s taxable estate does not exceed $400,000, the credit for the state death taxes is zero. If the decedent’s taxable estate does exceed $400,000, the credit for state death taxes is taxed at the rate of 8/10 of 1 percent for the next $50,000 and rates increasing to 16 percent for adjustable taxable estates over $10 million.

Table 1. Maximum Credit for State Death Taxes

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Large Cotton Crop Should be Good News for Livestock Producers

The USDA’s August estimate has pegged this year’s cotton crop at 18.5 million bales. A crop of this size could result in a 7.5 million tons of cottonseed, 15 percent over last year’s crop, and cottonseed meal production of 1.78 million tons, a 10 percent increase over 1992.

The 1993 cotton crop is estimated to be the second largest on record. The size of this year’s crop may prompt livestock producers to consider cottonseed products for use in their rations.

Availability and protein value on a price per unit of protein basis are two reasons to consider using cottonseed meal, according to the National Cottonseed Products Association (NCPA). Cottonseed meal’s natural protein fits into most rations and has approximately 40 percent bypass protein that works well for dairy cows in mid-lactation.

Turkey rations where the protein is provided by a 50/50 cottonseed meal to soybean meal mix has been shown to perform as well as rations with 100 percent soybean meal, according to research at Texas A&M.

Dr. Lynn Jones of the NCPA points out that “hulls are very palatable and contain from 40-45 percent TDN, which is equivalent to good grass hay. In highly concentrated feeds, the excellent roughage action of hulls stimulates the rumen and regulates the passage of feed through the digestive tract.”

The recent USDA estimate puts whole cottonseed consumption for the coming year at 2.6 million tons, which is equivalent to 4.8 percent of the 2.6 million tons of cottonseed consumption for the coming year.

“Important to whole seed feeders to realize the value of buying properly stored seed. By winter and on into late spring, you can begin to see the value in seed that has been stored under strict conditions at a cotton oil mill,” says Jones.

The National Cottonseed Products Association has information about feeding cottonseed products and a directory of cottonseed product suppliers throughout the United States. Write for these free materials at Dept. FD, P.O. Box 172267, Memphis, TN 38117-2267 or call (901) 670-6000.

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Fall harvest and grain storage facilities present a host of risks if a farmer fails to carefully look at the potential hazards in the workplace. Take a moment to analyze these common hazards on your farm.

**Augers**

The types of hazards include electrocution from contacting overhead powerlines, entanglements in augers, entrapment in flowing grain and other health and safety risks,” said Howard Doss, Extension agricultural safety specialist at MSU. Electrocution from an auger touching overhead powerlines has claimed the lives of several Michigan farmers during the past decade. These accidents generally occur when the operator fails to lower the auger before moving it, creating a situation for disaster.

Doss said that lowering the auger not only removes the risks of electrocution, but it also adds stability to the auger, making it less likely to tip over. Cables or winch failures are another hazard with augers. Never attempt to stop a running auger by grabbing the auger shaft. A running auger can quickly entangle an operator’s hands or feet unless precautions are taken to avoid these incidents. Always keep shields in place and be sure to warn workers to stay alert around augers at unloading time. Never use your foot or hand to dislodge grain that may be plugging or bridging up an auger. Use a stick or rod instead. Keep tools picked up to prevent someone accidentally tripping and falling into an auger.

**Hearing Protection**

Grain drying and handling equipment may produce enough noise to damage the hearing of an individual working in the area. Typically a long dull ringing sensation in your ears after a long day of working with noisy equipment is an indication that you have exceeded a safe sound level. This ear ringing is frequently accompanied with a slight loss of hearing where it may be difficult to hear faint sounds that you could normally hear. Doss said. Overnight rest will generally restore hearing, but prolonged exposure to noise of this intensity can result in permanent hearing loss.

To avoid hearing loss, wear ear plugs or ear muffs whenever exposed to noisy equipment that causes any hearing loss symptoms. There are numerous types of plugs and muffs available in prices ranging from a few cents to $20. Quality ear plugs and muffs have a noise reduction rating (NRR) which indicates how many decibels of noise they are capable of reducing. Ear plugs have an NRR ranging from 20 to 31, while ear muffs have an NRR of at least 23 or more.

**Farm Kid Safety**

Children are naturally attracted to an area where there’s a lot of activity, says Doss. Children should never be allowed in grain processing and handling areas or around equipment.

Accident reports show that Michigan children have been killed or maimed in augers, or have suffocated in gravity wagons as the grain flows out, trapping and suffocating children. Riding on grain wagons or any other piece of farm equipment places the rider at risk for falling off a wagon as the wheels hit bumps or drop into a rut.

**"Seed Supply Outlook Good" continued from page 1**

Like others, ICI’s soybean seed supply of groups 1 and early 2 could be a bit tight, due to reduced yields and early frost, according to Greenwalt. “Anything before mid-group 2, in general, might be a little tighter this year, and frost might make soybeans a little bit smaller,” said Cargill.

Shorter season varieties of corn more apt to be planted in Michigan will be in ample supply from Cargill, says Northern Michigan territory sales manager Keith Clark. “We feel we’re in pretty good shape at this point since our seed acres are widely spread out,” he said. “Smaller companies with production concentrated in the corn belt could be in a different situation, however.”

Clark said it’s really too early to tell what the availability of longer season varieties will be like, adding that the final outcome won’t be known until seed harvest is complete, and the frost damage actually determined in the midwest seed growing areas. He doesn’t expect prices to make much of a move either way, but just in case, Cargill is offering producers a chance to lock in prices.

“If producers book and pay for seed now, they can get an early pay discount and lock in the price,” Clark said. “If the price goes up, they’re guaranteed a price. If it goes down, we give the producer a rebate.”

Overall, Cargill has made minor adjustments on most varieties and actually dropped prices by 2/2 to 3/3 on a number of varieties, according to Clark.

“As a whole, I don’t know what kind of adjustment the seed industry will be making, but our prices have been out for a month and they’ll be good until we see what harvest looks like,” Clark said. “Of course, that means that those prices could be pulled at anytime.”

**Great Lakes Hybrids**

Ideal growing conditions and a nearly completed harvest as of early October means Great Lakes Hybrids will have a good inventory of high-quality seed available, according to Allen Moore, seed corn producer from Ovid, Mich.

“T here are areas in Iowa damaged from the flood, but that’s limited acreage,” said Moore. “There’s probably a bigger concern for companies with seed acreage in Minnesota and Wisconsin where there’s a lot of acreage is going to be a concern to frost damage yet. A frost can bust the cell walls in kernels, causing reduced germination.”

In regard to soybean seed availability, Moore expects there will be some lower yields, but he doesn’t expect any supply problems in general. “Soybeans are more local, so there could be some short supplies and poor-quality stuff out there,” he said. “But I think there’s enough good quality seed to supply the market.”

Pricewise, Moore said Great Lakes is planning to hold corn prices at last year’s levels. In spite of some minor increases from other companies, he doesn’t expect anything too drastic overall.

On the other hand, Moore thinks soybean seed, which depends more on the Chicago market, could be seeing higher prices, although it’s too early to tell just yet.

**From Farm Bureau Insurance**

Children, riding on grain wagons or any other piece of farm equipment places the rider at risk for falling off a wagon as the wheels hit bumps or drop into a rut.
The sun helps reduce moisture in the air, but the harmful effects of snow, rain, sun, and year. When not in use, protect them against hoses and tires and degrade some tank tens and weaken rubber materials such as strong winds. Moisture in the air, whether sprayers are used only a few weeks in a crease that reduces flow through the hose. The best protection is to store Coil hoses around a basket or other large building. Do not hang them over a nail or sprayers in a dry building.

2. To prevent corrosion, remove nozzle tips depending on the size of the tank, to the rinsing water before the final flushing. As water is pumped from the sprayer, the oil leaves a protective coating inside the tank, pump, hoses and other parts.

5. Cover all openings so that insects, dirt, and other foreign material cannot get into the pump and other sprayer parts. This also protects against corrosion and prevents freezing in case the water is not drained.

I C I 8700 AND 8543. BECAUSE THEY PAY THE BILLS.

The financial reform portion of the Engler plan to replace the $6.4 billion cut in property taxes would include a 1/2 percent increase in the Small Business Tax, a 4 percent homestead transfer tax, a 50 cent hike in taxes on a pack of cigarettes and tobacco products, a 16 mill property tax on businesses, second homes, and non-resident property which would be constitutionally limited at 16 mills, and a proposed 2 cent hike in the state's sales tax which would be capped in the constitution and requires a vote of the people.

In addition, there would be funds available from the elimination of the Homestead Property Tax Credit and city income tax credits.

Under the Engler proposal, a foundation grant would actually allow schools to the school that they selected to attend. A minimum foundation grant of $4,500 would be established. If the school costs were actually less than $4,500, the difference would remain, be put into a student bank account, for that student to possibly use during the early years of college or further educational training after high school.

There would be a funding schedule adopted so that students receiving from $4,500 to $5,500 would get an annual 2 percent increase; those from $5,500 to $6,500 would get a 1 percent annual increase in available funds. Nelson said this feature would eliminate the substantial spread which currently exists between low cost and high cost districts.

The proposal also contained a number of significant school reform elements including: improving the quality and availability of education, allowing school of choice and funding, and providing teachers an atmosphere in which to teach.

Details of the plan include allowing families to choose the school which they will attend. The governor characterized the current public education system as a monopoly, saying that schools of choice would allow individuals to select the school of their choice which could include a charter public school.

"Charter schools could be described as an organization which obtains a charter from the state to allow for somewhat specialized education, which could range from arts to technology," Pontz said. "This individuals with gifted children, or children with special needs, could select a school which provides and meets their needs in the most efficient manner."

In addition, there would be a report card on each school, that could be used to evaluate schools on a building by building basis. Teachers would receive more support through strict laws dealing with student behavior. Schools would assume some of the costs of health care, pensions, the coordination of purchasing, contracts and administrative reform.

"While there is significant detail yet to be worked out, the concept will shape the debate in Lansing for the next several weeks," Pontz said. "Farm Bureau will continue to evaluate and provide information as the details become available, in anticipation of the proposed Feb. 8, 1994 ballot, so that Michigan citizens can vote on the constitutional provisions of the proposal."
Michigan AG for NAFTA Formed and Growing

Comments from Michigan AG for NAFTA Members

Michigan Corn Growers Association

"The Michigan Corn Growers Association realizes the importance of trade with Mexico and the potential for vast markets as the economy improves. The U.S. can and does produce the most and cheapest food in the world. We need new markets.

Michigan Cattlemen's Association

"The Michigan Cattlemen's Association supports NAFTA because expanding export markets will put extra money in the pockets of producers. An agreement which contains strong regulatory enforcement for animal health, environment, and food safety standards will be good for the U.S. cattle industry.

Michigan Pork Producers Association

"Michigan Pork Producers and the National Pork Producers Council are strong supporters of NAFTA. For pork producers, the agreement will lower, and eventually eliminate tariffs while reducing other barriers to trade, providing greater access to the Mexican market. It's just as important to note that the Mexican population and economy grow, combined with the reduction of trade barriers and the improved living standards of the Mexican people will include expanded marketing opportunities can be significant. The improved living standards of the Mexican people will include what the media focused on Clinton's health care proposal, but is expected to intensify again as Congress considers ratification of the trade agreement later this year.

According to MB President Jack Laurie, Michigan AG for NAFTA will be an informed, responsible organization, following the broad spectrum of support in Michigan for NAFTA.

We simply cannot afford to stand by and let Michigan's agricultural future slip through our fingers because of misconceptions and the misguided political agendas of a select few politicians," said Laurie. "By working together to support NAFTA and inform our Congressional representatives, we can ensure the benefits from free trade with Mexico will be realized for Michigan agriculture."

For more information about NAFTA, or information on NAFTA, Summering"Michigan AG for NAFTA, contact Bob Boehm at 1-800-292-2680, extension 2023.

NAFTA and U.S. Sugar Trade with Mexico

Negotiations on NAFTA are complete and awaiting Congressional action before year end. This agreement would phase out tariffs and import quotas between the U.S. and Mexico over a 15-year period. This article summarizes the current status of sugar trade between the U.S. and Mexico and examines the potential impact of NAFTA on the sugar industry.

Mexico has been an importer of sugar since 1986, with the U.S. exporting an average of 140,000 tons of sugar annually during the past five years to Mexico. Mexico exported an average of 7,000 tons of sugar annually to the U.S. during the same years, representing less than 1 percent of total U.S. sugar imports.

Both the U.S. and Mexico use trade barriers to limit sugar imports. Mexico uses a tariff to maintain a price of 18.7 cents per pound for their sugar producers.

The U.S. uses a combination of import quotas and tariffs to limit sugar imports into this country and to maintain its price support program for sugar.

The program is designed to maintain the U.S. price support program with loan rates of 18 cents per pound for raw cane sugar, and 23.33 cents per pound for beet sugar.

Import quotas are assigned to each country for their sugar producers.

Under terms of NAFTA, Mexico will be permitted to export sugar to the U.S. under the following conditions:

- During the first six years of the agreement, Mexico would be permitted to export up to 25,000 tons of sugar to the U.S. if its domestic production is greater than its consumption.
- Beginning in year seven, Mexico would be permitted to export 150,000 tons of sugar to the U.S. if its domestic production is greater than its consumption. This amount would increase 10 percent each year during years 8 to 15 of this agreement.
- Beginning in year seven, Mexico would be permitted to ship its entire surplus to the U.S. if it was a net surplus producer during the previous two marketing years, or if it was a net surplus producer during the previous year and is projected to be a net surplus producer during the coming year.

By the end of year six, Mexico would have a surplus of sugar to export to the U.S. Mexico sugar trade is not expected to change significantly during the first half of the agreement period. Mexico's exports of sugar to the U.S. are limited to 25,000 tons during the first six years. Since the U.S. consumes 9 million tons of sugar annually, this increase in imports would not affect the U.S. sugar market.

The impact of NAFTA on sugar trade depends on several factors. Mexico is now a net importer of sugar and does not currently meet the requirements specified under NAFTA to increase its sugar exports to the U.S. Mexico's sugar production has been less than its consumption since 1987, with consumption reaching 4.5 million tons in 1992, while production was only 3.6 million tons.

Mexico sugar trade is not expected to change significantly during the first half of the agreement period. Mexico's exports of sugar to the U.S. are limited to 25,000 tons during the first six years. Since the U.S. consumes 9 million tons of sugar annually, this increase in imports would not affect the U.S. sugar market.

In the long run, Mexico's status as a sugar exporter will be determined by three major factors. First, growth in demand for sugar will be a big determinant of Mexico's sugar export status. If income growth in Mexico continues at a high rate, then its sugar production would increase faster than its production, preventing it from becoming a major sugar exporter.
Michigan Farm News

Gallup Poll Shows Changes in Michigan Farming Practices

Marshall area farmer Doug Myers (right), pictured with his father Grant below, exemplifies the findings of the poll. Last year, in his search for "greener" alternatives, he agreed to participate in government-sanctioned tests of an experimental herbicide on part of his 2100-acre crop. "Farmers are looking for safer herbicides because they live in the environment, too, and they are concerned with protecting everyone's health," Myers said. "Since I live in the Great Lakes area, water quality is a major concern as water is linked to everything we do."

A national poll conducted by the Gallup Organization reveals that farmers in Michigan and other midwestern states see water quality as the top farm-related environmental problem and "safer" pesticides as part of the solution. According to the results of the 1993 Sandoz National Agricultural Poll, three out of five farmers say they are more concerned about farm-related environmental problems today than five years ago.

"It's clear that farmers everywhere share the public's concern for the environment," said Dale Miller, CEO of Sandoz Agro, the agricultural company that commissioned the study. "This poll indicates U.S. farmers are embracing positive changes in their farming practices."

Among the findings:

- The majority of U.S. farmers say they have already made some changes in their farming practices as a result of public opinion about the environment, mostly in the areas of pesticide use and conservation tillage. Midwestern farmers are slightly more likely to be practicing conservation tillage.
- Ninety-two percent of U.S. farmers say they are very or somewhat likely to use safer pesticides in the future. According to the poll, Midwest farmers are even more likely to use safer pesticides in the future.
- Sixty-six percent of U.S. farmers favor tougher enforcement of penalties for misapplication of pesticides. Forty-one percent favor mandatory education and certification for those who apply pesticides. However, less than half of all farmers say that pesticides are knowingly misapplied.
- Thirty-nine percent of U.S. farmers believe they should have primary responsibility for fixing environmental problems associated with agriculture. This is almost three times the percentage of farmers placing responsibility with government and almost five times the percentage placing responsibility with agrichemical manufacturers.
- While most U.S. farmers think they are viewed as responsible stewards by their urban neighbors, 43 percent think their image has slipped. In the Midwest, only 39 percent say the image of the farmer has gotten worse. However, 28 percent believe their image is improving due to positive media coverage and better informed consumers.

"The majority of farmers believe consumers are more concerned about environmental issues because they are more aware of environmental issues, not because the problems are getting worse," said Dr. Max Larsen, executive vice president with the Gallup Organization. "Four of five farmers believe current safeguards are sufficient to protect people and the environment, but almost as many think the public doesn't understand these safeguards."

Overwhelmingly, farmers believe the key to reducing public concerns about farm-related environmental issues is education. Most feel they share responsibility for that education with government, teachers, manufacturers and others. More than one-third of U.S. farmers say they have personally participated in efforts to educate the non-farm public.

The 1993 Sandoz National Agricultural Poll included a cross-section of grain, cotton and vegetable growers. The study has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.8 percent.

Sandoz Agro Inc., headquartered in Des Plaines, Ill., produces chemical and biological plant protection products for agriculture and horticulture markets worldwide.

"NAFTA and U.S. Sugar Trade with Mexico" continued from previous page

If, however, income and demand growth are slower, Mexico is more likely to be able to increase its exports of sugar. Second, the Mexican soft drink industry uses sugar as its sweetener. If this industry converts to the use of corn sweetener (a possibility since NAFTA reduces the price of corn in Mexico in the long run), up to 1.3 million tons of sugar now used in soft drinks could be released for other uses.

If this conversion takes place, Mexico would have to increase its imports of U.S. corn or corn sweetener and it would also have to invest in new transportation, storage and processing systems.

Third, the Mexican sugar processing industry, a government-owned monopoly for many years, has been sold to private investors. If privatization improves the efficiency of this industry, Mexico's sugar industry could become more competitive and its export potential could improve.

The importance of these factors can be illustrated by considering long-run projections for Mexico's sugar industry (see Table I below). Mexico is expected to produce 3.8 million tons of sugar and consume 4.5 million tons of sugar in 1993. In total, Mexico is expected to import 700,000 tons of sugar in 1993. U.S. exports of high fructose corn sweetener to Mexico are expected to be less than 10,000 tons in 1993.

By the year 2000, Mexico's sugar production is expected to reach 4.5 million tons, while consumption will have reached 4.7 million tons. This projection assumes that roughly 16 percent of Mexico's soft drink industry will convert to the use of corn sweeteners by the year 2000.

Transportation costs, the high cost of corn in Mexico and Mexico's tariff on imported corn sweetener are expected to prevent soft drink bottlers in the southern regions of Mexico from converting to corn sweeteners during the first half of the agreement. Under this scenario, Mexico would continue to import 200,000 tons of sugar in the year 2000.

Mexico's sugar production is expected to reach 4.8 million tons in the year 2008. Mexico's consumption of sugar is expected to decline to 4 million tons as the remainder of Mexico's soft drink industry converts to the use of corn sweeteners. Mexico would then have an export potential of 800,000 tons of sugar.

These projections assume modest growth in Mexico's sugar consumption (2.1 percent annual growth for 1994 to 2008 compared to 3 percent growth in the past decade) and higher growth in sugar production than consumption (4.8 percent annual growth for 1994 to 2008, compared to 1.7 percent annual growth during the past decade). Given these assumptions and a partial conversion of Mexico's soft drink industry to corn sweeteners, Mexico is unlikely to increase its exports of sugar to the U.S. before the year 2000.

If Mexico's consumption growth exceeds this projection or its production growth fails to achieve this projection, then Mexico's sugar imports would actually increase during the first 10 years of the agreement and its sugar exports would decrease during the next five years of the agreement.

If Mexico does convert to the use of corn sweeteners, then U.S. exports of corn or corn sweeteners would have to increase by more than 4 million tons to meet this demand. In addition to the anticipated 2.5 million ton increase in corn exports under NAFTA.

So What's the Bottom Line to the NAFTA - Sugar Trade Question?

MSU Economist Dr. David Schweikhardt said Mexico's export potential of 800,000 tons in 15 years will have an impact, but that U.S. sugar producers must also remember that it's 15 years from now and then ask some very important questions.

"There are a couple of ways that you can look at NAFTA and sugar," Schweikhardt suggested. "First, will Mexico be a threat to U.S. producers and when? And if so, how much of a threat? They're not producing enough to be a threat right now to even keep up with their own demand, much less have a lot to export.

"So the answer of whether they will be a threat, 'is not for the first 10 years.' Their demand is likely to increase faster than their supply can.

According to MBF Commodity Specialist Bob Boehm, the impact of Mexico's 800,000 ton export potential on the U.S. market, even at current U.S. consumption levels, would account for less than 10 percent of the total U.S. sugar consumption.

"If the trend in U.S. sugar consumption for the next five years is extended out 15 years to the year 2008, 800,000 tons would be a much smaller part of the total U.S. sugar consumption picture," Boehm said. "The U.S. can also adjust sugar import quotas from other nations, so that the total net change in U.S. sugar imports is minimal."
12 Clinton Health Plan Benefits Offset by Negatives

What's Included in the Clinton Health Care Plan?

Health Care Alliances

- The budget would establish alliances by Jan. 1, 1997. These could be non-profit corporations, an independent state agency, or an agency of the state's executive branch. The alliance would establish information systems and a system for health care services and the doctors and hospitals participating. Alliances would be required to choose health care plans, including fee for service plans.

Self-Employed

- All premium payments made by self-employed individuals will continue to be deductible. If the self-employed individual uses the employer share and the individual share of the total premium. The total amount paid will be capped as a percentage of self-employed income, with the percentage to be applied to small businesses.

Employer Participation

- Every employer would be required to pay on behalf of its workers at least 80 percent of the average premium. Employees would be allowed to choose the portion of the premium that they would pay. The average amount. The federal government would offer an incentive to states that established agreements with rural areas.

Technical Assistance

- Health services would be expanded for rural residents through incentives such as steps to give people and health care providers who view in rural areas a modest tax credit during the first five years of practice.

Rural Areas

- Health care centers and institutions would be established to expand rural community health networks. Cooperative relationships between rural and urban providers would be established.

Smaller companies would be allowed to pay a smaller portion of the employee cost. For example, if the employee's average full-time wage is less than $12,000, the employer's contribution would be capped at 3.5 percent of the payroll.

If the average payroll is greater than $24,000, the employer's contribution would be capped at 7.9 percent of the payroll. If the employer's average full-time wage is less than $12,000, the employer's contribution would be capped at 3.5 percent of the payroll. If the average payroll is greater than $24,000, the employer's contribution would be capped at 7.9 percent of the payroll.

If the average payroll is greater than $24,000, the employer's contribution would be capped at 7.9 percent of the payroll. If the average payroll is greater than $24,000, the employer's contribution would be capped at 7.9 percent of the payroll.
Some of the hidden causes of stray voltage are in plain sight.

What makes stray voltage such an exasperating problem? One major reason is that it can be caused by so many different conditions. And many of them are in plain sight!

Here are some of the most common conditions that can reduce the safety level of your electric system and make stray voltage a serious problem:

- Broken or disconnected electrical conduits, missing covers on electrical panels and boxes, badly rusted conduits or electrical boxes.
- Cables and extension cords in contact with metal pipes, stalls or equipment and cables or wires entering boxes without cable fittings.
- Improper grounding, including missing connections to ground rods at electrical panels in locations such as at a meter pole, barn, milking area or feeding system.
- Electric fences that are grounded to stalls or water pipes rather than to their own individual ground rod.

The next step...

If you think you have a stray voltage problem, call our stray voltage specialists at 1-800-252-VOLT or your local Consumers Power office at 1-800-477-5050.
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Discussion Topic for November, 1993 - Funding Michigan's Schools

Until it was eliminated by the Legislature, the property tax was the major source of school funding. Statewide, property taxes raised $9 billion, of which about 60 percent ($6 billion) was funding for K-12 education. In addition, schools received about $3 billion in state general funds.

Rupprecht Earns Dairy Shrine/UDIA Milk Marketing Scholarship

The $9 billion total for public schools averaged out to $9,600 per student. But the funding per individual districts ranged from $2,600 to over $8,500 for each child. Wiping out the property tax cleared the slate for consideration of alternate methods for financing schools. Among the options are:

- Increasing the Michigan income tax. It now stands at 4.6 percent and generates about $4.6 billion a year.
- Increasing the current 4 percent sales tax. Under the state Constitution, this would require a vote of the people. Alternatively, the sales tax base could be broadened by taxing services or removing exemptions. The sales tax currently raises approximately $3.8 billion a year.
- Increasing so-called “sin taxes” on tobacco, alcohol and other products. Right now these taxes generate about $760 million a year.
- Other revenue sources could include fees and charges for state services. Fees could include licenses and permits to operate. Increased penalties and fines are also an option.
- Boosting the personal property tax. But the personal property tax is difficult to collect and may discourage investment and job expansion. Individual personal and farm personal property is currently exempt.

The Legislature may opt to combine any number of these revenue sources together with budget reductions in order to replace the property tax monies.

On the other hand, many thoughtful observers of the school finance system point out that there is considerable potential for cutting costs instead of simply replacing revenue. Some of these cost containment options are:

- Limiting salary increases for teachers and staff to the rate of inflation.
- Requiring students to pay for specific costs such as pay-to-play sports and other extra-curricular activities.
- Requiring faculty and staff to cost-share or co-pay deductibles on fringe benefits such as health care and retirement funds.
- Initiating cross-district “school of choice.” Advocates assert that in a free marketplace of educational options, schools will be forced to become more efficient and less costly.

Eliminating the property tax was a bold and controversial action by lawmakers. At the very least, it holds their “feet to the fire” to come up with a school funding plan before the next school year. Legislators need to hear from Farm Bureau members this fall and winter to get the proper guidance on this important issue.

Discussion Questions:

1. What has been the reaction in your school district to the elimination of property taxes?
2. What action(s) has your school taken in response to the cut in funding?
3. Review the proposed school funding options listed in the discussion leader guide. Which ones do your group members feel are the most advantageous for both your local school district and agriculture?
4. Which of the proposed options does your group feel would be the most detrimental for your local school district and agriculture?
5. Should a new form of school revenue be put in place by the Legislature or should cutting costs be the focus for school financing? Why?
Grain should be uniformly dry. Corn should be dried to 15 percent moisture. Soybeans and small grains should be 14 percent at harvest. Immature and sprouted or moldy grain should be dried one percentage point less in moisture than good condition grain.

**Grain Temperature**

Grain temperature in storage should be between 30 degrees F and 50 degrees F to maintain quality. Temperatures colder than 30 degrees F are not desirable because of the likelihood of warm spells during the winter. These warm spells may lead to moisture migration and a moisture build-up in the surface layers of grain. Temperatures higher than 50 degrees F will promote condensation, insect growth and mold development.

Grain temperature can be estimated by holding a good thermometer in the exhaust airflow. The temperature change will be complete when the exhaust temperature is nearly equal to the outside temperature. For upward airflow, check grain temperature about 6 inches down from the top surface of the grain. For downward airflow, check the air temperature as it leaves the fan. Be sure to check around the outside edge of the fan, and not near the center.

**Continuing Inspection**

Continuing inspection is important to detect any moisture build-up problems that will lead to a decrease in grain quality. These problems most often appear in the top three feet of the storage. The keywords for action are look, feel, and smell.

- **LOOK** at how well the grain is supporting you and for moisture condensation on the roof.
- **FEEL** the grain for increase in moisture and temperature.
- **SMELL** for any odors, but be aware the development of odors suggests that earlier inspections missed something.

Safety tip. Never enter a bin of flowing grain. An adult can be hopelessly trapped in five seconds and completely covered after 22 seconds. Use a lock-out to prevent bin unloading while you are in the bin doing an inspection.

**Safety tip.** Wear a good fitting dust mask when working in or around moldy grain; moldy grain can cause respiratory problems.

For more information: see Extension bulletin E-1431 Stored Grain Management. Reprinted from MSU Field Crop Advisory Team Alert.

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**Japan’s Decision to Open Market to U.S. Apples Good for Michigan**

The Japanese decision to move quickly in opening its apple market to the U.S. will be good news for Michigan apple producers, according to Tom Butler, manager of Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association’s Processing Apple Division.

“Japan has the potential for being the largest export market for the U.S. apple business today,” Butler said. “For years and years, they had an artificial trade barrier in place to prohibit U.S. apples because they were supposedly concerned about codling moth problems in the U.S.”

A letter from Japan’s vice minister of agriculture to U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor said the country intends to move “expeditiously” to open its markets to U.S. apples from Washington and Oregon.

If remaining technical difficulties are resolved, U.S. apples could begin to enter Japan by early 1995.

U.S. apple exports to Japan could reach $20 billion in the first year that markets are opened. Annual sales could eventually reach $75 million in the next four to five years, which ultimately means good news for Michigan, as well as Oregon and Washington, Butler said.

“The direct benefit to Michigan is that anytime West Coast states can move additional apples into the export markets around the world, Michigan producers don’t have to compete with those apples on the domestic market,” Butler said. “The Japanese are primarily interested in Red Delicious and a Japanese variety being produced in Washington called Fuji.”