

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS



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Corn Harvest One of Many Agricultural Issues at the Forefront in D.C.

At no one time has agriculture ever been faced with so many challenges and yet so many opportunities, according to U.S. Rep. Dave Camp (R-Midland), Michigan's only representative on the House Agriculture Committee. Speaking to members attending the annual meeting of the Michigan Agricultural Stewardship Association in Clare recently, Camp said agriculture must be involved and in touch with a Congress that's over 35 percent new.

Conclusion of the North American Free Trade Agreement, USDA structural revisions, energy/soil conservation, ethanol, budget and deficit reduction, and perhaps most importantly to Michigan farmers, revisions to USDA's disaster qualifications that include quality for coping with a dismal corn crop, are all front burner issues.

"I've introduced a package of two bills," explained Camp. "One would be a recourse low-interest loan so that farmers could get some operating money. I've also introduced legislation to change the disaster programs to consider the quality of the corn crop, which is literally a loss in many cases in Michigan."

Despite refusals by previous USDA Secretary Edward Madigan to include quality in disaster qualifications, Camp is confident the legislation will eventually be successful. "We already measure for quality in terms of moisture and test weight," he said. "We have to do what we can to help farmers who are in a very tough situation right now."

The biggest roadblock to this proposal and several other pieces of legislation, however, is the growing budget deficit. Budget issues are going to dominate every discussion in Washington because they affect every single program and policy of the federal government, according to Camp.

"I believe the budget problems should be addressed and the deficit reduced, but I don't want to see it done on the backs of agriculture," Camp said. "Of the 12 entitlement programs, production agriculture has been the only program to take budget reductions in the last seven years, while others have seen increased spending."



U.S. Rep. Dave Camp (R-Midland) has introduced legislation calling for quality to be included as criteria for qualifying corn producers for disaster aid. This handful of corn from near Grand Ledge was still testing 34 percent moisture as of Feb. 2.

Structural changes and reassignment of current USDA responsibilities are also likely, with the Environmental Protection Agency playing a bigger role in agricultural conservation issues, and Health and Human Services assuming administration of the food stamp program.

In addition, Camp said the Madigan plan to close 1,200 USDA field offices has been

shelved by new USDA Secretary Mike Espy, who intends to achieve spending reductions by reducing Washington staff and overhead before closing targeted field offices.

The Clinton Administration is reportedly in the process of overturning a recent decision to include the use of corn-based ethanol in the Clean Air Act. The move would reduce

the use of ethanol, as well as efforts to improve this country's energy self-sufficiency, said Camp. He and several other congressional leaders have asked Clinton to leave the Clean Air Bill intact.

Turning to NAFTA, Camp said the new administration is already discussing several changes with Mexico to address inequalities in worker and environmental protection/regulations between the two countries. Those changes are expected to be included as technical corrections to the current agreement.

Environmental regulations are an issue that Michigan farmers can expect to see more and more of, says Camp. With a limited federal budget, don't expect much in the way of cost sharing to implement new conservation measures either. Camp hopes that legislation he's recently introduced will form a national program fashioned after the extremely successful Michigan Energy Conservation Program (MECP). Farmers would be able to apply for grants to implement energy saving practices on their farm operation.

"The MECP saved \$2 in energy cost for every \$1 that was invested in it," claimed Camp. "The program would take the MECP on a national scale and offer farmers financial assistance for implementing energy conserving practices. The real problem, of course, is finding the resources to give this program a chance."

Soybeans to be the Talk of Town Hall Meetings

Move over Ross Perot. Soybeans and related issues are moving into the electronic age with a satellite teleconference sponsored by the United Soybean Board through town hall meetings.

Town Hall meetings are scheduled for Mon., March 1, 1993, at 8 p.m. EST, and Tue., March 2, 1993 at 10 a.m. EST at 375 Extension offices, colleges, and universities in 28 soybean-producing states.

In Michigan, the 14 locations include:

- * Delta College, Allied Health Building, University Center (Monday);
- * Kellogg Community College, Battle Creek (Monday);
- * S.W. Michigan College, Dowagiac (Monday and Tuesday);
- * Clinton County Services Building, St. Johns (Monday and Tuesday);
- * Gratiot/Isabella Regional Services District, Ithaca (Monday and Tuesday);
- * Hillsdale Intermediate School District, Hillsdale (Monday and Tuesday);
- * Michigan Farm Bureau Center, Lansing (Monday);
- * Kalamazoo Valley Comm. College, (Monday and Tuesday);
- * Lenawee Intermediate School District, Adrian (Monday and Tuesday);
- * Monroe County CES, Monroe (Monday and Tuesday);
- * Owosso Hospital, Owosso (Tuesday);
- * St. Clair Comm. College, Port Huron (Tuesday);
- * Glen Oaks Community College, Centreville (Tuesday only) and;
- * Tuscola, Caro (Monday and Tuesday).

The teleconference will help inform soybean producers of how checkoff dollars are managed, who makes the decisions, how programs are determined, and how the checkoff benefits producers. Updates of producer-funded soy diesel and production research projects and changes in European and Asian marketing strategies will be provided. The meetings will include a soybean market analysis and strategy recommendations for the upcoming year.

United Soybean Board members, as well as university and industry professionals, will

participate in a panel discussion to address those key issues.

The town hall meeting format will allow producers at any site to ask questions regarding any topic concerning the national soybean checkoff program through a toll-free number direct to the farmer-panel.

The town hall meetings are a result of a successful pilot broadcast in five states and 56 locations in late 1992. **More details and registrations can be obtained by calling 1-800-462-6866 prior to Feb., 20.**



2



Coping With Michigan's Corn Dilemma

Living in the Great Lakes region means putting up with fickle weather patterns. That was made pretty clear in the 1980's when Michigan farmers suffered through both torrential rains and severe drought. The 1990s aren't starting out much better. This past year was a disaster for many corn producers, as a cold, wet growing season meant the crop did not mature and/or could not be harvested.

One of the missions of your Farm Bureau organization is to be responsive to the needs of farmers when they face a crop disaster. Through the fall and winter, we were in close contact with county leaders in order to gauge the full extent of the corn crop losses. In response to the severe financial distress of farmers, we asked the USDA to allow grade standards to be included in the eligibility requirements used to qualify Michigan corn producers for disaster payments. Unfortunately, the USDA indicated that was not going to happen.

As the next step, Farm Bureau began working with Rep. Dave Camp (R-Midland), Michigan's representative on the House Agriculture Committee, and Sen. Don Riegle (D-Flint) to develop legislation that will require the USDA to make disaster payments to producers who suffer weather-related losses resulting from the reduced quality of their crops.

I don't think there's any doubt that there's a growing recognition among the Michigan congressional delegation of the problems faced by corn farmers. But, it's going to take a lot more votes than just those from Michigan congressmen to put these bills through Congress. We need to develop an educational effort directed at other lawmakers. We need to build some understanding of our problem with the new USDA Secretary. And we need to drive home the urgency of this problem with other members of the new Clinton Administration.

As we continue to work for legislative action, we have also asked Rep. Camp to facilitate the final corn deficiency payment (which should be the maximum of 50 cents) so that it will be made available in early February instead of early March. And we have asked him to review the status of the FmHA low-interest disaster loan program. In 1986, the loan could be used to restructure existing debt. But the loan now can apparently only be used to pay off operating bills.

Through the years, your Farm Bureau organization has shown that it is very responsive to the genuine disaster needs of Michigan agriculture. The weather-related problems with the corn crop are unlike anything we have faced before. Farm Bureau will continue to search for creative and appropriate solutions to the financial distress facing our farmers.

Jack Laurie
Jack Laurie, President
Michigan Farm Bureau

Annual Farm Womens' Symposium - March 16 - 18

Excitement is stirring among Michigan farm women and for good cause. The second annual Farm Womens' Symposium will be held March 16, 17 and 18 at the Ann Arbor Hilton and is expected to be better than ever. Last year's pilot project was received by the 50 participants with such enthusiasm that the planning committee, made up of farm women from across the state and MSU Extension advisors, have planned on attendance doubling.

The year's program highlights include topics such as "Demystifying Politics," "Having a Voice With Local Media" and a stress management program that will enable participants to help understand their reactions to stress and respond in a healthier fashion. The registration fee for the entire three day conference (lodging and most meals) is \$165, including materials. Reduced registration is available for participants not wishing to attend all three days. For more information contact: Rebecca Finneran, Kent/MSU Extension, 836 Fuller, N.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49503, Phone: (616) 774-3265. Or Sue Anne Shoemaker, Conference Treasurer, 3025 6 Mile Rd., Grand Rapids, MI 49504, Phone: (616) 784-0058.



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In Brief...

Engler Appoints Air Pollution Control Commission

Gov. John Engler has announced the appointment of Michigan Farm Bureau member Matthew K. Moser to the Air Pollution Control Commission. The commission is empowered to promulgate rules, issue permits, and issue orders for control of air pollution. Members are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Moser owns and operates Moser Farms Nursery, Inc., and is also the general manager of Orchard Hills Greenhouse, Inc. He is currently a member of the Coloma Charter Township Planning Commission and was appointed to represent local government replacing Janice Wilson, of Fraser, for a term expiring Nov. 15, 1993. Moser is also a member of the National Federation of Independent Business, and the Southwest Michigan Growers Association.

Espy - USDA Won't Immediately Close Field Offices

USDA Secretary Mike Espy said, he'll start cutting costs from the top in Washington before closing hundreds of field offices as his predecessor had planned. Former USDA Secretary Edward Madigan had proposed closing about 1,200 of the 14,000 field offices to help streamline the nation's fourth-largest agency, which has 124,000 employees and spends \$62 billion a year.

"What I'm first going to do before we start closing offices in the field is to examine the operation in Washington, D.C. Before you start cutting farmers' services and local offices in the rural areas, you ought to send a message first that we ought to clean up our own shop in Washington." He said, he eventually would try to consolidate field offices and make the agency's national computer system more effective.

Russia's Farm Credit Defaults Rise To \$245.9 Million

Two banks filed three farm credit delinquency notices totaling \$3.4 million against Russia recently, bringing Moscow's total delinquencies to \$245.9 million, a USDA spokeswoman said. Russia has been suspended from USDA's farm credit programs for almost two months for defaulting on farm credit guarantee payments. Private banks issue Russia the loans to buy U.S. farm commodities, but USDA is responsible for the loans in case of default.

USDA said, Russia has not indicated when it will resume payments on the debt. USDA Secretary Mike Espy said, he is working to clear up the problem soon. Russia and other ex-Soviet republics have received almost \$5 billion in farm credit guarantees from USDA.

Critical Food Safety Matter Up To Court

When a California court decided last year that the Delaney Clause of the Pure Food and Drug Act would prevail over the Environmental Protection Agency's policy of negligible risk, the Bush Administration did not ask for administrative review of the court decision, as requested by a number of groups including the American Farm Bureau Federation.

The National Agricultural Chemicals Association has requested a Supreme Court review of that decision. The Supreme Court will meet to decide whether to review the case on Feb. 19. AFBF has filed a brief supporting review of the case. The court's decision whether or not it will hear the review is likely to be revealed on Feb. 22, according to Mark Maslyn, assistant director of the AFBF Governmental Relations Division.

Should the review fail to reverse the decision of the California court, all pesticides suspected of being carcinogenic could have their tolerances revoked. Any pesticide without an approved tolerance cannot legally be used. This would mean a lot of pesticides would no longer be on the market, with disastrous consequences for agriculture, Maslyn said.

Meanwhile, congressional staffers are planning to introduce the Food Quality Assurance Act of 1993 in this session of Congress. The bill would, among other provisions, establish a policy of "negligible risk" for pesticides and repeal the Delaney Clause. Farm Bureau and a number of other organizations helped develop this legislation last year and will work for its passage again this time.

Corn Growers Look For Ethanol To Remain in Favor

There is some apprehension that a Clinton Administration order to suspend some Bush Administration proposals not yet announced in the *Federal Register* could include the plan to ensure the role of ethanol in reformulated fuel requirements of the Clean Air Act. Corn growers say they expect Clinton to allow the ethanol use in new gasoline formulas to go ahead as written, despite the temporary hold placed on it and other unpublished regulations by budget director, Leon Panetta.

Keith Heard, vice president of the National Corn Growers Association, says Clinton endorsed a role for ethanol in reformulated fuel during the campaign and has given no sign of intention to renege on that support now, according to a *Knight-Ridder News* report.

However, the higher visibility of environmentalists in the new administration has alerted corn growers to possible uncertainty and will cause them to assess where they stand with respect to the ethanol issue, according to Heard. Backers of ethanol have contended the claims of environmentalists against ethanol were not scientifically justified and that increased ethanol use would improve air quality.

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CAPITOL

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Property Tax Cut

MFB Position:

MFB has not taken a position on SB 1. Policy supports property tax reduction offset with other sources of revenue which do not result in a increase in tax revenue.

MFB Contact:

Ron Nelson, Ext. 2043

Medical Malpractice

MFB Position:

Support both bills and encouraged their adoption. Farm Bureau policy excerpts:

Farm Bureau members have a real concern for their family's good health. Adequate health care is becoming unaffordable for many Americans and is virtually nonexistent in many rural areas. The American public perceives the health care/health insurance system to be in a crisis. We believe that access to health care is a basic human right and that government should have a role in providing that care for those who have no other options.

We do not support an all-encompassing national health care program, but favor working through the current system of insurers and prepaid health care providers.

We support:

- A cap on malpractice settlements.
- Elimination of pain and suffering settlements.

Action Needed:

Call your legislators now and let them know you support these bills. Things are moving fast but letters are also appropriate until the governor signs medical malpractice reform. The legislators have taken the first bold steps and they now must be supported by grass roots endorsement of their efforts.

We had been looking at years before action seemed possible. Now we are talking months and maybe even weeks. Urge your legislator to make her or his vote count now.

MFB CONTACT:

Howard Kelly, Ext. 2044

Sen. DiNello (D-East Detroit) is sponsoring SB. 1 that would reduce the S.E.V. The bill has no provisions to replace lost funds. The proposal would continue county, township & school bonding at 50 percent of S.E.V..

Special Note: There are at least six additional separate proposals on property tax reform that have been proposed. More could surface in the future. We will continue to watch the progress of this important issue.

S.B. 270 sponsored by Sen. Dan DeGrow (R-Port Huron) and H.B. 4067, sponsored by Rep. Michael Griffin (D-Jackson) were drafted to reform the medical malpractice system in Michigan. The Senate Judiciary Committee planned to start debate of S.B. 270 at its meeting on Feb. 4, 1993. The Legislature appears to be in a true bipartisan mood and action on the floor of the House and Senate will be swift. Executive office aides have indicated the governor is also supporting these bills.

Provisions in the bills would:

- Limit contingency fees in medical liability cases.
- Remove exceptions to the cap on noneconomic damages and limits the \$250,000 cap to each incident.
- Defines expert witness.
- Requires plaintiffs to notify defendants of the suit and its legal basis 180 days before filing.
- Allows countersuits by prevailing defendants.

In an unusual move, the legislators writing these bills have inserted language into the bills which makes clear the need to change the state's medical liability laws. They said in section 291B:

"The Legislature finds and declares that there's a serious health care litigation problem in this state, resulting in the high costs of defensive medicine and medical malpractice insurance. This severely threatens access to, and cost control of, the health care delivery system for the people of this state and results in a breakdown of the health care delivery system, severe hardships for the medically indigent, and a denial of access for the economically disadvantaged."

The legislators have heard the people of Michigan. Recent polls confirm that Michigan voters overwhelmingly endorse changes in the state's medical liability system. In regional surveys of registered voters, 97 percent in the Upper Peninsula, 91 percent in Wayne County, and 86 percent in East Central Michigan said that the cost of medical liability insurance is driving up the cost of health care dramatically in Michigan.

Another poll taken just before the November elections showed that two-thirds of the voters surveyed believed that the state Legislature should pass medical liability reform.

In numerous other polls, state residents consistently favor medical liability reform, believing that skyrocketing medical liability costs reduce access to health care, and conclude that the state's medical liability climate is the key reason for the difficulty in recruiting physicians in both rural and urban communities.

Former Sen. William Sederburg, now a pollster and vice president of Public Sector Consultants says that over the last two years, the belief that Michigan desperately needs medical liability reform, both to increase access and reduce costs, has solidified among state residents. It's only a matter of time before the Legislature reflects the consensus that is evident in public opinion.

That time has arrived. The philosophical majority in the legislature will pass a bill but they need to hear from Farm Bureau members so they can feel confident enough to withstand any opposition to the passage of these bills.

This is tort reform that Farm Bureau members through their policies have been urging for years. Let them know you support their bipartisan efforts to enact meaningful reform.

MUSTFA

MFB Position:

Michigan Farm Bureau policy recommends that the fund be continued and amended to allow access to the fund for clean-up of any leaking underground storage tank.

The bill was introduced on Jan. 13, 1993, the first day of this legislative session and reported out of the Senate Natural and Environmental Affairs Committee on Jan. 27 and passed the Senate on Jan. 28 unanimously.

MFB CONTACT:

Vicki Pontz, Ext. 2046

S.B. 45, sponsored by Sen. Paul Wartner (R-Portage) offers general amendments to the Michigan Underground Storage Tank Financial Assurance Act. The amendments include redefining "owner" of an underground storage tank to exclude regulated financial institutions. The bill requires that a detailed billing along with a specific itemized list of the work performed by the contractor be made available to the administrator of the fund. The bill also clarifies that the owner or operator may receive money from the fund for a release that originates from an aboveground portion of a petroleum underground storage tank system under certain circumstances.

Of importance to Farm Bureau is the extension of the current sunset to Feb. 15, 2003. The fund currently generates approximately 55 million dollars per year through a 7/8 cent per gallon environmental fee on sales of refined petroleum products (The charge would be extended to include ethanol and methanol). Under current revenue estimates, the fund is projected to have a deficit of 81.6 million dollars when the funding mechanism is repealed in January 1995.

According to the Michigan Department of Management and Budget (DMB), the fund will remain insolvent unless the Michigan Legislature approves, and the governor signs into law, an extension of the revenue collection period and/or provides a mechanism to increase revenues available to pay claims under the program.

Michigan Groundwater and Freshwater Protection Act

M.F.B. POSITION:

MFB policy supports a comprehensive statewide plan to protect groundwater and surface water from agricultural chemicals and fertilizers that includes voluntary, incentive driven programs. MFB policy recommends that MDA be given primary authority and responsibility to respond to agriculturally contaminated groundwater with site specific recommendations to the producer to mitigate contamination. MFB also supports participation from agricultural producers in funding agricultural non-point source programs, but only when it's matched by equal contributions from public funding sources.

Farm Bureau policy also calls for programs to abate nitrate contamination to address all possible sources of nitrates including all uses of nitrogen fertilizers, animal manure, septic systems, urban runoff, nitrate occurring naturally, etc.

Farm Bureau generally supports the concepts in the bill but will seek several amendments to include a "general fund match" for dollars to run the programs, and alternative response mechanisms for nitrate contamination to include all sources. Farm Bureau will also request that a sunset provision be added to the collection of funds.

MFB CONTACT:

Vicki Pontz, Ext. 2046

S.B. 74, sponsored by Sen. George McManus (R-Traverse City) requires the director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) to develop and promote voluntary groundwater stewardship practices designed to prevent contamination of groundwater by pesticides or nitrogen fertilizers. The director shall also develop a voluntary evaluation system to help farmers determine the groundwater impact potential of their farming practices (The Farmstead Assessment System).

The director shall establish a broad based groundwater advisory council to establish educational programs, coordinate technical assistance programs, and provide inter-agency coordination of groundwater programs. The council shall include agriculture producers. Local stewardship teams may be established to implement groundwater protection programs.

A stewardship program will be established. Those farmers who have completed an on-site evaluation and develop a stewardship plan which would be protective of groundwater will be eligible to receive grants to implement the plan and be protected from liability for contamination unless he/she is grossly negligent.

A Freshwater Protection Fund will be established by requiring pesticide registrants to pay an annual groundwater protection fee for each product registered and nitrogen fertilizer distributors to pay a fee for each ton of fertilizer sold. The proposed fees are as follows:

- Specialty (non-agricultural) pesticides - \$100 per product
- Agricultural pesticides - 0.75% previous year's sale (\$150 minimum)
- Specialty (non-agricultural) fertilizers - \$100 per product
- Nitrogen fertilizers (agricultural) - \$0.65 per ton sold

The total fund would be limited to 3.5 million dollars. The fund would pay direct assistance to farmers such as cost share programs for persons implementing groundwater practices or groundwater protection rules; cost share programs for persons who notify the director of potential sources of contamination; closure of improperly constructed wells; recycling programs for specialty and agriculture pesticide containers; pesticide pickup programs; monitoring of private well water for agricultural chemicals; and removal of contaminated soils and waters. Indirect assistance programs such as education and technical assistance to pesticide users, implementation of on-site evaluation systems and stewardship practices, and research programs would also come from the fund. Administrative costs to include monitoring, developing and enforcing groundwater protection rules and management of pesticide sales information will be limited to 20% of the fund annually.

STATUS:

S.B. 74 was introduced on Jan. 13. Discussions continue with the sponsor and the Department of Agriculture. No formal hearing dates have been set.

4

Weather

30-Day and 90-Day Forecasts Both Calling for Warmer and Drier Than Normal

January was warmer and wetter than normal over nearly all of the state. Temperatures for the month ranged from 2-7 degrees above the 30-year normals, while precipitation varied from around 75 percent of normal in scattered sections of southern Upper and northern Lower Michigan to as much as 200 percent of normal in central and southern sections of the Lower Peninsula. As mentioned in the last column, several outbreaks of wet, heavy snow and/or freezing rain kept late corn harvest at a virtual standstill.

The relatively tranquil, dry weather that set in during the last week of January may be a sign of things to come. The new National Weather Service 90-day outlook for February through April calls for warmer and drier than normal weather over much of the Great Lakes region including Michigan.

The 30-day outlook is very similar, with warmer than normal temperatures and near normal precipitation expected. I personally would not be surprised to see below normal precipitation during February also. These outlooks come as good news to those still waiting to harvest corn.

As is the case with many weather scenarios, however, warmer and drier than normal weather in the late winter could cause overwintering crops to come out of dormancy earlier than normal, leaving them vulnerable to subsequent cold temperatures should that occur.

Michigan Weather Summary

1/1/93 to 1/31/93	Temperature		Precipitation	
	Observed Mean	Dev. From Normal	Actual (inch.)	Normal (inch.)
Alpena	22.0	+ 3.1	1.24	1.69
Bad Axe	24.8	+ 2.8	2.81	1.56
Detroit	29.1	+ 6.4	3.67	1.74
Escanaba	19.8	+ 3.2	1.13	1.82
Flint	26.8	+ 4.9	2.28	1.74
Grand Rapids	26.6	+ 4.9	3.45	2.44
Houghton	18.5	+ 4.0	2.86	2.02
Houghton Lake	22.1	+ 3.4	1.85	1.69
Jackson	26.6	+ 2.7	1.10	1.70
Lansing	26.6	+ 4.7	2.71	1.70
Marquette	17.8	+ 6.8	2.21	2.02
Muskegon	26.6	+ 3.1	2.29	2.38
Pellston	20.9	+ 4.6	2.49	1.91
Saginaw	25.7	+ 3.3	3.86	1.56
Sault Ste. Marie	17.4	+ 3.4	2.21	1.82
South Bend	28.5	+ 5.3	3.27	2.44
Traverse City	24.0	+ 2.4	1.96	1.91
Vestaburg	24.8	+ 2.6	4.40	1.68

Normals are based on district averages.

Jeff Andresen, Ag Meteorologist, MSU

Michigan and Major Commodity Area Extended Weather Outlook

T - Temp.	2/15.....2/28	2/15.....4/30
P - Precip.	T.....P	T.....P
Michigan	A.....B	A.....B
W. Corn Belt	A.....N	A.....N
E. Corn Belt	A.....N	N/A.....N
Wint. Wheat Belt	N.....N/A	N/B.....N/A
Spr. Wheat Belt	A.....N/B	A.....N/B
Pac. NW Wheat	A.....B	A.....B
Delta	N.....N	N/B.....N
Southeast	N.....N	N/B.....N
San Joaquin	A.....N	A.....N

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

1992 Michigan Fruit Production Better Than Expected

Fruit production was reduced by poor weather that prevailed throughout most of the 1992 growing season, according to the Federal/State Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service.

A cool spring ended with harsh frosts in late May. Summer was marked by below normal temperatures and excessive cloud cover. Warmth and sunshine in early October, however, benefitted some varieties of apples and grapes. Overall, production exceeded early expectations and was at or above 1991 levels.

Apple production reached one billion pounds, up eight percent from a year earlier. The preliminary farm-level value of the crop was 94 million dollars, down 6 percent from 1991. The estimated yield was 18,700 pounds per acre. Michigan ranked third among all states in apple output. Washington and New York orchards produced 4.9 billion pounds and 1.17 billion pounds of apples, respectively.

Tart cherry production in the Great Lakes State reached 245 million pounds. The utilized production of 235 million pounds constituted 75 percent of the national total. The yield in Michigan leaped to 7,230 pounds per bearing acre, up from 3,200 pounds per acre in 1991.

Michigan was also the leading state in blueberry production, for which official USDA estimates were made for the first time in ten years. The 34 million pound output was 30 percent of the U.S. total. The farm-level value of this fruit exceeded 27 million dollars. About 70 percent of Michigan blueberries were frozen or canned. New Jersey growers produced 24 million pounds of blueberries.

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- 11 Major Market and Michigan Cash Livestock Reports
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WATZ	Alpena	1450	5:30 am	12:15 pm	WWGZ	Lapeer	1530		12:15 pm
WPZA	Ann Arbor	1050	6:15 am	12:05 pm	WNBY	Newberry	92.5		12:15 pm
WLEW	Bad Axe	1340	6:30 am	12:50 pm	WOAP	Owosso	1080	6:15 am	12:30 pm
WHFB	Benton Harbor	1060		12:30 pm	WHAK	Rogers City	960	7:10 am	12:15 pm
WKYO	Caro	1360	6:15 am	12:45 pm	WSJ	St. Johns	1580	6:15 am	12:15 pm
WTVB	Coldwater	1590	5:45 am		WMLM	St. Louis	1540	6:06 am	12:20 pm
WDOW	Dowagiac	1440	6:15 am	12:15 pm	WSGW	Saginaw	790	5:55 am	12:15 pm
WACY	Fenton	1160	6:15 am	12:15 pm	WMIC	Sandusky	660	6:15 am	12:45 pm
WGHN	Grand Haven	1370/92.1	5:45 am	12:15 pm	WKZC	Scottville	95.9	5:45 am	12:30 pm
WPLB	Greenville	1380	6:15 am	12:45 pm	WCSY	South Haven	940		12:15 pm
WBCH	Hastings	1220	6:15 am	12:30 pm	WKJC	Tawas City	104.7		12:45 pm
WCSR	Hillsdale	1340	6:45 am	12:45 pm	WLKM	Three Rivers	1510/95.9	6:15 am	12:15 pm
WHTC	Holland	1450		12:15 pm	WTCM	Traverse City	580	5:55 am	12:40 pm
WKZO	Kalamazoo	590		12:15 pm					

Serving Michigan Farm Families is Our Only Business

MSU's ANR Week Agriculture Programs Will Focus on Microtel, Trade, Crop Production and Manure Management

Agriculture and Natural Resources Week (ANR) Week, Feb. 26 - March 6 at Michigan State University, will offer several programs that may benefit farm managers.

Among the programs are Microtel workshops March 2 and 3. Each workshop, limited to eight farms, costs \$25. The workshops will run from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in 403 Agriculture Hall. The registration deadline is Feb. 24.

The first workshop will focus on using Microtel for income and expense transactions. The second will focus on using the Microtel payroll program developed by the MSU Telfarm program. **For more information, contact Nancy Harms at MSU by calling (517) 355-4700.**

Producing organic food at the community level will be the focus of a session from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 2 in A101 Plant and Soil Sciences Building. The program will address local food security, distribution and economic development.

The program is free, but a luncheon hosted by the Michigan Organic Growers Advancement Project and the Organic Growers of Michigan is \$10. The luncheon registration deadline is Feb. 22. **To register or for information, contact Laura DeLind at MSU by calling (517) 353-2950.**

Fostering further collaboration between the farmer and MSU on sustainable agricultural practices will be discussed from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 3 in A101 Plant and Soil Sciences Building. The program will review past and future cooperative activities between MSU agronomists and the Michigan Agricultural Stewardship Association.

Registration is required by Feb. 22. The \$10 fee includes lunch. **To register or to get more information, contact John Durling at MSU by calling (517) 355-0196.**

Doing a better job environmentally will be the focus of the Michigan Manure Management Conference March 3. It will run from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the MSU Kellogg Center Big Ten Room A.

Experts will talk about manure management costs, trends in manure handling equipment, results of research, and educational and demonstration programs in Michigan. Manure management practices recommended in the Right to Farm Act will also be discussed.

Registration by Feb. 19 will cost \$15 (after that date, \$20). **To register, call Jerri Wardwell at MSU at (517) 355-0209. Conference details can be obtained from Lee Jacobs by calling (517)-353-7273.**

International trade and Michigan agriculture will be discussed from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. March 4 in the MSU Kellogg Center Auditorium. The morning session will focus on international trade policy.

Speakers will include a national expert on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

In the afternoon, experts will discuss international trade and how Michigan producers can participate in foreign markets.

More information about this program can be obtained from Jake Ferris at MSU by calling (517) 355-0144. The program is free.

Participants can attend the President's Luncheon from 11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. The cost will be \$12 per person. **Luncheon registration must be made by Feb. 19 by contacting Pam Lamb at MSU at (517) 355-0117.**

These programs are among the more than 80 educational programs, meeting and activities on agriculture, forestry, gardening, outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship that will be held during ANR Week.

A free ANR Week program guide is available from the local county MSU Cooperative Extension Service office. **Free copies can also be obtained by writing to the MSU Bulletin Office, 10B Agriculture Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824-1039.**

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Belding	Jerry Gallagher	616-761-3243
Birch Run	Con Agra Berger & Co.	517-624-9321
Breckenridge	B&W Co-Op	517-842-3104
Carson City	Harvey Milling Company	517-584-3466
Conklin	Arends Farm Service	616-899-2136
Constantine	Ron Weston	616-435-8219
Corunna	Clyde McLosky	517-743-3633
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Dowagiac	Joe Van Tuyle	616-782-8275
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New Lothrop	Bob Hajek	313-638-5281
Owosso	Anderson Fertilizer Services, Inc.	517-723-5205
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Reading	Dick Heffelfinger	517-283-2444
Richmond	Farmers Elevator	313-727-3025
Rockford	Ron Porter	616-874-8196
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Silverwood	John Ferkowicz	517-761-7217
Sunfield	Mueller Bean Co.	517-566-8031
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CPO

6 Market Outlook...

CORN

Corn futures are expected to remain relatively soft and drift sideways going into the spring. There is always the chance of weather markets in the spring and summer, but with the large expected carryover for this year, the upside potential is not as great as the last two years.

It's not that there's no positive news in the corn market. The problem is that there is a lot of corn for the market to absorb. The demand side of the corn market has been strong. Feed usage is up about 8 percent so far this year and exports year to date are up 32 percent, and are expected to be up over 4 percent for the year.

While futures are expected to stay fairly flat, there is some potential in the cash corn market. The basis is wide and expected to narrow, and the spreads between corn futures contracts show the market is looking to pay storage. But for many Michigan farmers, the corn pricing alternatives either were or are few. In order to take full advantage of the above, you need to have cash corn on hand.

Strategy: For those few who have storable corn, consider storing to take advantage of the narrowing of the basis. A hedge, with on-farm storage, would pay storage and increase your returns relative to today's prices. But with the corn market at today's low levels, there is less downside risk than

SOYBEANS

The soybean market is also expected to stay in a fairly flat trading range at least until spring. However, there are several differences between the soybean situation and the corn situation. First, the soybean market has had a nice rally since harvest. Secondly, the soybean market is telling you it will not pay to store.

The spreads between futures contracts are tight and there is not enough room left in the basis to pay storage. This means you do not want to be in the cash market no matter which direction you think prices are going.

TABLE EGG MARKET

Allan Rahn and Henry Larzelere

Egg prices in late January were trading in the 74 cent range (New York, Grade A, large, white, in cartons, to retailers), 5 cents per dozen above year earlier levels. Although prices have advanced from their upper 60 cent range after the first of the year, they are expected to soften again in February. Lower feed costs have cut egg production costs around 1.5 cents per dozen from a year ago.

The size of the table egg laying flock on January 1, 1993 was 240 million birds, unchanged from the previous year. Table egg production during December was 1 percent greater than a year ago as the flock is slightly more productive. On Jan. 1, 1993, the number of layers being induced molted

Dry Bean Stocks Exceed Production

Commercial elevators in Michigan held 4,350,000 hundredweight (cwt.) of dry beans in storage as of Dec. 31, 1992, according to the Federal/State Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service.

This year's stocks exceed the 1992 crop production of 3,875,000 cwt. The record high stocks carry-over from the 1991 crop is the major factor contributing to stocks exceeding production. This is only the second time that Dec. 31 stocks have exceeded production since stocks estimates began in 1983.

Carry-over stocks account for all beans in commercial off-farm storage and include a small portion of non-Michigan grown product. The quantity on hand included 3,600,000 cwt. of navy beans and 750,000

Seasonal Commodity Price Trends

Wheat	↓
Corn	↔
Soybeans	↔
Hogs	↔
Cattle	↔

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

upside potential. Consider the government loan to help with cash flow needs.

For those who had to sell their corn out of the field or who will not be able to store into the spring, the alternatives are few. One could buy a call to stay in the market, but in a sideways market the odds are not good that they will help add to your returns without a sharp upwards weather market. And selling a call, which may have good returns in a sideways market, is too risky without having any cash to offset losses if the market does rally.

Strategy: If you think the odds are better of prices going up, you should deliver cash beans and switch to either a basis contract, a minimum price contract, or buy a call. Remember, a basis contract gives no downside protection.

If you feel the odds are prices will drop, consider selling your cash beans, a minimum price contract, or selling cash and buying a call. Many elevators are offering these alternatives and are willing to work with you just to get you to move your grain through them. Check with several to see what they have to offer.

was 4.8 percent, and 22.2 percent of the flock had completed an induced molt. The number of egg-type hatching eggs in incubators on Jan. 1 was up 7 percent from a year ago, but the pullet chick hatch during December -- the more significant flock size change indicator -- was down 10 percent.

Egg prices are expected to weaken slightly in February and average around 70 cents per dozen. Egg prices in March should advance again and average in the 72-74 cent range as market conditions reflect the upcoming Easter period demand strength. Egg prices are expected to be relatively weak in the second quarter with the price lows falling in May. A quarterly average in the low 60 cent range is likely.

cwt. of all other classes. Stocks on hand Dec. 31, 1991, included 4,000,000 cwt. of navy beans and 900,000 cwt. of all other classes. An estimate of dry beans held on farms is not included in this report.

Dry bean stocks are not included in the USDA Agricultural Statistics Board system of grain stocks reports. Dry bean stocks data in this report were tabulated from information supplied by elevator operators in the Grain Dealers Daily Position Report filed monthly with the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

Dry bean stock reports are issued twice a year and reflect quantities held in commercial storage on Aug. 31 and Dec. 31. Stocks on hand as of Aug. 31, 1993, will be released Sept. 30, 1993.

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

WHEAT

The wheat market has probably topped out, at least for the near term. For the most part, winter wheat conditions are very good across the primary wheat growing areas of the country.

Yields are expected to be up and abandonment is expected to be down. And while spring wheat yields are not expected to meet last year's excellent levels, winter wheat yields will most likely more than offset it. At this point, next year's demand is as big a question as supply.

Strategy: On the pricing front, it is hard to justify holding old crop wheat any

HOGS

Hog slaughter was lower in December and January than the December Hogs and Pigs Report indicated it would be. At the same time, weights would indicate producers are current. It may be there just were not as many hogs as thought, or gains have been slow.

At the same time, demand has been fairly strong. These two together have kept prices

CATTLE

On Jan. 29 the USDA released the Jan. 1 quarterly 13-State and monthly 7-State Cattle-On-Feed Reports. They were bearish. Inventory and placements were higher than expected and marketings were lower.

Cattle on feed were up 7-8 percent in the two reports relative to last year. Placements were up 5 percent in the October-December period and up 16 percent in December in the counted states. Marketings were 98 percent of the previous year in both reports.

The quarterly reports also have weight breakdowns. Steers over 1,100 pounds were down 9 percent and heifers down 13 percent compared to last year on Jan. 1. However, while showing we are current and explaining some of the strong prices we've seen, most of these are gone by now. Steers and heifers between 900-1,099

DAIRY MARKET

Larry G. Hamm

The dairy markets are into their winter seasonal decline. The large 50 cent drop in the Minnesota-Wisconsin (M-W) price in December is now winding its way into Class I prices and into producer checks. Another sizeable drop in the M-W will occur in January. This reflects continuing weakness in the wholesale markets for cheddar cheese.

As of the last week in January, the prices of barrels and 40 pound blocks on the National Cheese Exchange had fallen to \$1.12 and \$1.16 a pound, respectively. Last year (1992), the lowest that cheese prices got was \$1.1350 for barrels and \$1.1525 for blocks. These cheese prices resulted in a M-W low of \$10.98 in March of 1992. Current cheese prices for barrel cheese are lower than last year. Logic suggests that this spring's M-W will go below \$10.98.

There is, however, another market force that may temper this spring's price reduction. There currently is strength in the dry milk product markets, especially the nonfat dry milk market (NFDM).

With cheese prices this low, milk is moving into butter-powder plants because the manufacturing profit margin is now tilted toward NFDM and butter production. This is a normal pattern which in the past led to the CCC having to purchase NFDM because commercial markets were unable to absorb the increasing supply of NFDM.

FARM BUSINESS OUTLOOK

longer, but I suspect there are few Michigan producers who have any left.

On the new crop side, the pricing decisions rest a lot on how much risk you are willing or able to take. Prices are about what fundamentals would project. At this point, watch for rallies to start some pricing, especially if you have priced any on previous rallies.

several dollars higher than expected. As of the end of January, futures contracts out through December are on the higher side of the range than fundamentals would project. This means there is probably more down side risk than upside potential.

Strategy: If you don't have much, or any, of your future production price protected, consider pricing some on rallies.

pounds were up 3 percent and 9 percent, respectively; we'll be seeing these from now through March or so.

Steers and heifers in the 700-899 pound range were listed as up 18 percent and 13 percent, respectively. These will make up the bulk of the production in April-June. Steers and heifers between 500-699 were up 10 percent and 12 percent, respectively. These will come to market this summer and early fall.

Strategy: While the strong demand we have been seeing will help, prices are likely to drop off sharply from now through summer as reflected by the futures markets. The Jan. 1 Cattle Inventory Report was released on Feb. 4. It should give us a better idea of the feeder market and the year's cattle markets.

The fact that NFDM markets are firm in spite of the shift to NFDM production requires further market analysis. The new factor affecting the market for dairy products is the continued active use of the Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP).

Before leaving office on Jan. 20, outgoing Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan announced that bonuses for exports of NFDM, butter, and cheeses were available for 1993. In a very significant move, the former secretary allocated bonuses for 204,020 metric tons (450 million pounds) of whole milk and/or NFDM powder and 48,415 metric tons (107 million pounds) of butterfat. This announcement allows butter/powder plants to know there is a market for current production of NFDM and whole milk powder.

The magnitude of these DEIP announcements is staggering. The 1993 DEIP allocations for milk powders are nearly double what they were in 1992. If all of the 450 million pounds of 1993 DEIP milk powder bonuses were used for NFDM, it would be more than half of all the NFDM produced for human use in the United States in 1992.

The DEIP sales announcement is a major market firming factor. Even with cheese prices weakening, powder prices should firm, preventing the M-W from falling more dramatically over the next few months. If production backs-off, this spring's price lows may not go much below last year.

7 Agricultural Income Tax Reminders

Myron P. Kelsey, MSU Ag. Econ. Dept.

As farmers work through the tax filing season for 1992, there are still potential areas to examine to minimize the state and federal income tax load. Most farmers should minimize their 1992 taxes as much as possible, since the 1992 growing season was such a disaster, along with low crop and livestock prices.

These will have a bigger affect on reducing 1993 farm income than they were in 1992. However, recognize that where possible, it probably does not make sense to reduce taxable income below zero so that your

personal exemptions and the standard deduction are not fully utilized.

Some key items to take full advantage of when reporting 1992 income:

(a) Utilize the direct expense deduction (Section 179 deduction) to its maximum in filing your 1992 return. It can be taken in lieu of regular depreciation on up to \$10,000 of capital purchases of farm personal property and certain specialized real estate items such as silos, livestock facilities, and grain storage structures.

Select for the 179 deduction those capital purchases with the longest Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System (MACRS) lives and depreciate those with the shortest lives to obtain the most rapid deductions. These lines can be found in a table in *The Farmers Tax Guide*, IRS Publication 225.

(b) On depreciable capital purchases in excess of the 179 deduction, utilize the useful life and depreciation method that is most appropriate for your situation. Where more deductions are needed, choose MACRS with its guideline lives. Where deductions are not needed, choose ADS (alternate depreciation system) which has a slightly longer life.

(c) If you do not participate in some form of a tax deferred retirement program, there is still time to set up an IRA or SEP (simplified employee plan) and receive a 1992 tax deduction. You would be eligible for an IRA tax deferred deduction of up to \$2,000 if neither you or your spouse are eligible for any other tax deferred program or your adjusted gross income is less than \$40,000 (there is a phase out of the deduction between \$40,000 and \$50,000).

An SEP program may allow a greater deduction, since the maximum contribution is 15 percent of net profit as reported on the Schedule F or C. Employees who are age 21 or over and have worked for you in at least 3 of the last 5 years must be covered for an equal or greater percentage of their wages.

(d) Choose the automobile expense deduction which gives you the greater benefit. The standard mileage rate is 28 cents per mile (also for 1993). This would require some kind of record of the business miles. The alternative is a record of actual expenses and depreciation divided by the business miles percentage.

(e) Scrounge everywhere you can think of for unrecorded bills and receipts. Expenses tend to be made in a lot of small expenditures which can be easily lost or forgotten.

In planning for 1993, set up your accounting system to improve on the recording and summarizing of your expenses. Explore alternatives early in the year for hiring your

On depreciable capital purchases in excess of the 179 deduction utilize the useful life and depreciation method that is most appropriate for your situation.



Dealing With The Loss of the Health Insurance Premium Tax Deduction

If you're in the process of getting your 1992 taxes prepared, remember that as a self-employed individual you can only claim the 25 percent deduction on health insurance premiums for the first six months of 1992, since the previous deduction expired July 1, 1992, according to Grace Ellen Rice of the American Farm Bureau.

Rice said that despite numerous legislative attempts to maintain and/or expand the 25 percent health insurance premium deduction in 1992, all efforts failed. The future of such a deduction isn't very clear either.

"I don't see Congress moving on any such legislation until later this spring," said Rice. "Whether they make the deduction retroactive so that a self-employed taxpayer could file an amended return is questionable. Everything hinges on when the economic growth package moves, or when a health care reform proposal is introduced that could possibly deal with this whole issue."

According to Dr. Bruce Kirchoff, professor at the New Jersey Institute of Technology and former chief economist for the U.S. Small Business Administration, more than 400,000 self-employed Americans and their dependents will drop health insurance in 1993 as a result of the loss of the deduction.

"There has been so little publicity about this issue, that many self-employed Americans are just now finding out about this issue," said Kirchoff. "Congress and President Clinton should move at once to restore this deduction. Any health care reform package should increase the deduction to 100 percent to provide tax fairness and equal treatment for the self-employed."

MSU Telfarm Director John Jones says there are few options for dealing with the loss of the itemized deduction at this point. One option, however, that should be thoroughly reviewed, is that of formally hiring your spouse, and including health insurance as part of the compensation package.

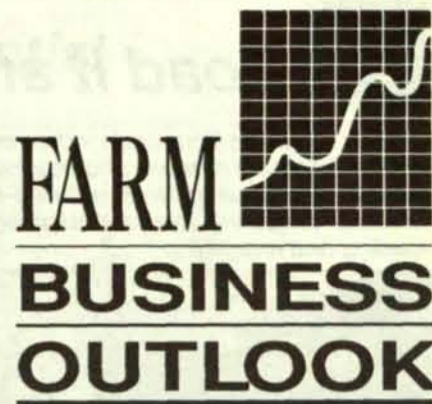
"You must have a formal employment agreement, whether it's oral or preferably written, an employer identification number and a W-4," recommends Jones. "To be considered a legitimate employee, the spouse must be treated and paid as you would any other employee."

Farm Credit Service's State Director of Farm Records/Tax, Kelly Tobin, agrees calling a spousal employment agreement a win-win from a tax and business management standpoint, since it allows a total deduction of the health insurance premium as a business expense. Not only can the health insurance premium be claimed as a business expense on federal taxes, it can also be applied as a legitimate business expense against state income tax and the self-employment tax.

"If you can formally employ your spouse with legitimate duties such as chores, record keeping, etc., which is not a problem in most cases, you can then include medical insurance as part of the compensation package," said Tobin. "You can then take a 100 percent deduction on the medical insurance premium as a regular business expense, which far exceeds deducting it under the self-employed itemized deduction previously available."

Employee duties and reasonable salaries for a spouse are key to such an agreement and will be used as test of legitimacy by the IRS, cautions Tobin. He urges farmers to make sure the compensation package offered to a spouse is consistent with what would be offered to any other person employed on the farm.

"Though it won't work in every situation, in many cases, the spouse is already actively involved in the farm operation with various levels of responsibilities," said Tobin. "We're just encouraging our farmer clients to formalize it and take full advantage of the benefits."



FARM BUSINESS OUTLOOK

spouse in your business to make it possible to obtain an extra \$2,000 IRA deduction and deduct 100 percent of your medical insurance.

Social Security rates for 1993 are the same as in 1992, 12.4 percent Social Security and 2.9 percent hospital insurance for a total of 15.3 percent for the self-employed. Maximums increase to \$57,600 for Social Security and \$135,000 for hospital insurance.

If you are receiving Social Security benefits, the maximum that can be earned by those under 65 is \$7,680 without reducing benefits. For those age 65 up to 69, the earned income level is \$10,560. Those over 69 may earn any amount without reducing benefits; however, they will still have to pay the Social Security and medical insurance tax. A good reason to explore ways to shift income to rent and interest which are not considered to be earned income upon which the tax is paid.

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8

Load it and Move it Safely on Your Farm

Tractor-mounted front-end loaders make short work of many tough jobs on the farm -- handling manure and hay bales, moving dirt and debris, and the like. Construction-type loaders and skid-steer loaders are also commonly used by farmers. Whatever kind of equipment you use, remember these tips for safe loading and moving:



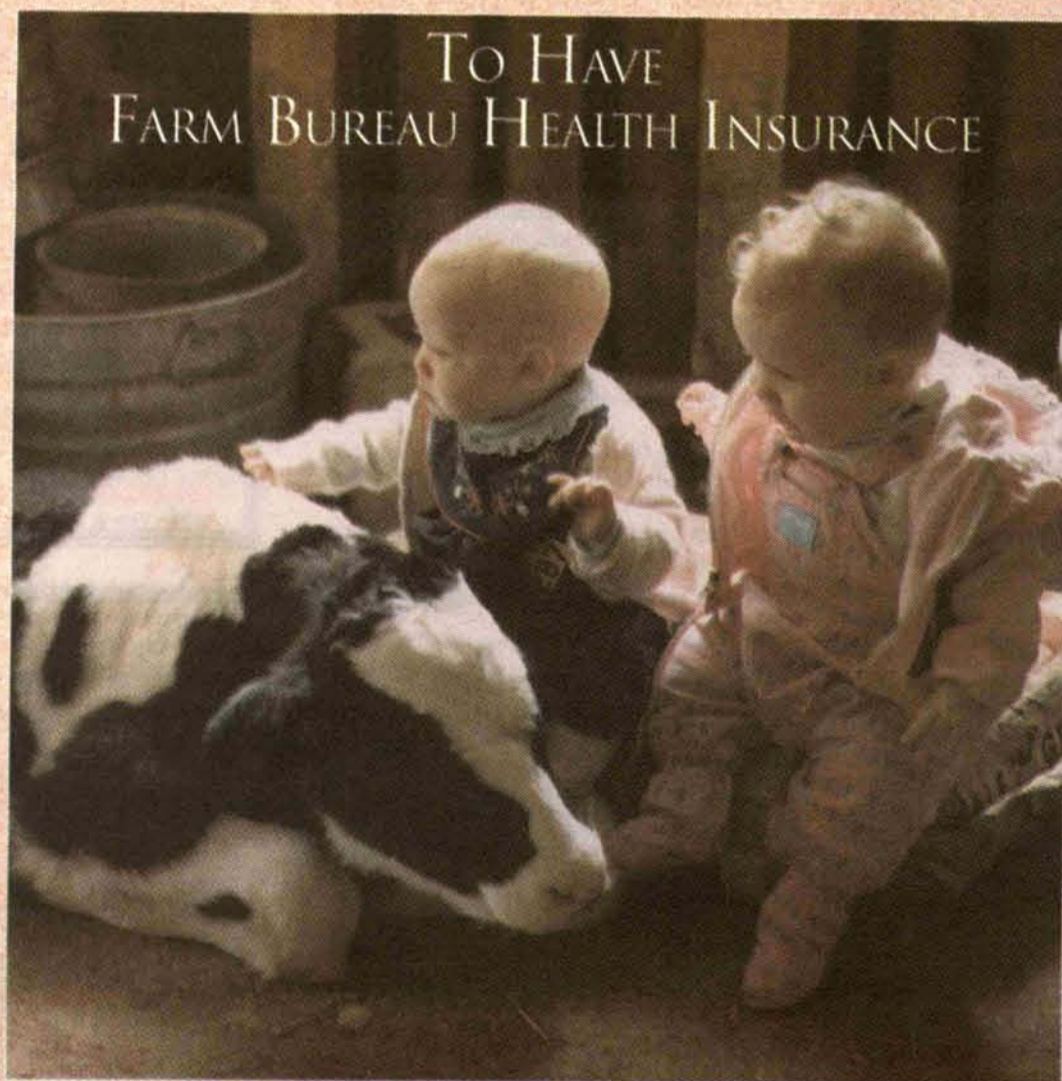
- Read and heed the instruction manual. Make sure all your operators are trained and skilled.
- When mounting a front-end loader on a tractor, check carefully to see that everything is tight and hydraulic lines are properly connected and leak-free. Add rear weight if necessary to balance the tractor. Use a tractor with ROPS.
- Load the bucket evenly from side to side, and keep the load within the specified capacity. Pay attention to the weight and density of the material to be moved -- because a full bucket of one type of material may be easy to handle while a bucket of another type might cause severe imbalance and an upset.
- Avoid fast turns, especially with the bucket raised. Transport a heavy load low, keeping your speed down. Watch where you are going. Avoid obstacles and holes, and proceed with extra caution on slopes and inclines.



From Farm Bureau Insurance

- Keep children out of the work area.
- Never use the bucket to lift people or take them for a ride.
- When moving large round bales, use a bale guard to keep the bale from rolling back and then down on you. A bale clamp is also recommended.
- Stay clear of the lift arms, and keep others away.
- Always lower the bucket to the ground when you stop work. Never rely on hydraulics to hold the bucket up.
- Be sure your skid-steer loader has ROPS as well as protective guards around the ROPS frame. Wear your safety belt -- and keep your arms and legs inside the cage at all times. Don't add weight that could upset the machine's stability. Drop the bucket when your work is finished.

A FEW SMALL REASONS



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



Michigan Agriculture Commission Adopts Nutrient Storage and Use Practices For the State's Right-To-Farm Law

After months of deliberation and hearings, the Michigan Commission of Agriculture has approved a set of on-farm nutrient management practices. The document, now part of Michigan's Right-To-Farm-Act, is called "Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices for Nutrient Utilization."

The recommended practices are the result of collaboration between Michigan State University agricultural researchers and Extension specialists, the Michigan Department of Agriculture, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, Michigan Farm Bureau and the Michigan Agri-Business Association.

The document contains 24 pages of recommendations for on-farm fertilizer storage and containment, crop fertilization, soil conservation and irrigation management.

There are also recommended practices for the fertilization and irrigation of container-grown plants and guidelines for land application of organic materials; sludges, food processing wastes, industrial organic wastes, etc.

"If growers carefully follow the recommended practices, they should meet the minimum requirements of state and federal regulations," says Maurice Vitosh, MSU Extension agronomy specialist.

He believes that the document reflects common sense in on-farm fertilizer storage, handling and use and does not contain recommendations that he would consider unreasonable.

Copies of the document may be obtained by writing to: Robert Craig, Michigan Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 30017, Lansing, MI 48909. A copy of the document has also been sent to all MSU Extension county offices.

Monitor Stored Grain Regularly to Help Reduce Fire Potential

Because of the quality and condition of this year's corn crop going into storage, fire may be a possibility if the grain is not kept in good condition.

Paul Streng, MSU agricultural engineering specialist, says that checking the stored grain weekly may prevent a destructive problem.

"Watch for an unusual rise in grain temperature and sniff around the structure for any off odors, such as the smell of burnt popcorn," Streng says. "If either or both of these are present, call the authorities who can effectively deal with the problem."

Call the fire department if smoke is coming from an oxygen-limiting storage facility or from a standard grain storage bin. Do not try to enter either type of structure.

Streng says, that owners of oxygen-limiting storages should first call the local dealer if a problem develops.

The dealer will have a step-by-step list of instructions to follow in the event of a fire. Those steps will minimize damage and avoid what could be a tragedy if the fire suppression recommendations are not heeded, Streng says.

He suggests that owners seal the structure at ground level (unloader discharge door, drain trap and pipe cap) as completely as possible but not enter or climb the structure. Tightly sealing the structure will deprive the fire of oxygen so it will die out. If that doesn't work, carbon dioxide or nitrogen can be injected into the structure using equipment provided by the dealer.

Proper drying and cooling are critical for success in storing a severely stressed corn crop.

If smoke is coming from a standard grain storage, immediately call the fire department. Do not enter the structure or attempt to extinguish the fire. The best way to fight this kind of a fire is to auger the grain from the bin, dousing and separating the burning material from the rest of the grain, Streng says.

Pouring water onto the grain mass from the top of the structure may be fruitless, because the water will follow the path of least resistance and not necessarily reach the core of the fire. Excessive amounts of water may also ruin the structure.

"In order for spontaneous ignition to occur, three requirements must be met: a supply of oxygen, a source of heat and a source of fuel," Streng says. "In this case, the source of fuel is the corn and the source of heat will be the microbial action that occurred in the corn. If you eliminate one of the three requirements, a fire cannot occur."



AMEX Long-Term Care Available Exclusively to MFB Members

Last year, senior Americans spent over \$600 billion on long-term care. Nearly half of that amount came directly out of the pockets of patients or their families.

A new MFB member service program can now help keep you from becoming one of those families, according to MFB Member Services Department Manager Doug Fleming. Available through Farm Bureau Insurance Agents, the policies are underwritten by AMEX Life Assurance Company, a subsidiary of American Express.

According to a *U.S. News & World Report*, one out of every two people age 65 and older are likely to need long term care in their lifetimes. The costs can destroy the financial security of many families that were built over a lifetime, says Fleming.

"Today many qualified nursing home facilities cost \$60 to in excess of \$150 per day - and those costs grow dramatically every year," said Fleming. "Statistically, half of the people entering a nursing home will stay an average of 2.5 years. At the current estimated cost of \$80 per day, it will cost \$79,360 for the average 2.5 years of long-term care. Medicare pays only about 2 percent of the nation's long-term care expenses, and that Medicaid coverage begins only after most assets have been depleted."

With MFB's new long term care program, members can select the plan best suited to their specific needs. You can select the length of nursing home coverage to help pay for care and assistance - two years, three years, four years, even for life. Members can also choose whether to have daily benefit amounts increase automatically to cover rising costs, due to inflation.

Ideally, members age 40 to 84 may want to discuss the feasibility of a long-term care plan with their Farm Bureau Insurance agent. Once you're covered, you'll be protected for life, says Fleming, meaning your insurance is guaranteed renewable for life.

Your premiums will never increase because of your age or changing health, and there's no requirement of prior hospitalization for nursing home or home care benefits. In addition the policy doesn't exclude pre-existing conditions, and benefits are provided for Alzheimer disease as well as other forms of senility.

"MFB members can also take comfort in knowing that this plan is provided by AMEX Life Assurance Company, which pioneered the development of long-term care insurance," explained Fleming. "AMEX is also rated A+ by A.M. Best Company (independent analyst of the insurance industry who base their analysis on financial position and operating performance), and are widely recognized as an industry leader in the field of long-term care. AMEX is also endorsed by the American Health Care Association."

To learn more about this newest MFB member service, available exclusively in Michi-

gan through Farm Bureau Insurance agents, call your local Farm Bureau Insurance agent or fill out and mail the coupon on the bottom of this page.

WORRIED
FACES
OF OUR
INSURED.



Worry? Not them.

And why should you when you can protect your life savings with a Long Term Care Plan from AMEX Life Assurance Company?

Regrettably, two in five older adults will require nursing home care.¹ With costs averaging about \$30,000 per year² it's easy to see just how devastating this can be.

But it doesn't have to be this way.

With AMEX Life you can plan on peace of mind. AMEX Life, an American Express company, has over 16 years experience in long-term care insurance and is rated A+ (Superior) by A.M. Best.³

Don't be worried by the costs of long-term care. Call or write today for more information from your local Farm Bureau Insurance Agent on the options available to you.

Representing:

AMEX Life Assurance Company

a subsidiary of TRAVEL RELATED SERVICES

1. Consumer's Guide to Long-Term Care Insurance, HIAA 1989
2. U.S. News & World Report, Aug. 13, 1990
3. Independent analysts of the insurance industry who base their analysis on financial strength and operating performance.

TO RECEIVE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND AN AMEX BROCHURE/APPLICATION - FILL OUT THE COUPON BELOW OR CALL DIRECT 1-800-292-2680, EXT. - 3237.



Please mail to: Michigan Farm Bureau Membership Services P.O. Box 30960 Lansing, MI 48909

Please Print

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Editors Note: This material is reprinted from the Farmstead Assessment System (FARM-A-SYST) in Michigan, a multi agency cooperative effort to increase awareness and encourage correction of the potential water quality problems around the farmstead. The FARM-A-SYST materials are based on similar materials developed in Wisconsin and Minnesota with assistance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region Five. This is the first installment of a new column in the Michigan Farm News, entitled "Environmental Stewardship."

Waste as used in this fact sheet, includes livestock manure and urine, milkhouse and milkparlor washwater, and livestock yard runoff. The term waste is not intended to imply that these materials represent only a "disposal" problem.

All of these materials have some nutrient, organic matter or other potentially beneficial value that make the "waste" a resource. If managed improperly, these same properties represent an environmental risk, especially to water resources.

Manure storage can provide environmental benefits by allowing wastes to be stored until they can be safely utilized, which in most cases means the manure is spread, incorporated into the soil and used by a growing crop. The environmental safety of storing large amounts of manure in one place for an extended period depends on:

1. The volume relative to daily manure production, climate, and cropping pattern.
2. The physical and chemical characteristics of the soil and geologic materials within the storage area and overflow areas.
3. Proper materials and construction methods to control leaching of stored material toward groundwater.

Reducing the Risk of Groundwater Contamination by Improving Livestock Waste Storage

4. Providing the storage volume needed to hold all the waste generated during the period between scheduled applications.

5. Timely removal and utilization of the stored waste in accordance with the waste utilization plan.

Waste storage is an important management option available to livestock producers. Manure can be applied to the soil at those times of year when crops are not actively growing and soils are open.

This allows manure to be injected or incorporated by tillage immediately following application. Handling manure in this way ensures the farmers of the maximum fertilizer value from the waste materials, while reducing risks of ground water and surface water contamination.

Waste storage can reduce the need for land application during winter months when soil is frozen. This conserves nutrients contained in the manure and minimizes nutrient runoff. Storage is also valuable when crops are actively growing making application impractical.

Long-Term Storage

Livestock waste can be stored either in solid, semi-solid or liquid states.

Solid facilities use walls and slabs for stacking of heavily bedded manure.

Semi-solid facilities use pumps to move manure to containment areas and may separate solids from liquids.

Liquid facilities hold manure in tanks, pits or bermed areas.

Liquid and semi-solid storage systems are self-contained. Groundwater contamination can occur only if the facility is not



Photo: MSU Ag Engineering Dept.

structurally sound, allowing waste materials to seep into the soil.

A threat to surface water exists if pits are not emptied frequently enough, allowing wastes to flow over the top of the structure. Likewise, check the walls of the earthen facility to be certain that liner materials have not been eroded away by pit agitation.

A properly designed structure has the capacity to handle waste from a specific number of animals for a known number of days. If a pit designed for 180 days of storage and receiving designated waste amounts has not needed pumping for a year, the pit is obviously leaking.

Seepage and direct rainfall runoff from within a solid or semi-solid facility can occur. Runoff control is required for any such facility. Runoff storage ponds should be designed to handle all runoff for at least a six month period. In addition, it should be able to contain the runoff from the maximum 25-year, 24-hour storm event rainfall for the area.

Storage ponds must be constructed to reduce seepage loss to acceptable levels. A Soil Conservation Service Field Office Technical Guides (SCS-FOTG) or the Midwest Plan Service Livestock Waste Facilities Handbook (MWPS-18) can be consulted for details.

If conditions allow, structures such as picket dams can be used to hold back solids, and grass filter strips help remove remaining pollutants in runoff water. These systems should not be considered on sites with course, textured soils; creviced bedrock or shallow water tables.

The vegetated area may be either a long, grassed, slightly sloping channel, or a broad flat area with little or no slope surrounded by a berm or dike. All outside surface water should be excluded from the infiltration area. Vegetation should be maintained and harvested at least once a year.

Short-Term Storage

Short-term storage, (usually 7 to 14 days) is an important option available to farmers. It allows them to hold livestock wastes during periods of bad weather when daily spreading is not feasible. The storage facilities should be designed and constructed to control leaching, runoff and seepage toward groundwater.

Designs for manure storage and treatment facilities should meet specifications found in SCS-FOTG. Additional handbooks that can be used are the National Pork Industry Handbook fact sheets E-1341 and E-1399 from MSU and the Midwest Plan Service Publication TR-3 for concrete.

To protect the groundwater from possible contamination, utilize liners that include soils of low permeability, bentonite or similar high swell clay materials, compacted earthen liner, and flexible membranes.

Storage Locations

The location of waste storage facilities in relation to any well is an important factor in protecting the farm water supply. The minimum required distance for any manure facility is 50 feet from a well. For temporary manure stacks and earthen facilities, the recommended distance is 200 feet. For liquid-tight storage structures, the minimum separation distance is 100 feet.

Minimum separation distances regulate all new well installations and/or new storage facilities. Existing wells are required, by law, only to meet separation requirements in existence at the time the well was installed. Make very effort, however, to exceed "old regulations" and strive to meet current regulations whenever possible.

While observing these well separation requirements may help protect your own well, poorly designed manure facilities can contaminate the groundwater that supplies other drinking wells.

Depth to seasonal high water table or fractured bedrock, along with soil type at the storage facility location is another important factor. Depth to water table is sometimes available in the county soil survey, but it varies from county to county. Your CES or SCS office may be able to help you gather this information.

Other Management Factors

Many Michigan counties have enacted waste storage facility ordinances, requiring storage facilities to be located and constructed to county-adopted engineering standards. Contact your local CES office for more information.

If animal waste storage causes any significant water contamination, the Department of Natural Resources can issue a notice of discharge, which may require corrective measures.

Abandoned Pits

Abandoned manure pits, especially earthen ones, can pose significant water quality problems. Any abandoned structure should be completely emptied. In the case of earthen facilities, solid liner material should be removed to a depth of about two feet and spread over cropland and incorporated.

The remaining hole should be filled and leveled. Manure packs from pole sheds no longer in use should also be removed and the waste applied at agronomic rates based on nutrient content.

Contacts and References

Who to call about...

Waste storage needs, designing appropriate structures:

Your county Cooperative Extension Service or your local Soil Conservation Service Office.

Cost-sharing funds:

Financial assistance for animal waste management practices, including waste storage, may be available through the Agricultural Conservation Program administered by the ASCS Office

Animal waste management:

Generally Accepted Practices for Manure Management and Utilization. (Right to Farm Act) from MDA or CES.

What to read about...

Publications are available from sources listed at the end of this section.

Health effects of livestock waste in groundwater

Livestock Manure Management for Crop Production and Water Quality, MSU - Extension, WQ12.

Handling, management and storage of livestock waste

Outside Liquid Manure Storages, 1979, 8 pages, Midwest Plan Service, AED-23.
Manure Digestion, Runoff, Refeeding, Odors, Midwest Plan Services, MWPS-25.
Swine Waste Management Alternatives, MSU - Extension, E-1399.
Legal Guidelines for Swine Waste Management, MSU - Extension, E-1160

Planning and design of livestock waste storage facilities

Livestock Waste Facilities Handbook, 1985, Midwest Plan Service, MWPS-18.
Circular Concrete Manure Tanks, 1983, 4 pages, Midwest Plan Service, TR-9.
Liquid Manure Tanks: Rectangular, Below Grade, MWPS-74303.
Systems of Runoff Control, MSU - Extension, E-1132
Lagoon Systems for Swine Waste Systems, MSU - Extension, E-1341.
Estimating Land Area Requirements for Manure Utilization, MSU - Extension, AEIS-575.

Publications available from...

1. Your county CES Office or directly from the Bulletin Office, Room 10B, Ag Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824-1039, (517) 355-0240. There may be charges for publications, postage, and sales tax.

2. Your county CES Office or directly from MWPS Secretary, Ag Engineering Dept., 217 A.W. Farrall Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824-1323, (517) 353-3297.



11 Livestock Waste Storage: Assessing Drinking Water Contamination Risk

Why Should I Be Concerned?

Storing livestock waste allows farmers to spread manure when conditions are right for nutrient use by crops. Accumulating manure in a concentrated area, however,

can be risky to the environment and to human health if not done properly.

Facilities for manure stored in liquid form on the farmstead sometimes leak or burst,

releasing large volumes of pollutants. Manure in earthen pits can form a semi-imperious seal of organic matter that does limit leaching potential, but seasonal filling and emptying can cause the seal to break down.

Short-term solid manure storage and abandoned storage areas can also be sources of groundwater contamination by nitrates. Manure can contribute nutrients and disease-causing organisms to both surface water and groundwater.

Nitrate levels in drinking water above federal and state drinking standards of 10 milligrams per liter (mg./l; equivalent to parts per million for water measured) nitrate-nitrogen can pose health problems for infants under six months of age, including the condition known as methemoglobinemia (blue baby syndrome). Nitrate can also affect adults, but the evidence is less certain.

Young livestock are also susceptible to health problems from high-nitrate-nitrogen levels. Levels of 20 to 40 mg./l in the water supply may prove harmful, especially in combination with high levels (1,000 ppm) of nitrate-nitrogen from feed sources.

Fecal bacteria in livestock waste can contaminate groundwater, causing such infectious diseases as dysentery, typhoid and hepatitis.

Organic materials that lend an undesirable taste and odor to drinking water are not known to be dangerous to health, but their presence does suggest that other contaminants are flowing into the groundwater.

How will this worksheet help me protect my drinking water?

- It will take you step by step through your livestock waste storage practices.
- It will rank your activities according to how they might affect the groundwater that provides your drinking water supplies.
- It will provide you with easy-to-understand rankings that will help you analyze the "risk level" of your livestock waste storage practices.
- It will help you determine which of your practices are reasonably safe and effective, and which practices might require modification to better protect your drinking water.

What do I do with these rankings?

Step 1: Begin by determining your overall livestock waste storage risk ranking. Total the rankings for the categories you completed and divide by the number of categories you ranked. (Total of rankings divided by categories completed = risk ranking.)

This ranking gives you a general idea of how your livestock waste storage practices, as a whole, might be affecting your drinking water.

This ranking should serve only as a very general guide, not a precise diagnosis. Because it represents an averaging of many individual rankings, it can mask any individual rankings, such as 1s' or 2s' that should be of concern.

Step 2: Look over your rankings for individual activities:

- * **Low-risk** practices (4s'): ideal; should be your goal despite cost and effort.
- * **Low-to-moderate-risk** practices (3s'): provide reasonable groundwater protection.
- * **Moderate-to-high-risk** practices (2s'): inadequate protection in many circumstances.
- * **High-risk** practices (1s'): inadequate; pose a high risk of polluting groundwater.

Regardless of your overall risk ranking, any individual rankings of "1" require immediate attention. Some concerns you can take care of right away; others could be major - or costly - projects, requiring planning and prioritizing before you take action.

Worksheet

Livestock Waste Storage: Assessing Drinking Water Contamination Risk

1. Use a pencil. You may want to make changes.
2. For each category listed on the left that is appropriate to your farmstead, read across to the right and circle the statement that best describes conditions on your farmstead. (Skip and leave blank any categories that don't apply to your farmstead.) For categories separated by "OR," choose only one category.
3. Then look above the description you circled to find your "rank number" (4, 3, 2 or 1) and enter that number in the blank under "your rank."
4. Directions on overall scoring appear at the end of the worksheet.
5. Allow about 15-30 minutes to complete the worksheet and figure out your risk ranking for livestock waste storage practices.

	LOW RISK (rank 4)	LOW-MOD RISK (rank 3)	MOD-HIGH RISK (rank 2)	HIGH RISK (rank 1)	YOUR RANK
LONG-TERM STORAGE (180 days or more)					
Location of all manure storages in relation to wells.	Earthen lined manure storage more than 250 feet down slope of the well. Water tight concrete or steel, glass-lined storages more than 100 feet down slope from the well.	Earthen lined manure storage more than 250 feet up slope of the well. Water tight concrete or steel, glass-lined storages more than 100 feet up slope from the well.	Earthen lined manure storage less than 250 feet down slope of the well. Water tight concrete or steel, glass-lined storages less than 100 feet down slope from the well.	Manure storage less than 100 feet up slope of the well.	_____
SEMI-SOLID AND LIQUID MANURES					
Steel, glass-lined; cast-in-place concrete; concrete stave; pre-cast concrete panels.	Designed and installed according to accepted standards and specifications. Properly maintained	Minor leakage on heavy clay soils or silt loam soils underlain with clay.	Evidence of overflow, past or potential leakage onto medium-textured soils (loam).	Evidence of overflow, past or potential leakage onto coarse-textured soils (sands and sandy loams). Water table or fractured bedrock shallower than 20 feet.	_____
Earthen.		Designed and installed according to accepted standards and specifications. Properly maintained.	Construction of earthen materials and storing liquid manure containing fine manure particles.	Evidence of overflow onto coarse-textured soils. Lining material integrity broken into coarse-textured soils.	_____

OR

	LOW RISK (rank 4)	LOW-MOD RISK (rank 3)	MOD-HIGH RISK (rank 2)	HIGH RISK (rank 1)	YOUR RANK
SHORT-TERM STORAGE (usually 30-90 days; in some cases, up to 180 days)					
SOLID, STACKABLE MANURES					
Stacked in field (on soil base)		Adequate surface drainage on medium to fine-textured soils (silt loams, loam, clay loams, silty clay).	Poor surface drainage on medium to fine-textured soils (silt loams, loam, clay loams, silty clay).	Poor surface drainage on coarse-textured soils (sands, sandy loam).	_____
Stacked in yard (Not permitted for milk cows)	Paved or earthen yard with all areas receiving frequent hoof traffic; with runoff control curbs, gutters, settling basin and runoff storage. Well maintained.	Earthen yard with all areas receiving frequent hoof traffic; with runoff control curbs, gutters, settling basin and grass filter strip. Well maintained.	Earthen yard with all areas receiving frequent hoof traffic; with no runoff control measures in place.	Earthen yard with low areas of coarse-textured soils and receiving limited hoof traffic. Yards with intermittent use and are on coarse-textured soils. No runoff control measures in place.	_____

	LOW RISK (rank 4)	LOW-MOD RISK (rank 3)	MOD-HIGH RISK (rank 2)	HIGH RISK (rank 1)	YOUR RANK
LOCATION					
Solid Manure Storage Structure	Constructed with a floor of impermeable material (concrete, asphalt, or 12 in. thick compacted clay) and with walls that prevents leachate from entering surrounding soils.	Earthen floor constructed with medium to fine-textured soils and where rainfall runoff and leachate will have direct contact with the earthen floor or side walls. Leachate and rainfall/snowmelt runoff discharged into a grass filter strip.	Earthen floor constructed with medium to fine-textured soils and where rainfall runoff and leachate will have direct contact with the earthen floor or side walls. Leachate and runoff are uncontrolled.	Earthen floor constructed with coarse-textured soils and where rainfall runoff and leachate will have direct contact with the earthen floor or side walls; or runoff and leachate are uncontrolled.	_____
Bedded Pack	Constructed with a floor of impermeable material or fine-textured soil. Adequate bedding is provided to maintain solid nature of manure. No rainfall or runoff enters the manured area. No waters in the building.	Medium to fine-textured soils, limited bedding provided, no rainfall or runoff enters manured area. Waters in the building.	Coarse-textured soils under bedded pack with continuous use. Some rainfall and runoff entering manured area.	Building has an earthen floor on coarse-textured soil and is subject to direct rainfall, runoff from the roof or adjacent land areas.	_____

Suggestions for Feeding the 1992 Corn Crop

Steven Rust,
MSU Animal Science Dept.

The immaturity of the corn crop has significantly altered the characteristics of the corn to be fed. Unfortunately, very little research information is available to make recommendations. What information is available on immature corn does not represent the present corn crop of Michigan. The following suggestions represent my intuitive sense of how to utilize the present corn crop.

Harvest and Storage

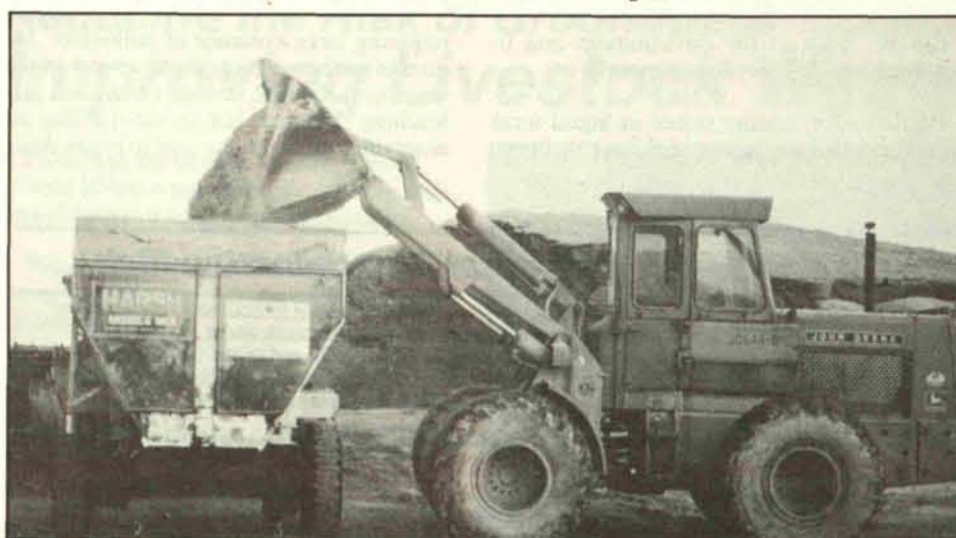
Corn harvested at temperatures less than 40 degrees F undergoes very limited fermentation. Consequently, the resulting high moisture corn (HMC) has less bunk stability.

At this late stage, addition of a microbial inoculant (silage additive) does not appear cost effective.

All wet corn harvested and stored at less than 40 degrees F is subject to rapid deterioration during warm weather and/or air exposure. Even corn dried below 30 percent moisture before ensiling is most likely going to be unstable. It would be advisable to feed the wet corn harvested now before warm weather.

Propionic acid treatment of corn harvested now may maintain the quality in its present condition for one year. Before going through the expense of applying acid, it's advisable to test acceptability or willingness of cattle to consume acid-treated corn.

Processing before ensiling will have less benefit than under normal conditions. If harvested corn contains a lot of fines, it should pack satisfactorily. From a feeding standpoint, minimal or no processing is suggested.



Corn Quality

Much of the corn remaining in the field contains various types of molds. Corn that contains molds should not be unconditionally rejected as livestock feeds. The toxins produced by the molds (especially T2 toxins) can be harmful to cattle. Historically, T2 toxin has not been prevalent in corn in Michigan.

Kernel discoloration is prevalent in the remaining standing corn as well. This is most likely the result of bacterial deterioration.

The feeding value of moldy or discolored corn is less than the normal harvested corn. It should be discounted accordingly. There are no published guidelines to determine the discounts, but it would seem 20 - 40 percent should be considered.

Feeding Strategies

Three major problems exist with the feeding of this unusual corn crop. The nutritive value, palatability, and rate of digestion

may limit growth and feed conversion efficiency.

Nutritive Value

There are a number of likely reductions in nutritive value due to harvest conditions. Reason/Likely reduction in nutritive value:
Immaturity/5-10 percent
Mold/10-15 percent
Discoloration/10-15 percent
Extra foreign material/4-10 percent
Total Potential Reduction = 29-50%

A simple method to evaluate the amount of deterioration is by ash content. Normal corn (56 lb./bu.) contains 1.3-1.5 percent ash and low test weight corn (47 lb./bu.) has 2.2-2.4 percent. Corn that was greater than 2.5 percent ash probably has been exposed to extensive microbial deterioration.

There have been reports of very low crude protein values (less than 6 percent) in the corn. A laboratory analysis would identify the low protein corn and allow addition of supplemental protein.

Palatability

Corn that possesses poor bunk stability may limit cattle intake unless carefully managed. Amount of feed delivered daily should be monitored closely. Bunks may have to be cleaned frequently. High levels of molds without presence of toxins may not severely restrict intake. However, corn that has presence of molds and formed clumps, will. Other tips include:

- Immature corn is more rapidly degraded in the rumen which could result in acidosis and erratic intakes.
- Blending the wet corn with dry corn will slow the rate of digestion and dilute the factors that may restrict intake.
- Feeding whole corn will slow the rate of digestion.
- Increasing the level of roughage to 12-15 percent (25-30 percent corn silage) will stimulate saliva production and buffer the pH decline in the rumen.
- Feeding Tylan to prevent liver abscesses may be necessary.
- Using by-product feedstuffs may be a greater challenge, particularly if rapidly degraded in the rumen. Use of a rumen degradable protein source may assist in suppressing accumulation of lactic acid.
- Feeding buffers in high concentrate diets has not shown benefits.
- When possible, utilize dry corn in receiving diets and in adjustment to finish rations. Once cattle are adjusted to finish diet, wet corn can replace dry corn as needed.



Cargill Hybrid Seeds Top 1992 Michigan State University Corn Trials

North Central Mich. - Early

Huron, Montcalm, and Mason County Trials
Average of all entries for a given company in 1992

Company	Yield	Moist.	Cargill Advantage
Cargill	143.5	31.3	
Asgrow	141.8	33.0	1.7
RENK	137.9	29.7	5.6
AMCORN	135.1	31.1	8.4
FUNKS	133.8	26.9	9.7
Callahan	129.8	32.3	13.7
Stine	124.9	31.7	18.6
Crow's	124.0	33.2	19.5

South Central Mich. - Late

Kent, Ingham, and Saginaw County Trials
Average of all entries for a given company in 1992

Company	Yield	Moist.	Cargill Advantage
Cargill	162.2	33.8	
N.King	159.7	31.3	2.5
RENK	153.9	31.3	8.3
Crow's	152.7	33.9	9.5
Asgrow	152.5	36.2	9.7
G. Lakes	150.9	34.8	11.3
Dairyland	150.1	28.9	12.1
Stine	149.6	35.8	12.6
FUNKS	149.5	31.7	12.7
G. Harv.	148.4	33.7	13.8

Southern Michigan - Early

Monroe, Branch, and Cass County Trials
Average of all entries for a given company in 1992

Company	Yield	Moist.	Cargill Advantage
Cargill	201.5	26.6	
DeKalb	199.1	25.3	2.4
N. King	192.6	22.8	8.9
Callahan	190.3	28.7	11.2
FUNKS	189.3	27.2	12.2
G. Lakes	188.5	32.7	13.0
G. Harv.	185.8	27.0	15.7
Dairyland	183.6	25.8	17.9
RENK	177.2	26.9	24.3
Trelay	171.3	29.3	30.2
Crow's	169.7	24.9	31.8
AMCORN	149.9	26.8	51.6

Southern Michigan - Late

Monroe, Branch, and Cass County Trials
Average of all entries for a given company in 1992

Company	Yield	Moist.	Cargill Advantage
Cargill	189.6	33.3	
G. Lakes	188.5	32.7	1.1
N. King	188.3	33.7	1.3
RENK	184.8	33.1	4.8
Crow's	181.6	32.8	8.0
Stine	181.2	32.3	8.4
Dairyland	176.4	32.7	13.2
FUNKS	175.8	33.2	13.8
Jacques	174.4	34.0	15.2
AMCORN	173.4	32.6	16.2

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Brown.....City Robert Howland (313) 688-2703	Mendon.....Rex Crotsler (616) 496-7204
Capac.....Blumerich Farms (313) 395-4517	Paw Paw.....Bill Mihelich (616) 657-4351
Croswell...Croswell Milling Co. (313) 679-3400	Quincy.....Don Bercaw (517) 278-2851
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Marlette.....Dale R. Wood (517) 635-3280	Sturgis.....Lowayne Yoder (616) 651-2111
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.....or (517) 531-4757	Cedar Springs.....Vernon Starr (616) 696-1858
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March Discussion Topic – The Cost of Education

America's founding fathers believed that a representative democracy could only survive if citizens were educated and well-informed. As a result, broadly available publicly-funded schools have been a tradition in this country.

But in Michigan in recent years, the rising cost of education, the reliance on property taxes as the major source of school funding and perceived inequities in school spending have fueled efforts to reform education finance. Property taxes raise about \$6.4 billion for schools each year, with the state providing funding to the tune of \$3.7 billion. Because some communities are wealthier than others, per pupil spending across the state varies widely -- from \$2,600 to \$8,600.

Your property tax bill is based on the S.E.V. (state equalized value) of your property times the millage. Unlike income taxes and sales taxes, which vary depending on the amount of money you make or spend, property taxes are levied regardless of the ability to pay. So, despite several laws designed to provide equity and reduce property taxes for retired persons and farmers, there is a wide-

spread perception that property taxes are not fair.

Delegates to the 1992 Michigan Farm Bureau annual meeting thoroughly debated the property tax question. The final policy they approved states a belief that school finance reform is needed to achieve equal educational opportunities for all Michigan children.

The policy says that opportunities for reform include:

- Reducing the current 50 mill limitation.
- Tax base sharing which requires that one-half of the growth in commercial and industrial property taxes for school operations be distributed to local in-formula school districts on a per pupil basis.
- Equalize to the extent possible per pupil spending.
- Full state funding of transportation for students.

- Cost containment through increased efficiency and innovation.
- Funding at 50 percent local/50 percent state, plus lottery revenue.
- Additional funding phased in over three to five years, with revenue increases limited to no more than 15 percent of the previous year.
- Require that school aid state funding reflect current year enrollment.

Furthermore, the policy states that "all state aid formulas must be fully funded. There also must be full funding for state mandated programs whether new or amended. Revenues to be used for school finance must be earmarked for the state School Aid Fund.

Reorganization of school districts should be studied and considered but should continue to be voluntary. We support a reduction of property taxes with a shift to other sources to replace the lost revenue with the shift being earmarked specifically for education. However, any change should be revenue neutral."

As this goes to press, the governor and state Legislature are unveiling a variety of school finance reform plans. Michigan Farm Bureau will closely evaluate these proposals to determine their compatibility with Farm Bureau policy.

Each Farm Bureau member has a responsibility to become well-informed about the finances of his or her local school district. Take an active role in encouraging cost containment efforts and efficient spending of scarce local resources. With your input, Michigan schools can move closer to the American ideal of outstanding education at an acceptable price.

Discussion Questions:

1. What alternative sources of revenue should be used to replace lost revenue from property tax reductions?
2. How can school districts fulfill state mandated programs, such as handicapped and special education requirements, and still remain in-formula?
3. How can school systems compete for and keep good teachers?
4. Can you suggest any cost containment and/or efficiency measures that might be implemented in your district?

Grassroots in Action - MFB's Lansing Legislative Seminar Series

Michigan Farm Bureau members will once again be able to participate in the annual Lansing Legislative Seminar series, to discuss issues such as property tax reform, school finance, local pesticide pre-emption, and medical malpractice with their legislators.

This is the ideal opportunity for Farm Bureau members to make their views and concerns known where it really counts - face to face with their respective legislators, according to MFB Public Affairs Director Al Almy.

"This conference has built up a great deal of credibility with legislators over past years," said Almy. They know and understand that the people attending these seminars are genuine farmers with a genuine desire to meet and talk on issues affecting their farm operations."

Van Buren County Farm Bureau members present Rep. Mick Middaugh (R-Paw Paw) (second from right, front row) with a Michigan Farm Bureau Policy Book during a past Lansing Legislative Seminar.



Registration is scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m. each day, followed by a legislative briefing by MFB Public Affairs staff, prior to meeting with respective legislators during lunch, and during the afternoon. In addition to meeting with legislators in the afternoon, members will also have an opportunity to attend House and Senate sessions, and participate in a capitol tour.

Specific meeting dates for respective county Farm Bureaus are as follows:

February 16:

Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Cass, Clinton, Eaton, Genesee, Ingham, Ionia, Kalamazoo, Kent, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, Ottawa, St. Joseph, Shiawassee and Van Buren County Farm Bureaus.

March 30

Branch, Calhoun, Hillsdale, Huron, Jackson, Lapeer, Lenawee, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Sanilac, Tuscola, Washtenaw, and Wayne County Farm Bureaus.

March 31

Alcona, Alpena, Antrim, Arenac, Bay, Benzie, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Chipewewa, Clare, Copper Country, Emmet, Gladwin, Gratiot, Hiawathaland, Iosco, Iron Range, Isabella, Kalkaska, Mac-Luce, Manistee, Menominee, Midland, Missaukee, Montmorency, Northwest Michigan, Ogemaw, Otsego, Presque Isle, Saginaw, and Wexford County Farm Bureaus.

For additional meeting information and registration, contact your local county Farm Bureau office.

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This European tour includes roundtrip airfare, transfer, deluxe motorcoach transportation, first class and Tyrolean-style hotel accommodations, European-style buffet breakfast daily, 1 dinner, and much more. The Farm Bureau member price is \$1,725. Non member price is \$1,755 per person.

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01
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LINCOLN WELDERS, welding supplies and Harris Cutting Torches available at money-saving discounts to Farm Bureau members. The savings are even greater during the "Early Winter Sale" Dec. 1 - 8. For more information, contact your local Group Purchasing vendor, or call 1-800-292-2680, ext., 2015.

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04
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06
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11
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12
General

CROP INSURANCE It's time to start planning for your 1993 crop insurance needs. If you have questions about crop insurance, call your authorized Farm Bureau Insurance agent or contact Jim Gallagher in the Farm Bureau Insurance home office, 517-323-7000, ext. 2741.

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FFA Convention During ANR Week at MSU

About 1,000 members of the Michigan FFA Organization will meet March 3-5 at Michigan State University for their annual convention, which is part of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Week, Feb. 26 - March 6 at MSU. More information about the FFA convention, to be held at the MSU Wharton Center for Performing Arts, can be obtained from Charles Snyder at MSU by calling (517) 353-9221.

The FFA convention will include skilled competitions, business meetings, election of state FFA officers and presentation of state FFA degrees, including the State Star Farmer and the State Star Agribusiness awards. Chapters across Michigan are preparing for a number of leadership contests, as was this group of students last year from the Lowell FFA Chapter.



Crop-O-Rama, intended for FFA and 4-H members, will take place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. March 3 in A155 MSU Plant and Soil Science Building. Participants will demonstrate their skills in crop identification, soil judging and land use. There will also be an agronomic quiz bowl for high school juniors and seniors. For more information, call Larry Copeland at MSU at (517) 353-4595.

FFA members can also participate in a Building Our American Communities workshop from 3:30 to 5 p.m. March 3 in E100 MSU Veterinary Clinic. The workshop will focus on the role that local FFA chapters can play in community improvement. For more information, contact Louis Twardzik at MSU at (517) 353-5190.

Michigan Commission of Agriculture Elects Officers

David Crumbaugh of St. Louis was elected to a one-year term as chair of the Michigan Commission of Agriculture at its January meeting in Grand Rapids.

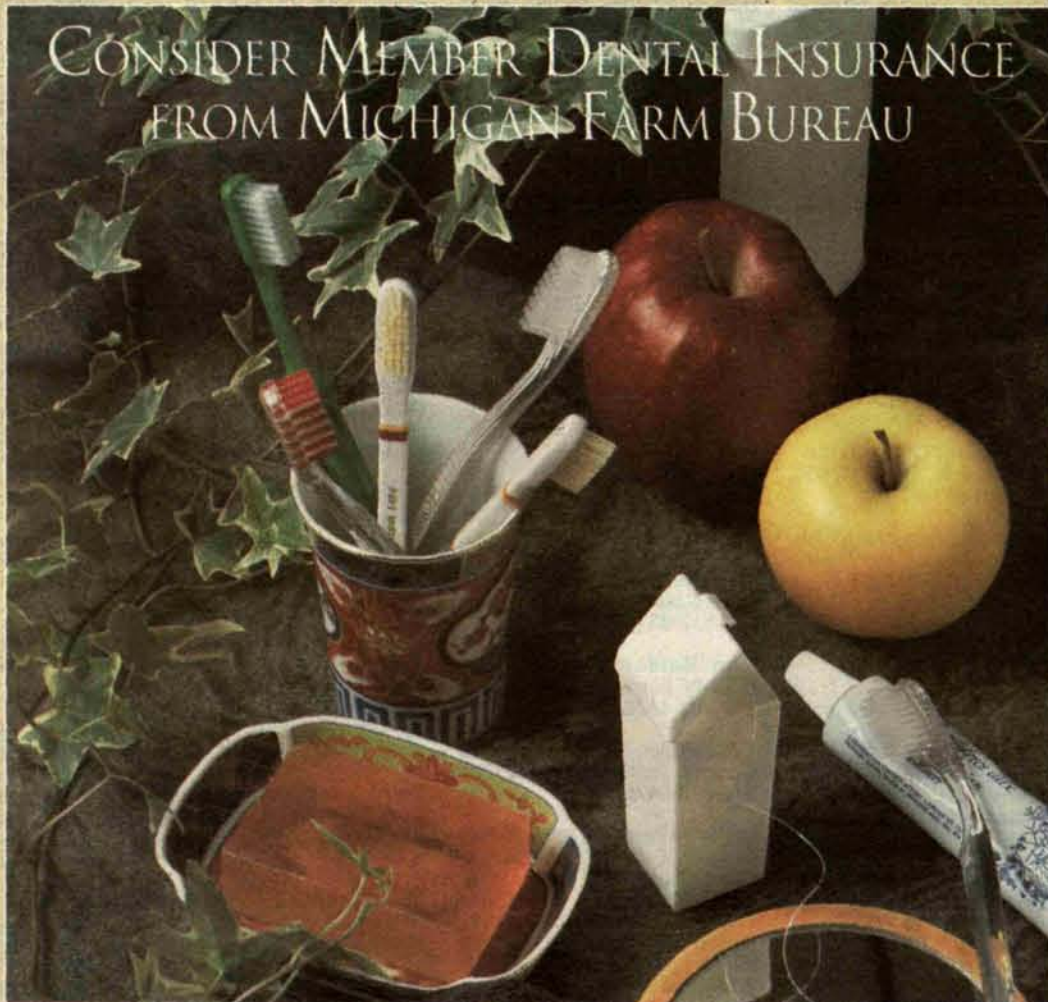
Other newly elected officers include: John A. Spero, Birch Run, vice-chair, and Keith H. McKenzie, Cassopolis, secretary. Donald W. Nugent, Frankfort, and Rita M. Reid, Vulcan, are the remaining members of the five-member bipartisan policy-making body for the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

Crumbaugh, a commission member since 1991, farms 1,200 acres of sugar beets, soy beans and feed corn. Appointed in 1991, Spero farms 550 acres, specializing in sugar beets, soybeans, pinto, kidney and navy beans, corn and wheat. Named to the commission in 1992, McKenzie owns and operates McKenzie Highlands, a hog and grain farm.

Nugent, a member since 1991, owns Nugent Farms; is president of Gateway Products, Inc.; founder, general manager and director of Graceland Fruit Cooperative, Inc. He served as commission chair in 1991 and 1992.

Reid owns a 400-acre farm and is owner and manager of the New Brier Supper Club in Norway. First appointed in 1984, she served as chair in 1987.

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Tirrell - January Farm Bureau Volunteer of the Month



Duane Tirrell of Charlotte, Eaton County, has been selected as Farm Bureau's January Volunteer of the Month winner. Duane and his wife, Pat, have three children and are actively involved in a family partnership with Duane's brother and father raising strawberries and sheep, in addition to the family's dairy and beef operation.

Duane was recognized for his efforts and support of new county Farm Bureau president training. During the recent training program, Duane conducted a workshop on member involvement, goal setting, and working with the media. Duane is a past county president of the Eaton County Farm Bureau and is currently on the county's executive committee.

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