Farm Bureau Establishes Farm Disaster Relief Fund

Below, a bird's eye view of the flood destruction farmers in the midwest are experiencing. This farmstead is located in Southeast Iowa, down river from Ottumwa. At right, a farmer in western Iowa inspects what's left of his corn crop after local flooding.

In addition to the $100,000 donation from the Chicago Board of Trade to kick off the fund, CBOT Chairman Patrick H. Arbor has personally pledged an additional $20,000. Arbor also has issued a challenge to other CBOT seat holders to match his donation.

Individuals wishing to contribute to Farm Bureau's Farm Disaster Relief Fund may send donations, and checks payable to:

Farm Disaster Relief Fund
c/o American Farm Bureau Federation
225 Touhy Ave.
Park Ridge, IL 60068

More information is available by calling (312) 399-5700.

Property Tax Reform a Wakeup Call for School Finance Reform in Michigan – Legislation Looking For $5.5 Billion in New Revenues

Legislation passed by the Michigan House and Senate would exempt all property from millage levied for local and intermediate school district operating purposes. That's good news for Michigan property owners, but the final impact on schools is less certain.

The legislation would, in effect, reduce the property tax bills by 60 to 80 percent, depending on the mix of millage for school operating, county, township, and special assessments, etc., explained MFB Legislative Counsel Ron Nelson. "The revenue lost to schools is estimated at over $5.5 billion dollars, some of which can be offset with savings from cost reductions in other programs such as the Homestead Credit and Public Act 116. There are other property tax credit programs for business and industry which could bring the total savings up to $3 billion."

There are a number of questions surrounding the legislation. The most important is whether or not the allocated 15 mills for school operating called for in the Michigan Constitution will still be allowed. "It doesn't appear the allocated mills will be allowed any longer," Nelson said.

"There is also a significant technical/legal problem with the ability of the state to allocate funds based on the Headlee Limitation," Nelson said. "It appears the state would be limited to approximately $3.5 billion, leaving schools with an estimated $2 billion shortfall.

For the 1993/94 school year, it will be business as usual. Nelson said that if schools have budget problems during the coming school year, it is not the fault of the new legislation. Beginning in September of 1994, however, a substantial change in revenue sources for K-12 operating will take effect.

One ominous option from agriculture's standpoint in replacing lost revenue is the suggestion of removing exemptions from the sales tax. "If that is the avenue taken by the Legislature, it will be very controversial," Nelson concluded. "Those exemptions and credits have been fought for and won over the years based usually on the argument that the tax is disproportionate to that particular taxpayer or group of taxpayers."

Nelson said that MFB will continue working with legislators to improve the quality of education, while holding the line on future spending increases in addition to finding alternative funding sources for K-12 education.

MFB Policy Survey Enclosed - Your Response Encouraged!

Michigan Farm News readers will find a policy development survey enclosed in this issue. This marks the first time that such a comprehensive policy survey of this nature has been undertaken, asking members for input on a number of state and national issues.

Please take a moment to fill out the survey and drop it off in the mail, no postage required, by Sept. 1. Once received at Michigan Farm Bureau, completed surveys will be sent to your respective county Farm Bureau, for use by your Policy Development Committee in formulating policy recommendations.
Governor Signs Bill on Farm ORV Use

There really is something going on in Lansing besides debate over replacing property tax revenue. Gov. Engler has signed House Bill 4592, a measure that clarifies the law regarding use of three and four wheel ORVs on farms.

"The new law allows a farmer on a farm operation to use an ORV to move from field to field within the right-of-way, or on the road if necessary," said Michigan Farm Bureau Legal and Legislative Director Ken Chaddock.

The law requires the farmers, if possible, to travel off the road on the extreme right hand side. The driver of the ORV must be rebound by the lowest of a low law; the travel must take place during daylight hours and a flag must be displayed on the ORV.

The legislation was necessary because the ORVs, commonly used to run errands in rural areas and travel from field-to-field, were technically not legal for use on public roads, according to Nelson. House Bill 4592 was sponsored by Rep. Sandra Hill (R-Montrose).

**MCA Bull Test Nomination Deadline Nears**

Nomination forms for the Michigan Cattlemen's Association (MCA) Bull Test are due on Sept. 10, 1993. The Bull Test station is at Stoneman Feedyards, Breckenridge, Michigan. Bulls are to be delivered to the station on Oct. 15 and 16.

The objectives of the MCA Bull Test are to promote performance testing of beef cattle and serve as an educational tool to acquaint producers with its overall value. It also provides a common environment for evaluating young bulls for rate of gain, soundness and body conformation. The Bull Test aids beef producers in obtaining superior performance tested bulls that have been evaluated for growth and breeding soundness.

Upon completion of the test on Feb. 24, 1994, bulls will be screened for the sale on March 20. For more information on the MCA Bull Test, please contact the MCA Information Line at (317) 669-8599 or write to P.O. Box 387, DeWitt, Michigan 48820.

**USDA Sees Widening Farm Trade Surplus**

The USDA says the nation's farm trade surplus will grow still larger over the remainder of this decade. The estimate is based on an expected pickup in world economic growth and the emergence of free trade rules.

Over the last five years, the United States has maintained a surplus of agricultural trade of around $18 billion, after exports rebounded from their lows of the mid-1980s. Exports of fruit, vegetables and other high-value items have increased dramatically, the USDA said. The surplus is expected to grow strongly during the decade, aided by the dynamic performance of Asia's varied economies, the department said.

**Soybean Defoliators Prevalent this Time of Year**

At flowering and early podfill, soybeans can withstand up to 20 percent defoliation. Other insects that have been reported include bean leaf beetles in southwestern Indiana, Mexican bean beetles in southeastern Indiana and grasshoppers.

**Barter Could Be Most Effective Russian Trade**

Barter trade is the best way of ensuring that more U.S. farm products reach Russia and other financially strapped nations, according to Archer Daniels Midland Co. Chairman Dwayne Andreas.

"I think the magnitude of the problem is severely underestimated," warned Michael Miller, a wildlife researcher with the Colorado Division of Wildlife. "I see the success of our national eradication program slipping through our fingers."

According to an Associated Press story, 12 cattle herds in California, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Texas are under quarantine for outbreaks of the disease. Bovine tuberculosis also has been diagnosed in captive deer and elk in at least 14 states.

**Equine Encephalitis Risk Higher this Summer**

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), commonly known as "sleeping sickness," is a real risk this summer due to the proliferation of mosquitos in Michigan, warns the Michigan Department of Public Health. The virus is transmitted through the bite of a swamp mosquito to horses and other equine, and can cause acute brain inflammation, often being confused for rabies. The fatality rate often reaches 90 to 95 percent.

Mosquitoes that feed on birds and mammals are responsible for transmitting the disease, according to Dr. Milly Chaddock, state veterinarian and director of MDA's Animal Industry Division. "Horses do not develop blood viruses high enough to infect mosquitos and are not a source of the disease," he said. "Horses are considered dead-end hosts and are not a part of the transmission cycle."

Chaddock said anyone concerned about EEE and human health should contact the Michigan Department of Public Health. Horses can also be vaccinated and Chaddock suggests horse owners discuss this option with their local vet. For more information about EEE, contact MDA's Animal Industry Division at (517) 733-1077.
Grand Jury Indicts Man in Connection With MSU Vandalism at Anthony Hall

A false account number used to ship a Federal Express package to Bethesda, Maryland, containing items from MSU’s Dr. Aulerich’s office, was the lucky break investigators needed, and what also may eventually cost Rodney Adam Coronado 50 years in jail and a fine of $1,250,000.

A federal grand jury has issued a five-count indictment against Coronado, in the arson and vandalism that destroyed decades of research facilities on Feb. 28, 1992.

According to Dr. Bruce Benson, MSU Police Chief and Director of Public Safety (DPS), the indictment against Coronado follows more than 16 months of extensive investigation by a task force that included members of MSU’s Department of Public Safety, the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

“Not in short, thousands of hours and thousands of dollars have been expended in pursing this case,” explained Benson. “It’s important to note, however, that these indictments don’t signify the end of the investigation. Additional charges in the future are very possible and the investigation will continue.

According to DPS’s Lt. William Washwell this marks the first time ever, to his knowledge, that indictments have actually been issued against individuals for terrorist activities. Those indictments against Coronado are:

Count 1: maliciously damaging and destroying by means of fire and explosives the personal property of Professor Richard Aulerich and Anthony Hall at MSU.

Count 2: traveling in interstate commerce from Oregon to Michigan with the intent to facilitate, promote, and to commit a plan of extortion in violation of federal law.

Count 3: devising a plan and purpose to obstruct, delay, and affect commerce.

Count 4: willfully using a fire to commit the offense of interference with commerce through extortion.

Count 5: knowingly and unlawfully transporting, transmitting and transferring through interstate commerce, goods, wares and merchandise worth more than $5,000 knowing them to be stolen. Specifically, the indictment says that Coronado sent via Federal Express a package addressed to the Animal Liberation Front or “ALF,” which contained research material stolen from Aulerich, which the defendant knew was intersected in Memphis, Tenn., by Federal Express employees after they discovered that he (Coronado) had used a false Federal Express account number as payment for shipment.

Coronado is a self-proclaimed founder of a group called the Coalition Against Fur Farms (CAFF) and has been active in animal rights protests and activities. He has lived in California, Oregon and Washington.

John A. Smietanka, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Michigan, said that Coronado’s capture. Anyone having information that will assist in finding Rodney Adam Coronado, said Smietanka during a news conference announcing the indictment.

In addition to announcing the five count indictment, we are asking for the public’s assistance in trying to find Rodney Adam Coronado, said Smietanka during a news conference. “He has been in hiding for several months. Federal authorities welcome any information that will assist in Coronado’s capture. Anyone having information is encouraged to call their local FBI or ATF office.”

If convicted of all charges, Coronado faces a maximum prison term of 50 years, a maximum fine of $1,250,000 and supervised release of 15 years. Smietanka quickly dispelled one reporter’s suggestion that the potential punishments were excessive due to previous failures to get indictments on similar cases.

“We have a situation here where $125,000 of vandalism was done to these buildings with a fire,” said Smietanka. “There were also two people in those buildings who could have been killed. So why do we consider it serious? It’s not just because of the physical damage to buildings, but also because of the potential for loss of human life or serious injury of innocent people.”

The terrorist raid on MSU’s mink research facilities destroyed more than 30 years of research - research aimed at protecting mink in the wild and at reducing the use of animals in research. Aulerich, an animal science professor who leads MSU’s mink and associated toxicology research, was studying nutrition and the decline of natural mink populations. Karen Choe, an assistant professor and toxicology expert, also lost research data in the fire.

Flood Concerns Japanese Buyers

With barge traffic still disrupted along the Mississippi River, Japanese soybean buyers are still trying to fill their August order for soybeans. A major Japanese trading firm says about 90 percent of Japan’s 170,000 metric ton August purchase has arrived at their Gulf shipping destination, but the remainder is still unaccounted for.

Rail, truck and barges from the Ohio to the lower Mississippi have been used in transporting beans to the Gulf since the flood closed upper Mississippi barge traffic. Traders say return to normal conditions on the river will be at least two weeks away.

West Coast origin soybeans are another alternative, but they are going at high premiums and are said to be of lower quality than those from Midwest locations. Supplies on the West Coast also are limited, according to traders. The Atlantic Coast as port of origin is even less attractive because of high freight costs and higher soybean premiums, according to Knight Ridder Financial News.

“We have to look at every alternative, but in the end, it is price matters,” one trader said.

Electronic Food Stamps on the Horizon

Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy is recommending that states switch from the traditional paper food stamps to an electronic transfer system that operates like a cash station. He says the electronic benefits system has been tested in New Mexico and Minnesota, and results show it can cut costs and reduce fraud, compared to the booklets of paper stamps.

The EBT system can be used instead of the stamps by issuing qualified recipients a plastic card and a personal identification number. Instead of providing cash, the card is used to purchase food. No money is exchanged. The recipient’s food stamp account is debited for the purchase only of authorized merchandise. Other advantage, besides cost saving and fraud prevention, is that the recipient is relieved of the stigma associated with the exchange of printed food stamps, Espy said.

Private Firm Sees Lower Corn, Soybean Output

Sparks Companies, a private crop analyst firm, has estimated the 1993 soybean crop at 1.85 billion bushels and the corn crop at 7.43 billion. The estimates compare with earlier USDA figures of 1.975 billion bushels of soybeans and 7.85 billion of corn. The government’s previous estimate was based on a World Situation and Outlook Board projection. USDA’s first estimates of 1993 production based on actual field conditions was released Aug. 9.
Weather

As discussed in previous columns, weather patterns for much of June and July in the Midwest were remarkably similar (toughing in the northwestern U.S. and weak riding in the east). Since then, the jet stream configuration has "flip-flopped," resulting in ridging over western North America and troughing over the upper Midwest eastward to New England.

This pattern, much more common during cold season months (and July and August of last summer), has resulted in a series of cool Canadian-origin air masses moving southeastward out of the Canadian Prairies through the Great Lakes region. After finishing the month generally above average, current daily temperature anomalies have recently trended significantly below normal. Precipitation during the last month is expected to be near normal elsewhere and precipitation in Michigan.

To date, the longer-term precipitation is expected to range from normal to normal in the 30-day period to above normal for the 90-day August-November period.

Michigan Weather Summary

7/1/93 to 7/21/93

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Iowa Farm Bureau is in contact with a relief organization called "AmeriCares," which is based in Connecticut. They have provided items such as food, health items and disinfectants for farm wells.

Livestock is being moved to higher ground. The state has set up several weeks past the crest stage. As a result, an estimated 1.75 million acres of corn and soybeans were either not planted or have been flooded or drowned out due to standing water.

Michigan Farm News

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

Midwest Disaster Situation and Crop Update

Iowa: Much of the corn in flooded areas is yellow and stunted. An estimated 2 million acres of corn and soybeans were either not planted or have been flooded or drowned out due to standing water.

Two weeks ago, Corn Belt soybean acres along the Mississippi River have been hard hit. Major relief efforts are now concentrated along the Mississippi River from Rock Island County through Hancock, Adams and Pike counties.

Farmers and relief workers are monitoring levees around the clock for boils and seepage areas. Relief efforts have been organized by the County Farm Bureau, helping farmers who need food, clothing, water and assistance financing, etc.

Seven or eight counties in the state have been hit by 7-inch rainfalls in recent days.

Kansas: Dams and levees have been breached in a number of areas. Wheat harvest problems are widespread, resulting in shortages.

Drought Damage in the Eastern United States Serves

Seven or eight counties have been hit by 7-inch rainfalls in recent days. The state is anticipating crop losses of $550 million and a string of problems reaching back to harvest difficulties this past winter and winter-freeze losses earlier in the year. While the drought damage has not been as widespread as in other states, localized areas have been severely affected.

Kentucky: Four counties along the Mississippi River are experiencing flooding problems. An estimated 40-50,000 acres of soybeans have been lost.

Minnesota: The heaviest rains have occurred in the Red River Valley area, which, fortunately, flows north. The lastest estimates are that 1 million acres of beans, corn and small grains either didn’t get planted or have been destroyed. No one knows how much crop is being destroyed.

Missouri: The state has major flooding problems along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. All of the tributaries are back up. As a result, an estimated 7.5 million acres are badly saturated or under water.

Livestock is being moved to higher ground. The state needs heavy equipment. Many counties are in serious shape. Pasture and hay crops are non-existent. The state is anticipating crop losses of $550 million and a string of problems reaching back to harvest difficulties this past winter and winter-freeze losses earlier in the year. While the drought damage has not been as widespread as in other states, localized areas have been severely affected.

South Dakota: Thirty-three counties have been declared a disaster. Only 2 million acres of the normal 2 million acres of soybean crop have been planted, and

Again, 30 percent of the planted acreage will likely become fed acreage. Some areas of the state have been hit by 7-inch rainfalls in recent days.

The South Dakota Farm Bureau is working to head off expected regulatory problems involving field certification of conservation compliance. They also are working with banks to restructure loans.

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

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

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

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

Dr. Gerry Schwab, Dept. of Agricultural Economics, MSU

CORN

Corn continues to be Michigan’s leading crop in acreage, in value of production and in cash receipts. As indicated in Table 1, expected harvested corn grain acreage (numbers in parenthesis) in most states including Michigan will decline in 1993. Because of the flooding that has occurred in the Western Corn Belt states, harvested acreage will be even less than the 67.3 million acres listed in Table 1.

If 2 million acres drop out due to flooding and the harvested U.S. corn yield drops back to 118 bushels per acre, as occurred in 1989-90 and in 1990-91, harvested corn bushels would be 7.7 billion (in contrast to 9.4 billion in 1992).

Average annual corn price based on the 7.7 billion bushel crop, as estimated by Dr. Jake Ferris using an econometric model, would be in the $2.45 per bushel neighborhood. All though some late July corn production estimates have placed the corn crop at less than 7.5 billion bushels and should encourage some additional bloom to the new crop December CBOT price level, there is no guarantee that the corn prices will reach or exceed the projection.

HOGS

Given that commercial red meat production during June was record high and that the most recent “Hog and Pigs” Report had market hog inventory slightly above the 1992 level, hog prices in the mid-40’s have held rather well.

Although hog production expansion was not as indicated by the USDA June 1 inventory of breeding stock, there is a prevailing sentiment with this author that hog numbers are not declining.

The 6 percent lower sow slaughter during the first half of 1993 compared to 1992, and relatively cheap feed grains, suggest that modest profits are being made and that the swine industry, including the large vertically integrated firms, are not reducing sow numbers.

Strategy: Your corn should have tossed by the time this article is released. Assess the yield potential for your crop.

Unless you prefer to carry all the risk for your new crop, transfer some of the downside price risk to others using one of the several available pricing tools when the pricing opportunity reaches your threshold. Remember that crop prices in short crop years often peak early to ration out the reduced supply.

Seasonal Commodity Price Trends

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WHEAT

The markets continue to digest the news and present its composite evaluation in the form of an ever-changing set of prices. The record-setting July rally in the Corn Belt will be devastating to the crops of river bottom farmers and will adversely affect crop yields of upland producers. This misfortune does provide grain and soybean producers with some pricing opportunities that were not predicted this spring.

Production will be reduced, but by how much? Prices have increased relative to previous expectations, but no one can predict with certainty how high the prices will go and how long higher price levels can be sustained. What we can and continually do have a marketing plan that enables us to pull our pricing triggers when desirable pricing opportunities are presented.

SOYBEANS

Soybean prices have been buoyed upward with strong demand and reduction in acres to be harvested. Although, as indicated in Table 2, intentions were to increase soybean acres planted in 1993 to 60.47 million acres; the forces of nature prevailed.

Data in Table 2 indicates that four of the top five soybean producing states are in the Western Corn Belt that has been pelted with the adversely high rainfall. Estimates of flooded soybean acreage range from 3 to 5 million acres often peak early to ration out the reduced supply.

Using the econometric model of Dr. Ferris and reducing soybean acreage by 3 million

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<tr>
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Using the econometric model of Dr. Ferris and reducing soybean acreage by 3 million

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<tr>
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<th>Wheat</th>
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<th>Production (1,000 Bu.)</th>
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<td>2,840</td>
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TABLE 3: ALL WHEAT - JULY 1, 1993 FORECAST *

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<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Acres Harvested (1,000 Acres)</th>
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<tr>
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* "Crop Production," November 10, 1992; National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.
** "Acreage," June 30, 1993; National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

The CBOT soybean price action has been quite choppily and difficult to hold above the $5 level. No one knows if this is a top of the market price, but it does offer you a profitable pricing opportunity. The market also is not offering any carry or storage premium after the new crop (November) contract and positive returns to storage do not appear likely.

If you previously priced as many soybeans as you desire for 1993, think about pricing some 1994 soybeans using a "roll over" hedge with the July 1994 contract.
Market Outlook Continued

CATTLE

The most recent Cattle Inventory Report suggests that the cattle cycle continues its expansion. Total cattle numbers are continuing to slowly increase with a reported number of 110.6 million head - 1.3 percent above last year's number.

Cattle on feed inventories reported in the July 1 state survey were also up by 7 percent over year earlier levels. If demand can be maintained, slaughter cattle prices for 1994 are expected to be in the $74-$78 per cwt. neighborhood.

Strategy: One of the most important decisions to influence the profitability of cattle feeding is determining what price can be paid for feeder cattle. Table 4 indicates the results of analyzing three cattle feeding alternatives.

The prices and costs used are intended to be representative of the Michigan situation as it exists in late July for a fall feeding purchase decision. Table 4 was generated using the BEEFEDER software created by Drs. Rust and Black at Michigan State University to facilitate this planning process.

Dairy Feeds Situation and Outlook

Dr. Sherrill Nott, Dept. of Agricultural Economics, MSU

Creating the feed supply is a major task for Michigan dairy farmers. This year’s challenges include predicting the impact of the Northern Plains drought, as well as the weather actions on your farm. As the state moves into the fall period, dairy managers will be taking action to assure feed supplies through summer of 1994. This review of what happened to major crops on Michigan dairy farms in 1991 and 1992 will help you think about your feeding decisions for the next year.

Hay supplies for the year start with inventories January 1. Hay on hand was 6.3, 5.8 and 5.2 tons (as fed) per cow in 1991, 1992 and 1993, respectively. The average Telfar (Tel-far) inventory for the 1991, 1992 and 1993 hay yields, as reported by the Michigan State University Extension’s Telfarm accounting project.


Despite feeding less hay per cow in 1992, inventories were down by the end of the year. Hay used per cow was 43.83 on January 1, 1993. Southern Michigan conditions, as written in the production of crops. During 1993, hay inventories may be rebuilt while maintaining feeding rates.

Corn silage yields per acre were 6.1, 5.6 and 7.1 tons (as fed) per cow in 1991, 1992 and 1993, respectively. The 1.7 tons in 1993 is 127 percent of the 1992 amount. Corn silage yields per acre were down to 12.5 tons in 1992 from 14.4 tons in 1991. Land harvested as corn silage rose from .53 acres in 1991 to .73 acres per cow in 1992. The tons fed per cow stayed constant at 7.7 tons both years.

Com silage was plentiful, but of perhaps lower quality in 1992. Many acres that did not ripen for grain were ensiled. This 127 percent increase in tonnage was valued at $19 per ton. These beginning inventories, in combination with a decent 1993 hay yield, should provide for this year’s corn crop to go more towards grain and less towards silage.

Corn grain inventories on dairy farms January 1 were 142, 156 and 121 bushels per cow in 1991, 1992 and 1993, respectively. The 121 bushels in 1993 were 72 percent of the 1992 amount. Due to lack of dry down, plus late harvest, much of the 1992 crop was of low quality. The corn inventory value January 1, 1993 was $1.84 per bushel.

The corn yield averaged 110 and 98 bushels (as fed) per cow in 1991 and 1992, respectively. The acres harvested were 4.12 and 3.58 tons in 1991 and 1992, respectively. After allowing for purchases and sales, hay disappeared as 7.65 tons per cow in 1991. It dropped to 6.73 tons in 1992.

Patz® Offers Open-Top Mixers

Four notched, 24-inch augers mix fast—even square-baled dry alfalfa in limited amounts. "Self-aligning auger bearings mounted outside. Electronic scales precisely weigh total mixed rations. For trailer models: 540 R.P.M. PTO. For stationary models: electric motors. Capacities of 190, 240 and 290 cubic feet (bigger models available in limited amounts)." Patz® augers tubes for easy removal. Rollers-"chain reduction with sealed oil bath and planetary gear drive for the augers. Flanged auger tubes with sealed oil bath and planetary gear drive for the augers.

Ask us about Patz financing with affordable rates and 24, 36 or 48-month terms.
The Animal Agriculture Initiative -- Putting Michigan's Rural Economy on the Launching Pad"

Livestock Initiative funding will be used to renovate Anthony Hall, the Dairy Plant, the Meats Lab and the farm facilities, as well as a new agriculture and livestock education Center to replace the old livestock pavilion pictured below.

In these days of widespread cynicism about the motives behind government spending, it's rare to find an expenditure that draws almost unanimous praise for being a genuine investment in the economic future of Michigan.

To the delight of farmers and everyone else interested in the state's economic growth and diversity, the Legislature's Joint Capital Outlay Committee this spring approved the preliminary planning money for the nearly $70 million Animal Agriculture Initiative at Michigan State University. The action will launch architectural planning this summer. Construction and renovation of animal agriculture buildings on campus could begin yet this year or next.

The campaign that kept this investment plan on track through several tight state budgets is a tribute to the leadership of Michigan Farm Bureau, dairy and livestock organizations and others in the state's agricultural industry.

"The industry has really done an excellent job of reminding and thanking legislators for their support and for the efforts that have gone into this project over the past several years," said Ron Nelson, legislative counsel for Michigan Farm Bureau. Nelson is a veteran observer of Lansing politics, and he admits that he was pleased that lawmakers were persuaded to stick with the funding for the Initiative. "Budgets have been tight, but the animal industry has demonstrated its need. Animal agriculture facilities at MSU are very much out of date. In fact, some have not been updated for at least 30 years because of inadequate funds," he said.

Through the years, the prowess of MSU's football and basketball teams has drawn the most attention to the nation's pioneer land grant institution. But MSU has also been a superstar in the world of agricultural institutions. The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources has a well-earned reputation for innovative, world-class teaching and research.

But that reputation in the area of animal agriculture has been threatened by years of trimmed budgets that have taken their toll on both facilities and people resources at MSU. "Unless you're aware of the modern operations underway or being constructed at other universities around the country, you don't really recognize how far MSU has fallen behind the times," according to Kevin Kirk, commodity specialist and livestock expert for Michigan Farm Bureau.

He said MSU had these specific problems that helped galvanize support for the Initiative:
- the research facilities in Anthony Hall were antiquated and unsafe. The ventilation system could not handle laboratory needs and freezers had broken seals.
- the Dairy Plant did not meet U.S. Department of Agriculture standards and its equipment was decades behind the industry.
- the current Meats Laboratory also did not meet USDA standards, had outdated equipment and no facilities for many processing areas.
- the beef, dairy, poultry and swine farms needed renovating.
- the Livestock Pavilion was obsolete.

"Because of these facility problems and years of budgetary constraints, MSU found itself in the position of having more difficulty continuing to attract the outstanding faculty needed to support an expansion of the animal agriculture industry in our state," said Kirk.

But the $70 million investment in the Initiative will help turn that situation around. Funds will be used to remodel Anthony Hall and for new research farm facilities, including a swine farrowing barn and nursery, grower/finisher facilities and a new horse barn and arena. It will renovate an existing building for the installation of a high speed treadmill for evaluation of performance horses working at racing speeds. It will construct new infectious disease containment facilities at the veterinary research farm. And it will construct a new agriculture and livestock education center to replace the old livestock pavilion.

The state's agricultural industry believes that this investment in the future will yield big dividends.

With this additional funding support, MSU is expected to develop solutions to animal manure problems. Solutions are critically important if the industry is to expand or even maintain its current level of production. And finding appropriate, environmentally sound manure application techniques is a key to maintaining a "good neighbor" policy with non-farmers in rural areas.

The investment will help expand, perhaps even double, the beef feedlot and cow-calf production in the state and create a forage-based beef industry.

It will also encourage expansion of the state's poultry industry, which currently produces only about half of the eggs consumed in Michigan. Turkey production could be doubled.

With the feed and slaughtering capacity in this state, Michigan will be able to produce and market a million additional hogs each year.

The initiative will help to optimize the health and performance of horses in support of the state's racing industry.

It will boost the health of the sheep industry, in part by filling the now-vacant sheep extension veterinary position.

Finally, it will allow Michigan State University to continue working with dairy farmers to make dairying even more profitable, and help the industry meet the opportunities presented by the new, large dairy processing facilities in the state.

This revitalization of Michigan's animal agriculture project will benefit all sectors of the state's agricultural economy. For example, it will allow more farmers to diversify their operations by taking advantage of Michigan's unique environment for livestock production.

The project will also expand local live-stock grain markets, and help reduce the need for costly "out of state" grain shipments. By some estimates, the extra demand for corn and soybeans created by this live-stock expansion could boost prices by 25 to 30 cents a bushel.

But what about the impact on the total Michigan economy? What kind of return...
Eaton County farmer and MBF Director Mark Smuts was in Portland, Oregon, recently as a member of the AFBF Grain Quality Advisory Committee to inspect export facilities, and to meet with Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) personnel. MBF Commodity Specialist Bob Boehm also participated in the two-day meeting.

The advisory committee includes farmers from across the country, who are charged with providing direction to the AFBF Board of Directors on grain quality issues.

Top on the list of discussion was the recent controversy surrounding the use of water to control dust. Allegations have been levied against some grain companies that the practice is being abused, by adding more water than is needed to adequately control dust.

The committee heard from several industry representatives about the pros and cons of water use for dust control as well as other measures, such as the use of soy oil.

"While most agreed that dust levels must be reduced for environmental considerations and worker safety concerns, several industry representatives admitted the system is susceptible to abuse," Boehm said. "The highest cost of oil compared to water for dust control is not economically feasible either."

Although managers of the export facilities advocated the use and need for water in dust control, many critics are suggesting that the FGIS be responsible for maintaining and enforcing stricter standards.

The committee also discussed other quality-related issues, including review of current grain standards, grain quality discounts, grain testing equipment and standardization, funding alternatives for the FGIS and amendments to the Plant Variety Protection Act.

The advisory committee toured two export terminals including the Columbia Grain, Inc., Terminal 5 Elevator. The 4 million bushel export terminal is located 100 miles from the mouth of the Columbia River, and sports a maximum load-out of 2,000 tons per hour for ocean-bound vessels. This ship was bound for Japan, with an expected trip of 13 days, sea.

**Initiative... continued from page 8**

...A focus on the non-farm impact from expansion of the dairy industry helps make the point. The dairy industry comprises the largest single element of Michigan's agricultural economy and has the most impact on the rest of the state.

An analysis by the MSU Agricultural Economics Department noted that there are around 5,000 commercial dairy farms in the state. The output provides over a quarter of the cash farm receipts of Michigan agriculture. The Initiative has targeted a 127 percent increase in sales value.

If the dairy expansion multiplies, it could produce over $123 million dollars a year. And it would generate $123 million dollars a year. It would boost local property tax receipts by nearly $4 million dollars being spent each year on dairy supplies, utilities, insurance and other services. The dairy industry comprises the largest single element of Michigan's agricultural economy and has the most impact on the rest of the state. Their output provides over a quarter of the cash farm receipts of Michigan agriculture. The Initiative has targeted a 127 percent increase in sales value.

To illustrate the nature of the expansion, if the number of cows to the state's dairy herd would mean in terms of economic development? Again, citing figures from the MSU Agricultural Economics Department noted that there are around 5,000 commercial dairy farms in the state. The output provides over a quarter of the cash farm receipts of Michigan agriculture. The Initiative has targeted a 127 percent increase in sales value.

Over fifteen hundred more jobs. It would also generate $123 million dollars a year. And it would generate $123 million dollars a year. It would boost local property tax receipts by nearly $4 million dollars. Another point. The dairy industry comprises the largest single element of Michigan's agricultural economy and has the most impact on the rest of the state. Their output provides over a quarter of the cash farm receipts of Michigan agriculture. The Initiative has targeted a 127 percent increase in sales value.

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Cash Crop Farm Financial Analysis Shows Reduced Returns

Ralph E. Hepp, Agricultural Economist
Department of Agricultural Economics
Michigan State University

The cash crop report number 569 is a summary of the financial and production records kept by crop farmers enrolled in the TELFARM record program through Michigan State University's Cooperative Extension Service. The report includes 24 grain farms producing corn, soybeans, wheat, and dry edible beans and 18 Saginaw Valley crop farms producing sugar beets, corn, soybeans, wheat and dry edible beans. The report has three purposes: 1) to provide statistical information about the financial results on crop farms during 1992, 2) to provide information on the trends in resource use, income and costs during the last three years, and 3) to provide production costs for comparative analysis and forward planning.

The 42 crop farms are located in southern Michigan and are selected for the report because they specialize in grains and other field crops, include inventory and crop production data, and represent various sizes of crop farms.

Business analysis reports are also published for farms specializing in potato, dairy, fruit, and swine enterprises. The TELFARM participants are not necessarily representative of all Michigan crop farms, but are those that desire an excellent record-keeping system and assistance in records and financial management from the Cooperative Extension Service. Typically, TELFARMers operate larger farms than the average Michigan crop producer and obtain a larger percent of their income from agriculture.

FINANCIAL TRENDS - Returns on cash grain farms in 1992 decreased from the previous two years (Table 1). The return on owned capital was 4.4 percent in 1992, which was down from 9.5 percent in 1991 and 5.8 percent in 1990. The total value of production per acre was $245 in 1992, $288 in 1991 and $262 in 1990.

The 42 crop farms were divided into three groups by number of acres with small farms less than 400 tillable acres, medium farms between 400 and 800 tillable acres and large farms greater than 800 tillable acres (Table 2). The small farms averaged 281 tillable acres, medium farms averaged 572 acres and the large farms averaged 1,567 acres. Capital investment per acre was about $63 per acre and a .9 percent residual return on owned capital was achieved.

The value of farm capital on cash grain farms was higher in 1992, with a higher value placed on the land and machinery per acre. The estimated hours of labor per acre was 4.2 in 1992.

Crop yields in 1992 were about the same as 1991, with the decreases in crop value coming from decreases in prices and crop quality due to weather conditions. Total production cost per acre was $225, which was slightly lower than 1991 and 1990. Crop supplies and machinery costs decreased.

The return to owned capital was 15.3 percent in 1992, 10.5 percent in 1991, and 10.2 percent in 1990. The return to owned capital was 4.2 percent in 1992.

Governor Appoints Beef Industry Commission

Governor Engler has made three appointments to the Michigan Beef Industry Commission. They are William Sheridan of Mason, Gary Voogt of Marine and Pam Bonteke of Marion. The Commission administers the beef checkoff program which is designed to improve profitability by strengthening beef's position in the marketplace and by expanding consumer demand for beef.

William Sheridan will be representing the livestock marketing position and will be replacing Bim Franklin, who is retiring after 18 years of service. Sheridan, an animal science graduate of Michigan State University, is owner of Sheridan Auction Service, Inc., and the Ososso Livestock Sales Co.

Gary Voogt, chairman of the Michigan Beef Industry Commission and a polled hereford breeder, was reappointed for a second term. Voogt is Vice-President of Moore and Broggink, Inc., Consulting Engineers in Grand Rapids.

Pam Bonteke, co-owner of Bonteke Farm, was reappointed for a second term. Bonteke serves as Michigan's beef director on the National Livestock and Meat Board.
Western Michigan has made the American Farmland Trust's (AFT) list as one of 12 of America's most threatened agricultural areas. In selecting the areas for its list of "The Top 12 on the Edge," AFT cited the regions' economic importance as food-producing areas and the threat to their agricultural resource base from rapid population growth and urban-edge sprawl.

AFT, a national farmland conservation group based in Washington, said the farmland lies in urban-influenced counties either in or adjacent to metropolitan statistical areas.

Agricultural regions named to the Top 12 list in order to greatest threat were California's Central Valley, south Florida, Oregon's Willamette Valley, Twin Cities metro area, Western Michigan, Shenandoah and Cumberland Valleys of Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, and the Hudson River and Champlain Valleys of New York and Vermont.

AFT said that while the 12 most threatened agricultural regions collectively represent only 5 percent of U.S. land of farms, they account for 17 percent of total U.S. agricultural sales, 67 percent of domestic fruit production, 55 percent of domestic vegetable production and 34 percent of dairy products. Production per acre is nearly six times greater in the 12 regions than other nonurban-influenced counties.

The most threatened agricultural regions saw population grow by 21 percent from 1980 to 1989, twice the national average. In fact, 40 percent of the country's population increase in the eighties occurred within the 12 areas.

Meanwhile, farmland in the areas declined by more than 3 million acres from 1978 to 1987, or by 34 acres every hour. The rate of decline was 40 percent greater than in other U.S. counties. While conceding not all the loss can be attributed to non-farm use, AFT said much of it is likely to represent permanent conversion.

Looking Out For The Environment

Sinkhole Management Protects Groundwater Quality

Sinkholes are common in many regions of the United States. Bushes being a physical threat to people, equipment and animals, sinkholes can create a water quality hazard. Sulfur water or irrigation runoff can wash soils and create a groundwater quality problem. This property can be reduced when a sinkhole protection is offered to the irrigation systems and other groundwater protection processes in the soil.

If you have a rancher or farmer on your property, you can help prevent ground- water supply and expose you to financial and legal liability. Be sure to remove any trash from surface water. Don't let livestock or animals use the water in the sinkhole. Sinkholes should be treated with care, and you should be aware of the potential danger.

AFT said it examined total agricultural production, population growth, production per acre, specialty crop production and farmland decline in arriving at its list of 12 areas.

AFT said other high-value agricultural areas in the U.S. are also facing serious growth pressures and conversion threats, including the Pioneer and Connecticut River Valleys in the Northeast, the Great Lakes basin in upstate New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan, the Bluegrass region of Kentucky, the Washougal Front in Utah, western Arizona and the Rio Grande Valley of Texas and New Mexico.

Government Conservation Expenditures Highest Ever

Spending on conservation activities by USDA and state and local governments has increased steadily over the past decade. In recent years, rental payments for land retired for conservation purposes have become the largest category of USDA conservation expense. USDA and related state and local government expenditures for conservation exceeded $3.6 billion in 1992 and could reach $3.9 billion in 1993. This total has been increasing in recent years, but could take its first drop in 1994 with budget tightening occurring at all levels. USDA expenditures account for the bulk of government conservation spending. In 1992, USDA spent 86 percent of the total ($3.16 billion), compared with 8 percent for states ($291 million) and 6 percent for local governments ($203 million).

Total USDA conservation expenditures for 1993 are expected to be around $3.4 billion, up $244 million from 1992. A slight drop is budgeted for 1994. Related state and local government spending on conservation increased steadily through 1991, dropped about $20 million in 1992, but rose again for 1993 to more than $203 million, the highest ever. However, appropriations at the local level actually declined by almost 20 percent.

Rental and easement payments are estimated to account for over half of USDA conservation expenditures in 1993. The bulk of these are rental payments to participants in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for land retired from production. Rental payments will also be made for land enrolled in the Water Bank Program and easement payments for land accepted into the new Wetlands Reserve Program.

Technical assistance and extension expenditures of $184 million in 1993 would be the highest ever and could account for nearly one-fourth of the USDA total for private purposes. However, the proportion is much lower than prior to 1988 when CRP rental payments became the single largest component of USDA conservation expenditures.

Cost-sharing for practice installation in 1993 accounts for just over 10 percent of USDA spending, with lesser proportions going to conservation data and research and to project conservation programs. The only category of conservation spending in 1993 that is below its 1992 level is that for project conservation programs.

2002 Yields

AFA-treated wheat had an average increase of 10.76 bu/acre with the highest yield based on the ACA Advantage! as a spring dormancy break application with your topdressing fertilizer to boost your yields.

See the Benefits of ACA

Better root systems Increased Profits Heathier Plants Increased Yields Easier Harvesting Proven Performance

To see the difference, apply ACA with anhydrous, liquid 28% N. Liquid Starter, impregnated on dry or sprayed.

Contact Your Local Clean Crop Dealer or call 1-800-292-2701 for additional information on the ACA Advantage!
Michigan Farm Bureau Young Farmers between the ages of 18 and 30, will once again have an opportunity to express their views on key agricultural issues, and possibly win $1,000 worth of Great Lakes Hybrids and $500 cash from Dodge as a state winner of MFB's Young Farmer Discussion meet contest.

The state finalist will also receive an expense paid trip to the American Farm Bureau annual meeting in Ft. Lauderdale to compete in national competition and possibly win a 1994 Dodge Dakota Pickup.

The national winning grand prize, a 1992 Dodge Dakota Pickup, includes a clutch cab, 4 wheel drive, complete with the SLT Premium Trim Package and a 5.2 liter Magnum V-8 engine.

Contest topics include:

District level: 1. What are some alternatives and innovative uses of agricultural commodities and by-products?

State level: 2. How will primary and secondary education be funded?

3. What can be done to encourage the introduction of beginning farmers into agriculture?

4. What should be the provisions of the 1995 Food Security Act (Farm Bill)?

The district level contests started August 4 in Escanaba for District 11. Other contest dates and locations are:

**District 1, Berrien, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, Van Buren, Sept. 8, Holiday Inn, Kalamazoo**

**District 2, Branch, Calhoun, Hillsdale, Jackson, Lenawee, Sept. 7, Schuler's, Jackson**

**District 3, Livingston, Monroe, Oakland, Washtenaw, Wayne, Aug. 30, Weber's Inn, Ann Arbor**

**District 4, Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Ottawa, Sept. 9, Middletown Inn, Middletown**

**District 5, Clinton, Eaton, Genese, Ingham, Shiawassee, Sept. 16, Holiday Inn, Lansing**

**District 6, Huron, Lake, Macomb, Sanilac, St. Clair, Tuscola, Aug. 31, Westpark Inn, Sandusky**

**District 7, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, Sept. 23, Sandy's Serendipity**

**District 8, Arenac, Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot, Isabella, Midland, Saginaw, Aug. 25, Holiday Inn, Midland**

**District 9, Benzie, Kalkaska, Manistee, Missaukee, Newaygo, Wexford, Sept. 20, Crystal Mountain Resort, Thompsonville**

**District 10, Alcona, Alpena, Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Otsego, Presque Isle, Sept. 20, Days Inn, Gaylord**

For more details, call your county Farm Bureau office or 1-800-292-2680, ext. 3234.

**Corn Growers Appoint Keith Muxlow**

Keith Muxlow of Brown City has been appointed executive director of the Michigan Corn Marketing Committee (MCMC) and the Michigan Corn Growers Association (MCGA). The appointment of Muxlow, who served in the Michigan House of Representatives from 1980 until Dec. 31, 1992, was announced by MCMC Chairman Dan Putman of Williamston, and MCGA President Larry Nobis of St. Johns.

For more details, call your county Farm Bureau office or 1-800-292-2680, ext. 3234.
Due to extreme drought conditions in the southeastern U.S. and flooding in the midwest, Michigan Farm Bureau is laying the groundwork to accumulate information from Michigan farmers who may have hay for distribution in disaster areas.

"Once we begin to receive the information from our members, we'll send that information directly to disaster coordinators in those states that have been hit by drought and floods," said Ken Nye, MFB Community Activities and Research Director. "We've received a number of phone calls from members who would like to know how and what they can do to help farmers in those disaster areas."

Ahld, and the approximate amount of hay won't be known for some time, Nye said it's critical that efforts to accumulate this kind of information get underway so that Michigan farmers can be of assistance when it's needed. Those needs will vary, too.

"From what we've been told, farmers in the Midwest will need to take stock of their situation before they know how much feed they'll actually need," explained Nye. "Although they may be flooded out, adjoining farms do have feed that may be available."

"Many farmers in the southeast, on the other hand, have no feed - period. They're faced with either purchasing feed from outside the region, donations or selling their livestock," he said.

One Michigan farmer's generosity to help Michigan's brethren has encouraged an incalculable multi-state effort to deliver nearly 4,000 bales of hay, and nearly nine tons of feed from Michigan and Indiana farmers. Cass County Farm Bureau member, Rob Frey, has been organizing efforts to ship hay to South Carolina. "According to ag agents in South Carolina, it's just like a desert - there's no pasture, no forage, no crops," he said. Ironically, South Carolina farmers were responsible for organizing fund raisers and hay shipments to Michigan in the Greenville area in 1988. Those efforts generated roughly $25,000 to aid Michigan farmers in addition to several loads of hay.

"We definitely owe those farmers in the Southeast in their time of need - this is farmers helping farmers," said Frey. "We've really been blessed this year and if guys would stop and think and give a helping hand by donating just 50 or 100 bales of hay, it sure would help those guys out down there."

Readers with hay available either for sale or donation, should fill out the coupon on the upper right of this page, and mail it back to: MFB CARD Div. Hay List, P.O. Box 30960, Lansing, MI 48909-8460.

Information required to list your hay is: name, address, phone number, quantity of bales or tons, type of bale (round or square), type of hay (alfalfa, alfalfa mixed, etc.); which cutting (1st, 2nd, 3rd), weight of bale, hay test results (if tested), the best time of day to be reached, and, most importantly, if hay is to be donated or sold. If you want to do both, indicate the quantity in each category.

According to Nye, once the lists are distributed, individuals will be contacted directly by either disaster coordinators and/or farmers in those areas. Transportation arrangements will have to be made on an individual basis. If you need additional information, call Nye at 1-800-292-2680, ext. 2020.
September Discussion Topic – "National Ag Policy"

Congress is expected to begin writing the 1995 Farm Bill late next year or in 1995. The politics of agriculture, however, have changed dramatically since the last Farm Bill was written. The focus of lawmakers who work on the 1995 Farm legislation will reflect those changes.

The predominant concerns that will come into play include increasing pressure to reduce the federal deficit, more environmentally oriented, more consumer responsiveness, more willingness to challenge the justification of outdated programs and more realistic consideration of economic and social consequences resulting from expenditures of scarce federal budget dollars on agriculture.

Farm program spending is a popular target and could become one of the casualties of the fight to cut the federal deficit, despite the fact that farm program spending accounts for less than one percent of the total federal budget. Robert Young, co-director at the University of Missouri, said one more deficit reduction bill and “we’ve squeezed out any advantage of farm program participation, especially among corn and wheat producers.”

Farm program spending cuts in recent years have been the largest in any one program area, except for defense spending. Farm program expenditures now account for just under 20 percent of the USDA’s nearly $70 billion budget. More than 50 percent of USDA’s budget is spent on domestic nutrition programs.

It is clear that the environmental agenda will also continue to pose challenges for farm programs. Agriculture’s political strength has been diminished, while that of the environmental and consumer-oriented organizations has been strengthened due to population changes and congressional redistricting.

Politically, when budget cuts are proposed, agricultural programs are among the first to be targeted for further reductions. This is the result of the declining impact of farmers, increased concentration in agriculture, which conflicts with the image of family farming that consumers would like to preserve - and programs that appear to reward politically unpopular activities such as idling acreage.

Farm Bureau’s role in promoting particular alternative program options must be weighted in light of the prevailing political environment. Agricultural interests alone, even if totally united, cannot command a majority in the House or the Senate. Other interests must join together to generate a working majority to pass a farm bill or other legislation important to agriculture. Alliances with other sectors of the economy will be essential if agriculture is to prevail on such issues.

Efforts to preserve agricultural price and income support programs will continue to be pressured by efforts to cut spending by even greater levels than those under consideration today. It will be very difficult to promote aggressive new programs for agriculture. The influences of budget reduction, environmental improvement, rural development and consumer protection will result in increased scrutiny of many commodity programs, in an attempt to make them more politically palatable. Maintaining the status quo will be increasingly difficult.

In developing new parameters for agricultural programs, alternatives must be thoroughly explored. Farm Bureau can only respond to these challenges if there is an honest evaluation of political strengths and vulnerabilities. If we are to win on the key issues in the farm bill debate, we must view agricultural programs and farm bill issues as they are, not as we wish they were.

Agriculture must capitalize on its advantages and develop proposals that are politically practical in order to preserve a meaningful form of support and stability for basic agricultural commodities. (This article based on information provided by Rob Nooter, ABFB director of governmental relations, and by the Iowa Farm Bureau).

Outstanding Young Ag Leader Applications Due Sept. 1

Young Farmers intent on competing in the Michigan Farm Bureau Young Farmer’s Outstanding Young Ag Leader contest must be recognized as their county’s winner and the make application to the state level on or before Sept. 1, 1993, according to MFB Young Farmer Chairman Kurt Inman.

“Hard work, intelligent planning and the development of leadership skills lead to success in the agricultural industry, which should be recognized,” said Inman. “Recognizing these successful young farmers not only pays tribute to the individual, it also emphasizes the need for highly efficient farm leaders if agriculture is to satisfy the future demands.”

Four finalist will be selected from all of the county winners and will be interviewed by a panel of judges during the MFB annual meeting, where a state winner will be determined.

The state winner in the Outstanding Young Ag Leader Contest will receive an expense paid trip for themselves and the spouse to the ABFB annual meeting held in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Great Lakes Hybrids will also award $1,000 worth of products. Blue Cross Blue Shield will also award all four finalists an MFB Carhart jacket.

For more information, contact your local county Farm Bureau office, or call MFB at 1-800-292-2680, ext. 3234.
Grain Bin Inspections - A Word to the Wise

Farmers with on-farm grain storage facilities may want to conduct a close inspection of their grain bins before refilling them with the 1993 crop. This 40,000 bushel bin, owned by Mueller Bean Co., in Sunfield, Mich., was full of wheat when it started to buckle. It was caught in time by an employee before going all the way down.

Although not sure what caused the bin to buckle, Mueller Safety Director and Company Chairman, Vern Mueller, said they suspect the stiffeners located inside the bin may have gotten out of alignment.

"At this point, it's just a guess, because we haven't had a chance to get inside and inspect it yet," said Mueller. "Farmers should check their own bins and make sure their stiffeners are aligned, and that the splice plate hasn't become loose. The stiffeners are what transpose the weight from the top to the bottom of the bin. If they're not aligned properly, the load will shift and break the chain of support, causing a problem."

Mueller added that the splice plates used on some stiffeners are not the same thickness as the stiffeners themselves, causing problems as well. Attempts were made to unload the bin from the bottom, and vacuuming wheat from the top which caused the buckling to worsen. Workers finally cut a series of 14 holes around the bin to relieve the pressure and get the level of wheat below the buckling point so that it could be unloaded normally.

Case-IH, Great Lakes Hybrids, Dodge Truck, Sponsoring Distinguished Young Farmer Contest

Michigan young farmers have an opportunity to once again compete for 80 hours free use of a Case-IH tractor, receive $1,000 worth of Great Lakes Hybrid product, a $500 cash award from Dodge Truck, and an all expense paid trip to the AFBF annual meeting in Ft. Lauderdale to compete nationally in the Distinguished Young Farmer contest.

Contestants must first receive the Distinguished Young Farmer award at the county level before submitting application to the state contest by the Sept. 1, 1993 deadline, according to MFB Young Farmer Chairman, Kurt Inman.

"The award is based on the individual's ability to be successful at the profession of farming and demonstrated leadership participation," explained Inman. "Heavy emphasis is placed on farm management ability and how much progress has been made since the individual started farming. It's important to realize that the individual's progress, rather than total net worth is the determining factor."

It's also important for applicants to realize that all confidential information is treated just that way, Inman pointed out. Only the three preliminary judges used to select the four finalists have access to the business information, and the application's name sheets have been previously removed and designated by a code for complete impartiality and confidentiality.

Once the four finalists have been selected, they'll be interviewed by another panel of judges at the MFB annual meeting where a state winner will be determined and announced. For more information, contact your local county Farm Bureau office, or call the MFB Young Farmer Department at 1-800-292-2680, Ext. 3234.

Erdman May
MFB Volunteer of the Month

Michael D. Erdman of Stephenson in Menominee County, was awarded the MFB Volunteer of the Month for May, after being nominated by his county Farm Bureau. Erdman, who is the Agricultural Extension Agent for Menominee County, was recognized for his efforts in conducting "Ag in the Classroom" classes for 17th grade classes, reaching a total of 370 children.

"Mike's engaging personality and enthusiasm for agriculture has been a positive influence on our future citizens," said Jeannie Foster, Menominee County Promotion and Education Chairperson. "He has also vigorously advocated wildlife crop damage control in this county. His farm surveys have lent credibility to claims of high deer populations destroying farm crops. We salute Mike for his cooperative spirit!"