Apple Fire Blight Task Force Formed

Severe fire blight infestations in parts of southwestern Michigan prompted various segments of the apple industry to meet recently at the MFB Center in Lansing to form a task force intent on securing additional research dollars and solutions to this bacterial disease that's threatening the state's apple industry.

Fire blight is a bacterial disease that usually infects the apple tree during bloom, eventually killing off limbs of trees. In severe infestations of younger blocks of apples, fire blight can actually kill the entire tree.

Although fire blight is a new phenomenon to Michigan apple producers, the severity of losses and newer strains resistant to control are encouraging efforts to seek new intervention options and resistant apple varieties, according to Coloma fruit grower Jim Miller, who serves on the MFB board of directors.

"Three years ago, we experienced the worst outbreak of fire blight ever throughout the entire state," Miller explained. "Although the outbreak this year is more specific to various regions of the state, it is extremely severe. The newer high-density plantings established within the last five years are very susceptible to this disease."

Hail storms in Van Buren and Allegan counties, and in the Belding area, combined with an unusually humid wet summer, created an ideal environment for the rapid proliferation of fire blight. The hail "wounds" the trees, creating openings in the bark, and on the apples, providing the bacteria access into the tree.

AFBF Recommends 5 Percent ARP for Corn in 1995

Based on an excellent corn harvest this year and crop projections for 1995, the American Farm Bureau Federation is recommending a 5 percent corn acreage reduction program (ARP) for next year.

While setting the ARP at 5 percent would provide slightly higher farm returns, according to David Miller, AFBF commodity policy and programs coordinator, "a 5 percent ARP allows for more price strength and a more reasonable stocks-to-use ratio."

Farm Bureau analysis indicates a 5 percent 1995 ARP would allow for growth in consumption to record levels, but ending stocks would be a more workable 17.6 percent. At 5 percent ARP, production would reach 8.68 billion bushels. Total use would also rise to a record 8.8 billion bushels. Ending stocks are estimated to rise slightly to just over 1.79 billion bushels, Miller stated. This would result in a stocks-to-use ratio of more than 20 percent. When ending stocks exceed 20 percent, the ARP for the following year must be set at 7.5 percent, Miller explained.

The recommendation, sent to Philip Sorenson, director of the Grain Analysis Division of the ASCS, will be considered in setting the ARP rates for 1995. The preliminary recommendation will be announced Sept. 30, and the final ARP level must be set by the Secretary of Agriculture by Nov. 5.

So New it's Patented...Michigan Farmers Get Their First Look

Farmers across Michigan had their first chance to look at and test drive the newest John Deere to offer during mid-September field demos at participating dealers. John Deere introduced its 8100, 8200, 8300 and 8400 models rated at 160, 175, 200, and 225 horsepower, respectively, according to Larry Lich of Lich Farm Service, Inc. near Portland.

A radically redesigned and patented chassis that positions the engine 10 inches higher and 44 inches further forward provides the operator improved visibility, improved maneuverability with a 16-foot turning radius, improved weight distribution, and added clear space, says Lich. The frame has been eliminated which allows the front wheels to be turned tighter than possible on past models. The redesign doesn't stop with the chassis either, thanks to a new "CommandARM."

"The cab is laid out so that you can actually work the controls, including the hydraulics, throttle, and gear selection and not move your arm more than six inches," Lich said. "The controls are all touch hydraulics and toggles, with no levers to speak of, so the operator can control the tractor with his fingertips."
"November Ballot Proposal Facts and Fiction"

Just like autumn leaves, facts and fiction about the fall ballot proposals are swirling around the electoral landscape. With the flurry of information being distributed by those who are against Proposal C, it's important to take a look at your organization's position (and the reasoning behind that position).

MFB is an active member of the Michigan Citizens for Insurance Reform (MCIR) - a coalition of dozens of organizations and businesses and thousands of individuals supporting reforms to Michigan's automobile insurance law.

We strongly favor a "yes" vote on Proposal C, the referendum to amend Michigan's auto insurance laws. You are probably asking yourself: why do we have to vote on this again? Didn't the Legislature approve and the governor sign a Farm Bureau-backed auto insurance reform package?

That's right. We did have effective auto insurance reform legislation (Public Act 143) signed, sealed and delivered. But those who had the most to lose from reform - the Michigan Trial Lawyers - are asking voters to reverse the law enacted by a bipartisan majority of the Legislature. They have delayed enactment of the new law and placed the issue on the ballot in hopes that they can confuse voters into rejecting the reforms.

In my opinion, the trial lawyers are conducting a campaign that insults farmers and other Michigan motorists by implying we're not smart enough to understand the real agenda behind a "no" vote on Proposal C. A "no" vote is not a vote for real insurance reform. A "no" vote is not a vote for lower rates. A "no" vote is not a vote for protecting the rights of those who file legitimate claims.

A "no" vote is really a vote to reject reforming an auto insurance system that too often rewards wealthy lawyers and penalizes ordinary consumers. But a "yes" vote on Proposal C is a smart choice that brings real reform to the system and saves us up to $700 million dollars annually in insurance premiums.

Michigan Farm Bureau strongly supported the original auto insurance reform legislation. Remember, your positive "yes" vote on Proposal C will be needed to make auto insurance reform a reality.

New MFB Staff Assignments Announced

MFB staff member Scott Everett of the Field Operations Division has been appointed to coordinate administration of the Community Action Group program, with Bob Harms assigned to new group development. Doug Ewald of the Public Affairs Division has been appointed to coordinate local affairs and will assist county Farm Bureaus in securing resources to help them deal with local issues.

With the increasing importance of environmental issues facing agriculture, MFB is also strengthening its ability to assist members in this area. Kevin Kirk of the Commodity Activities and Research Division will, in addition to his role in the animal agriculture area, become an environmental specialist to help keep Farm Bureau in the forefront of environmental education and compliance activities.

Country Sunshine in Northern Michigan

Farmers and sunflowers combined their talents this past summer bringing a little more sunshine to the Northern Michigan counties of Antrim and Charlevoix. This 20-acre field, sponsored by the Promotion and Education committees of Antrim and Charlevoix county Farm Bureaus, was located on the Tom Wieland Family Farm. According to Wieland, the field attracted its fair share of onlookers and photographers this past summer.

In Brief...

Net Farm Income to Rise

The Agriculture Department said it estimates net farm income for 1994 will rise from $43 billion to $47-53 billion this year. The department also estimated net cash income will be in the $53-57 billion range. Over the past five years, net cash income has averaged $56 billion per year. The rise in farm income will be attributed in part to making top receipts, which is expected to come in at between 6 percent and 8 percent for the year.

Feed grain and soybeans are forecast to produce receipts of 4 percent to 6 percent and oilseed increases between 9 percent and 11 percent. Dairy and livestock are not expected to rise more than 2 percent. Production expenses are expected to rise less than 2 percent. Total farm income is expected to rise 1 percent. Total farm equity is expected to remain stable at between $771 billion and $781 billion.

No Significant Drop in Milk Consumption

Countering anti-biotechnology activist's claims that the use of a bovine growth hormone in dairy cows would cut U.S. consumption of milk by as much as 25 percent, Agriculture Department figures showed a scanty 1 percent drop in fluid milk sales in July over the same time period last year.

"The American public is confident that milk is as pure and wholesome as ever," said Jim Barr, chief executive of the National Milk Producers Federation. "Consumers have recognized that there is no reason to stop drinking milk."

The hormone BST is said to increase milk production in treated cows by up to 15 percent and has the blessing of the Food and Drug Administration, the American Medical Association and the American Dietetic Association.

Court Ruling a Setback for Ethanol

A federal appeals court decision to grant a stay on implementation of the Environmental Protection Agency's rule to include ethanol in a cleaner-burning fuels program is being viewed as a setback by agricultural interests and a temporary victory for big oil.

EPA officials said the program will move forward pending final court ruling on a lawsuit filed by the American Petroleum Institute challenging the agency's decision to mandate use of ethanol from renewable sources in the reformulated fuels program. Without a final ruling, the program will include petroleum based oxygenates as the primary air-pollution curbing additive to gasoline beginning Jan. 1. In its ruling, the court did not agree with the oil industry's position, but said its lawsuit must be heard in its entirety.

Although the renewable oxygenate requirement in the EPA plan (that would require a 2 percent oxygenate blend comprised of 30 percent renewable ethanol in gasoline used in heavily polluted cities) does not specify from what source ethanol must come, the oil industry is critical of the plan because it does not require all oxygenates to be derived from non-renewable petroleum sources.

Michigan Milk Production up in August

Dairy herds in Michigan produced 466 million pounds of milk during August, up 2 percent from a year ago, according to the Federal/State Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service. Milk per cow averaged 1,390 pounds, increasing 40 pounds from a year ago. The Michigan dairy herd was estimated at 335,000 head, 4,000 less than in August 1993.

The preliminary value of milk sold averaged $12.60 per hundredweight (cwt) in August, $0.20 less than last year. August mid-month slaughter cow prices averaged $45.00 per cwt., $3.50 less than the previous year.

Milk production in the 21 major states totaled 10.8 billion pounds, 2 percent more than production in those same states in August 1993. Production averaged 1,344 pounds per cow for August, 38 pounds more than last year. The number of cows on farms was 8.03 million head, 65,000 head less than August 1993, but 3,000 head more than July 1994.

Dairy manufacturing plants in Michigan produced 1.2 million pounds of butter in July, unchanged from a year ago. Ice cream output totaled 1.72 million gallons, 19 percent less than July 1993.

Price Elections Announced for Fall Planted Crops

Ken Ackerman, manager of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), announced the maximum price elections for 1995 wheat and barley. The top price elections will be:

- Wheat - $3.15 per bushel; and barley - $1.90 per bushel.

Price elections reflect FCIC's expectations about prices farmers will receive for their commodities in the 1995-96 marketing year. Farmers have the option of selecting any price election at or below the announced maximum election. FCIC must estimate market price well in advance of production and sales so that farmers will know their insurance coverage and what it will cost.

All affected producers should contact their local crop insurance agents to discuss their risk management options and sales closing dates.
In Brief...

Continuation of CRP Goal of Nov. 9 and 10 Statewide CRP Forum

A host of Michigan organizations, including Michigan Farm Bureau and the Soil and Water Conservation Society, have banded together to host a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Forum on Nov. 9 and 10, according to MFB Public Affairs Director Al Almy.

"With over 300,000 acres planted to grasses and/or trees in our state as a result of CRP, Michigan obviously has a vested interest in the fate of CRP during the 1993 Farm Bill debate," Almy said. "Michigan is estimated to have had an erosion reduction of 3.2 million tons annually due to the CRP."

In addition, there have been conservation and environmental benefits, improved wildlife habitat, and reduced pesticide run-off, according to Almy. Sponsors of the CRP Forum are hopeful that the CRP can be extended once the existing 10 year contracts start to expire.

For more information and forum registration, contact Soil Conservation Service District Conservationist Randy Seelbrede, located in the Paw Paw field office at (616) 657-4263.

Michigan BST Labeling Bills up to 15 and Counting

Rep. Varga (D-Detroit) has introduced five bills to allow for labeling of milk or milk products not treated with rBST. These five bills are in addition to the 10 bills that have already been introduced which provided for the labeling of milk from cows treated with rBST.

The bills have all been sent to the Consumers Committee which is chaired by Varga.

West Branch Feeder Calf Sale Celebrates 50 Years

The 50-year anniversary is a family affair for Alcona livestock farmers Jack Small (left) and, son, Kevin. Jack participated in the first sale and has served as president. Kevin is currently serving as president for the feeder calf sale event scheduled for Oct. 18.

by Renee Negent

This fall marks 50 years that the West Branch Feeder Calf Sale has existed. Bill Finney, who is the county agent, prompted the first sale in an effort to get better livestock. The first sale was held in West Branch through the cooperative effort of MSU, Finney, and the original president of the sale, Charlie Prescott.

According to Jack Small, past president of the West Branch Feeder Cattle Association, economics is the real reason the sale has been successful year after year. Jack said, "Producers make money and that's why it works."

Jack's son, Kevin, who is the current president, said, "The main group of producers are mostly family-owned operations and have about 50 to 100 cow/calf pairs."

The Small operation, consisting of Jack and Kevin, raise 150 cow/calf pairs and farm about 900 acres annually. Jack has been involved with the West Branch Feeder Calf Sale since it began in 1944.

According to Steve Gonyea, past president of the Michigan Feeder Cattle Producers Council, a reputation for quality animals has generally resulted in a 5 to 10 cent premium for producers because of the quality.

Gonyea said, "Producers pre-sort their animals before bringing them to the yards, which means the animals can come in closer to sale time, cutting down on the possibility of getting sick."

Since the West Branch sale began, it has expanded to three other sites: Alpena, Paulding, and Rapid River. The Michigan Feeder Cattle Producers Council is the organization that is responsible for all of the sales. The four sales share the reputation for quality animals, but are run independently by their local branch of the council.

The sales are a cooperative effort. Producers come together to plan the event and supply the labor to conduct the auction. Each sale has its own board of directors and is conducted independently, but they pool their resources with the other sales for advertising and promotion.

This year, the sales will be held on Oct. 10 at 12 noon in Paulding; Oct. 11 at 10:30 a.m. at Rapid River; Oct. 17 at 1:30 p.m. in Alpena; and Oct. 18 at 12 noon in West Branch. Between the four sales, about 4,000 head of feeder calves are marketed. The steer calves average about 500 pounds, while the heifers average slightly less, about 475 pounds. To get more information about any of the sales, contact your local Extension Service.
A
bove-normal temperatures during early September caused seasonal growing degree day totals across many sections of the state to surge back to normal or even a little ahead of normal by the middle of September. The mostly sunny, dry weather accompanying the above-normal temperatures favored early harvest and other field work activities and provided nearly ideal conditions for late maturing crops.

While little has changed with respect to the outlook during the next few weeks, jet stream flow patterns on a hemispheric basis have become stronger and more active since the beginning of the month. This is likely associated with the annual transition of summer to winter.

Should this active pattern continue into October, I would expect highly variable conditions in Michigan, with temperatures ranging from above normal to below normal. Given that cold air has recently begun to appear on weather maps in far northern sections of North America (again, in response to shortening day length and the change of seasons), I would also expect the first killing frost in some sections of the state, especially in interior sections away from the lakes. The official National Weather Service 30-day outlook for mid-September through October calls for the variations to average themselves out over time, with near normal temperatures and precipitation expected.

Michigan Crop Yields Expected Down from Last Year

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Michigan Farm News</th>
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**Michigan Weather Summary**

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**Corn Yields**

Corn yields can accurately be estimated. Going into fields also tells you about insect damage, weeds, maturity and provides an opportunity to evaluate the variety.

1. **Step 1**
   - Count the number of harvestable ears in 1/1000 acre. For 38-inch rows, this will be 74 feet and 8 inches. In 38-inch rows, measure 14 feet and 6 inches. In 30-inch rows, measure 17 feet and 4 inches.
   - Count the number of rows per ear, and the kernels of one row of the second, sixth, and tenth ears. Do not count half size kernels on either the butt or tip of the ear. Calculate an average.
2. **Step 2**
   - Count the yield formula is: (ear population) times (the average number of rows) times (the average number of kernels per row) divided by 900. (the average number of rows) times (the average number of kernels per row) divided by 900. (the average number of rows) times (the average number of kernels per row) divided by 900.
3. **Step 3**
   - Calculate pounds per acre by dividing: (seeds per acre) by 2,500 seeds per pound. (seeds per acre) by 2,500 seeds per pound. (seeds per acre) by 2,500 seeds per pound.
4. **Step 4**
   - Calculate pounds per acre by dividing: (seeds per acre) by 2,500 seeds per pound. (seeds per acre) by 2,500 seeds per pound. (seeds per acre) by 2,500 seeds per pound.
5. **Step 5**
   - To get yield, simply divide (pounds per acre) by 30. (pounds per acre) by 30. (pounds per acre) by 30.
Fire Blight Control/Treatment
Options Very Limited

The proliferation of a strain of fire blight resistant to conventional treatment of the antibiotic streptomycin in southwestern Michigan this past season, has growers and researchers alike desperately seeking alternative control options.

According to MSU Professor of Plant Pathology Dr. Al Jones, the resistant strain was first detected in 1990 in a single orchard. The strain has gradually been building up since that time. Oxytetracycline (Mycoshield) has provided some control, but not as successfully as streptomycin had been on other strains of the bacteria.

“If we lose streptomycines because of resistance, growers will basically not have an effective chemical control for fire blight,” Jones explains. “That means they’ll have to rely on sanitation, by pruning out infections as soon as they see them and get those infected limbs out of the orchard.”

Since fire blight is a cyclic disease, producers should take advantage of years when the incidence of fire blight is low, and aggressively prune out infected trees and limbs. “However, if you get a real epidemic going because there was disease in one year, you’ll have a higher disease carryover, and then pruning is not going to help a whole lot. You’ve already lost the battle,” Jones said.

Allegan County fruit grower Alan Overhiser learned that lesson the hard way this past summer. “We just didn’t get lucky this year,” Overhiser said. “By the time we realized we had a problem in the orchard, there was very little we could do.”

Part of that commitment, says Jones, needs to include long-term research funding for resistant variety research and immediate research efforts in alternative control options. In addition, he believes that the industry trend toward heavy density planting of susceptible varieties creates a greater urgency than what most realize.

“We basically have a number of growers in this state that are sitting on a powder keg that’s ready to explode if we get the right conditions and an infestation in these high density plantings,” Jones says. “Not only are these varieties highly susceptible to fire blight, the blight only has to move a short distance before it can cause severe damage to the structure of the tree, and it can move from tree to tree much easier than in older plantings where the trees are further apart.”

Options that can be used for fire blight control include:

- Crop rotation
- Cultural practices
- Biological control
- Chemical fungicides

Fall Ideal Time to Control Perennial Weeds

The best procedure for getting control of perennial weeds is to begin mapping their location now and either spot treat them with a herbicide or mow the area to till the location before the first killing frost.

Some weed species can also be controlled through crop rotation.

Tillage can decrease perennial weed infestations if it is done every two or three weeks when the soil is soft and dry. Tillage during cool, wet conditions is not as effective.

Chemical spot treatment of perennial weeds either before or after harvest can be effective. Bipyridyik weed control can be used on some perennial weeds with fair to good results, though retreatment may be required.

The following are frequently observed plant responses from soil and foliar applications of ACA on winter wheat:

**Visual Response**

- Increased tillering
- More fibrous and extensive root system
- Improved winter hardiness

**Observation Timing**

- Spring - greenup and vigor
- Fall - first to fourth leaves unfolded
- Spring - from stem elongation on
- Fall - first to fourth leaves unfolded
- Spring - emergence of inflorescence
- Fall - observation on plant stand
- Spring - flowering
- Fall - emergence of inflorescence
- Spring - greenup and vigor
- Fall - flowering

**Methods of Application**

- ACA mixed easily with and fits into the following fertilizer program
  
  **Soil Applications**
  - Soil broadcast applied with liquid fertilizers
  - Soil broadcast applied with dry stranded fertilizers
  - Soil broadcast applied (weed & fertility & fertilization solution)

**Foliar Applications**

- Application can be made with liquid fertilizers as the carrier
- Application can be made with liquid fertilizers at the carrier

**Applicator Technologies/Procedures**

- Foliar spray can be applied at any growth stage. The best times for applying ACA are when the wheat canopy is between 3-4 inches high and before the tillering stage.

**Application**

- Soil applied broadcast with liquid fertilizers
- Soil broadcast applied with dry fertilizers

**Other Application Methods**

- Foliar broadcast applied with liquid fertilizers
- Soil broadcast applied with dry fertilizers

**Contact Information**

- Contact your local Clean Crop Dealer or call 1-800-992-2701 for additional information on THE ACA ADVANCE

**Michigan Farm News**

September 30, 1994
The latest USDA Crop Report, for Sept. 1 conditions, was released Sept. 12. It showed the corn crop would be even bigger than the August report estimated. And, if early harvested corn yields are a good indication, the crop may be even bigger than this report indicates.

As shown in Table 1 below, the 1994 corn crop is expected to be 9.257 billion bushels, up 43 million bushels from the August report. The country's average yield is expected to be a whopping 129 bushels per acre. Yes, that is less than the 1992 record of 131.4, but the best before that was ONLY 118.5.

Other supply side news was not so bad. We expected a little more last year than we thought we would which lowered ending stocks brought into this year. But, before we get too excited, look at the USDA Stocks Report, released Sept. 28, which will give the actual corn stocks remaining on Sept. 1.

On the demand side, the news is mixed. Feed use is expected to be up 1 percent over last year. Exports are expected to be up 14 percent over last year's record level. Food, seed and industrial uses (FSI) are forecast by USDA to be up 8 percent. However, the FSI increase is expected to be mostly in ethanol use. It is not clear how the corn will do for the food market, oil companies will affect ethanol use over the next year, but it won't be positive.

Even with the increased use projections, carryover will almost double from last year's low levels. But the 1.601 billion bushel ending stocks forecast for the 1994-95 corn marketing year (shown in Table 1) is still lower than 1992-93. This will put a limit on how low and how long the market will go down.

Another unknown is how the Corn Marketing Loan option (see article page 7) will affect the market. It may allow the market to drop substantially below the loan rate for a period. However, should that be tempered by the need to lend for loan money from harvest through planting when prices are expected to gradually increase.

Strategy: At this point, the basis is still in a 60 cent range for on-farm storage for wheat, if it is already there, may pay better than corn or soybeans. However, the entire market is more downside risk because we are at relatively higher prices.

Strategy: That storage gain can be locked in by hedging, either with futures or with puts, if you want to keep up-side potential. All of the tools are available through many elevators, as I mentioned earlier, which means you don't have to mess with actually dealing with the futures, brokers or margin calls.

The USDA Crop Report shows our total 1994 wheat production will come in at 2.361 billion bushels. This is down a bit from the August report and is the smallest in three years as seen in Table 2 below. This, is on top of a short crop in Australia which shows export are only expected to go up marginally due to poor demand from the former Soviet Union countries.

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

**WHEAT**

What is a different story than corn and beans for the most part. One place they are the same is the wide basis. At this time, using your on-farm storage for wheat, if it is already there, may pay better than corn or soybeans. However, the entire market is more downside risk because we are at relatively higher prices.

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**CATTLE**

The latest monthly 7-State Cattle-on-Feed Report on Sept. 16 showed the total on feed, as of Sept. 1, down 5 percent from a year ago. It showed August marketings up 3 percent from a year ago while placements were down 4 percent. The marketing number was not positive at first glance because we had one more marketing day this August versus last. In addition, weights are staying way above year ago levels. These two together indicate the market is still not current and then is a plentiful number of cattle to clean up, at least for the next couple of weeks.

On the brighter side, the on feed number being down and, to a small extent, the placement number being down, are indications we should see some rebound in prices over the November-December period. If we don't, try to save over-weight cattle for the price increase. Prices will probably go into the high $60 range and we may even see some $70 calf for a little while.

The lower placement number, while welcome, is a little misleading. August 1993 placements were very large, which means being down from a very large number can still be quite large. With low corn prices, feeders prices adjusting down, and a larger calf crop this year, I expect the feeders will fill up.

Steer prices over the next year are expected to average under $70/bwt. This will push calf prices back into the $86-91 range and yearlings into the $76-81 range.
Consider Corn Marketing Loan Options

Jim Hilker and David Schweikert
Department of Agricultural Economics
Michigan State University

The Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (Farm Bill) contains provisions for a corn marketing loan during the 1994 crop year. While there are several ways for farmers to use this new alternative, the basic idea is that they can pay back their government loans at the market price rather than the loan rate if the market price is lower than the loan rate.

This accomplishes several things. First, it allows corn producers to receive a price equal to at least the loan rate without having to store the crop for nine months. Second, less corn would be forfeited to the government. Third, the market price can go below the loan rate if the market called for it, which would move more corn into the market, reducing the potential for accumulating large surpluses.

Marketing Alternatives/Decisions

The marketing loan program will be administered by local ASCS offices. Farmers should check with the ASCS office for final details. To be eligible for this program, farmers must have participated in the 1994 government feed grain program, and the corn must be eligible for a non-recourse loan. Farmers must still have a beneficial interest in the corn and must provide production evidence. There are fees to participate in this program.

The usefulness of this program depends on the outlook for corn prices. If corn prices stay above the loan rate plus interest, the marketing loan will not be used. However, if corn prices go below the loan rate, even for a short period, it is a tool farmers may need to know how to use.

This is also a year farmers may have to forecast the lowest price as well as the highest during the marketing year. The September USDA Crop Production Report gave an indication of how low prices may go.

The "market price" that the ASCS will use is the Posted County Price (PCP). This price is calculated using predetermined spreads for each county from the Toledo or Cincinnati price. The market price can go below the loan rate if the market called for it, which would move more corn into the market, reducing the potential for accumulating large surpluses.

Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP)

There are at least three ways to use this program: farmers can use it to put corn under loan and deliver it on a forward contract. Farmers can then wait until after harvest to deliver on a forward contract. Farmers will need to work closely with their elevator to use this alternative. It appears that LDP must be executed first. Once the LDP is used, that corn is no longer eligible for the loan rate. If the price then goes up, participants will have added ten cents to their total price. Participants can sell their corn and not have to pay storage. The disadvantage is that participants no longer have any downside price protection if the corn is stored. In addition, that corn is no longer eligible for the cheapest government loan rate if the PCP decreases.

To eliminate the burden of taking out a loan just to pay it back, there is another option that allows farmers to collect a Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP). (This has nothing to do with the regular deficiency payment.)

There are two methods of executing an LDP. In both of these methods, the corn can still be used to deliver on a forward contract. Farmers will need to work closely with their elevator to use this alternative. It appears that LDP must be executed first. Once the LDP is used, that corn is no longer eligible for the loan.

One method is to wait until after harvest and then execute a form CCC-666 at the ASCS office. This allows the farmer to lock in the PCP that is in effect on the day the form is approved. Farmers must make sure to go in early enough to give ASCS personnel time to approve the form before the end of the day. The LDP received will be the difference between the county loan rate and the county PCP in effect that day. For example, if the loan rate is $1.86 and the PCP is $1.76, the farmer would receive a 10-cent loan deficiency payment times the quantity requested on the CCC-666 form.

The other method is to execute a form CCC-709 at the ASCS office prior to harvest. At that time, producers can specify the quantity on which they would like to receive the LDP. This amount can be revised at any time prior to harvest, but not after harvest. Farmers should check to see if they will be eligible for a loan if the LDP is zero at harvest.

This method has the advantage of allowing producers to harvest their grain, deliver it to an elevator, and lock in the LDP based on the PCP in effect that day without having to make a trip to the ASCS office.

Producers can then wait until after harvest to go to the office and present evidence of delivery and dates. The PCP may not be the largest on the date it is delivered, but it is difficult to forecast the exact date when it will be largest. The odds are that PCP will be the greatest during the harvest season.

FARM BUSINESS OUTLOOK

Ascas has the Details

Again, all the details of these programs are not included here. There may also be changes as ASCS learns from implementation. The use of these programs will require farmers to work closely with the local ASCS office to understand all of these marketing alternatives.

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Keep your mouth healthy, prevent bone loss and discourage periodontal disease by having your dentist regularly check the condition of crowns and bridges. And pay special attention to home care techniques to ensure your dental health and comfort.

If you have crowns and bridges, here's what you can do:

Although you can't get cavities in your tooth replacements, they are potential food and plaque traps. To keep supporting teeth and gums healthy, brush and floss around the edges of the crown or bridge diligently or use interdental cleaners (ask your dentist or hygienist about these devices that clean between teeth).

Try rinsing with an anti-plaque mouthwash before brushing. Use a toothbrush with a small, tapered head to reach hard-to-clean areas.

Rinse your mouth with water after every meal. Rinsing will remove any trapped food from your mouth and fixture.

Keep your mouth clean. Brush your gums and the roof of your mouth with a soft brush (often the bristles first in a warm-water soak). You'll clean away food particles and keep your gums healthy.
Self Care - A Concern for Rural Women

The unique needs of rural women were the focus of a women's health strategy session in the nation's capitol this summer. Dr. Elaine Eaker, Sc.D., senior epidemiologist at the Marshfield Medical Research Foundation expressed concern over access to good primary care for rural women.

"Often, women will go to their doctors for reproduction issues, but not prevention. Doctors need to be more aware of conducting screening tests and preventive care such as pap smears and checking cholesterol during these visits," said Eaker.

And she encourages women to be more involved in their own health care decisions. "It's not that we shouldn't trust doctors. Rather women need to take more responsibility for their own health. In order to do that she needs more information. Fortunately, there are lots of good health articles available today in women's magazines and in health newsletters," says Eaker.

"A woman doesn't need to know all the guidelines, but she should definitely be informed enough about her health needs and risk factors to ask for a mammogram, for example, or to ask about checking her cholesterol level."

Good, open communication with the physician is essential. "A woman should feel that her physician is listening and responding to her concerns and questions," Eaker recommends.

Making the shift to more active involvement in health care can be simple. Here are a couple of examples: A woman could open discussion with her physician by asking for information about smoking cessation programs, by inquiring whether estrogen replacement therapy is appropriate for her, or scheduling a complete physical exam and discussing the follow-up reports thoroughly with her physician.

"Rural women face unique dilemmas," says Dr. Eaker. "Evidence indicates that women in rural settings may be more likely to suffer from depression compared to women in urban settings. To the extent this may be due to isolation, underemployment, financial concerns and heavy family and work demands needs further investigation."

In addition, rural women may be more susceptible to chronic disease problems such as high-fat diets, obesity, diabetes and alcoholism.

Dr. Elaine Eaker is primarily involved in the study of women's health issues and cardiovascular disease epidemiology. Before joining the Marshfield Medical Research Foundation, Dr. Eaker served in various capacities at the Centers for Disease Control and the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute. She received her master and doctorate degrees in science from Harvard University.

Quick Tips

Nutrition research gives new meaning to "three squares." A recent study has found that eating nine small meals a day may be better for the arteries than eating the same amount of food in the traditional three meals a day.

Related research supports findings that frequent snacking can be a factor in lowering blood-cholesterol and may help to control blood sugar levels for people with diabetes.

It's important to remember, however, that eating more often means increasing eating frequency — not increasing calories.

Hold the phone! Don't cradle the phone between your neck and shoulder. Instead, take the time to hold the phone to your ear and you'll avoid the muscle strain and nerve compression that results in pain to your neck and back. If you spend a lot of time on the phone, consider using a headset. The latest exercise guidelines recommend at least 30 minutes of daily exercise, such as brisk walking. The exercise doesn't have to be strenuous and you can break it up into intervals. Frequent and regular are key words to remember.

Q: I sometimes experience a ringing in my ears. What causes this?

A: As many as 30 million Americans experience tinnitus, described by many people as a high-pitched, ringing sound in the ears. Some people also describe tinnitus as a buzzing, whistling, popping, hissing or roaring.

Tinnitus is a symptom which can be caused by many different problems. Exposure to loud noises, blows to the head, large doses of certain drugs such as aspirin, anemia, hypertension, stress and impacted ear wax are among just a few of the causes.

To most effectively treat tinnitus, the cause must be found and eliminated. However, if the cause cannot be identified, then the tinnitus may have to be treated. Drug therapy, vitamin therapy, biofeedback, hypnosis and tinnitus maskers have been effective in helping many tinnitus sufferers.

If you experience persistent tinnitus, you should consult your doctor who can check for factors associated with tinnitus such as blood pressure, kidney function, drug intake, diet or allergies.

Dr. Robert Holmes, MD. Dr. Robert Holmes is an otolaryngologist at Head & Neck Surgery Consultants, 204-A Auer Court, East Lansing, and Chief of the Medical Staff at Sparrow Hospital.
The key to surviving a heart attack is prompt medical attention. This is the heart's own way of compensating for the clogged artery, or stop the flow of blood to the heart, the heart muscle may be damaged, but when there's a complete blockade of the flow of blood so that the heart can't get the oxygen and food it needs, a part of the heart may die. This is a heart attack.

When a heart attack occurs, the dying part of the heart may trigger electrical activity that causes ventricular fibrillation. Ventricular fibrillation is an uncoordinated twitching that replaces the smooth, measured contractions that cause blood to be pumped to the organs of the body. In many cases, if trained medical professionals are immediately available, they can get the heart beating again by using electrical shock and/or drugs.

If the heart can be kept beating and not too much heart muscle is damaged, small blood vessels may gradually reroute blood around blocked arteries. This is the heart's own way of compensating for the clogged artery, and it is called collateral circulation. The key to surviving a heart attack is promptly recognizing the warning signals and getting immediate medical attention.

Medical Emergency at Home — Lifesaving Steps

- Dial 911 immediately. If 911 service isn’t available in your area, keep emergency phone numbers next to the phone.
- Stay calm. Speak slowly and clearly.
- Location is important for emergency personnel. Give your name, phone number, street address, city or town and directions, including crossroads and landmarks.
- Describe the nature of the emergency. Let the dispatcher know whether you need medical, police, or fire assistance.
- Give details about the victim’s condition. Is he/she bleeding? Conscious or unconscious? Choking?
- Describe any first aid. If the victim is receiving or has received first aid describe what kind, such as cardiovascular resuscitation (CPR), or other emergency care.
- Describe the victim’s location. Emergency personnel need to know if the victim is in an upstairs room, bathroom floor, barn or shed, or open field.
- Listen carefully and write down instructions. If necessary ask the dispatcher to repeat instructions or information.
- Stay on the line. Do not hang up until the dispatcher tells you.
- Make sure that your house or accident site is lighted and visible to emergency personnel. Your house number should be visible from the road.

What is a Heart Attack?
The human heart basically is a muscle that pumps blood. It has its own blood vessels, the coronary arteries, that nourish it and keep it alive. In most cases, when a heart attack occurs, fatty deposits (composed mostly of cholesterol) have lined the coronary arteries. As these deposits build up, they progressively narrow the arteries and decrease or stop the flow of blood to the heart. When there’s a decreased flow of blood to the heart, the heart muscle may be damaged, but when there’s a complete blockade of the flow of blood so that the heart can’t get the oxygen and food it needs, a part of the heart may die. This is a heart attack.

A heart attack most often results when a blood clot forms in a narrowed artery and blocks the flow of blood to the part of the heart muscle supplied by that artery. Doctors call this form of heart attack a coronary thrombosis or myocardial infarction.

When a heart attack occurs, the dying part of the heart may trigger electrical activity that causes ventricular fibrillation. Ventricular fibrillation is an uncoordinated twitching that replaces the smooth, measured contractions that cause blood to be pumped to the organs of the body. In many cases, if trained medical professionals are immediately available, they can get the heart beating again by using electrical shock and/or drugs.

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How to Recognize a Heart Attack
If you feel an uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing or pain in the center of your chest (that may spread to your shoulders, neck or arms) and your discomfort lasts for more than a few minutes, you could be having a heart attack. Lightheadedness, fainting, sweating, nausea or shortness of breath also may occur, although not all symptoms necessarily occur. Sharp, stabbing twinges, on the other hand usually aren’t signals of a heart attack.

When a person has these symptoms, it’s natural for him or her to deny what’s happening. No one wants to think that he might be having a heart attack. But before your shrug off the symptoms, it’s important to know that as many as 300,000 heart attack victims died before reaching the hospital last year, many of them because they refused to take their symptoms seriously.

What should you do if you think you might be having a heart attack? If you’re uncomfortable for more than a few minutes, call your local emergency medical service (EMS) immediately. If the EMS isn’t available, get to the hospital offering emergency cardiac care as soon as possible.

Here’s some things you can do to be prepared in case of a cardiac emergency. Know in advance which route from home or work will take you to the hospital the quickest. You might even discuss possible choices with your doctor. Another option is to call your nearest American Heart Association and ask which recognized emergency medical service and hospitals cover your area. Keep emergency information and phone numbers where you can find it easily and develop a “buddy system” with someone you know.

How To Reduce your Risk of Heart Attack (and Stroke)
Have your blood pressure checked at least one a year. High blood pressure is a major risk factor in heart attack and it’s the major risk factor in stroke. Don’t smoke cigarettes. Smoking increases the risk of heart attack and stroke.

Source: American Heart Association

Medical Focus

Eat Nutritious Food in Moderate Amounts. Eat a well-balanced diet that’s low in cholesterol and saturated fats and moderate in sodium (salt). Fatty foods contribute to atherosclerosis, which itself is a major contributor to heart attack and stroke.

Have Regular Medical Checkups. Risk factors such as high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol, excess weight, lack of exercise and cigarette smoking call for medical supervision to prevent a heart attack or stroke.

Source: American Heart Association
Michigan Wheat Growers Being Hunted by MSU

"Wanted: farmers interested in growing wheat better. Call (517) 353-9545."

If Michigan State University Extension agronomists had their druthers, the above classified advertisement would appear throughout rural Michigan.

"We want to create a partnership between growers, Extension agricultural agents and research agronomists," says Larry Copeland, MSU Extension agronomist. "Our goal is to make 100 bushel-per-acre wheat yields commonplace in Michigan."

To reach that goal, Copeland and his colleagues, Rick Ward, MSU wheat breeder, and Steve Poindexter, MSU Extension agricultural agent in Saginaw County, are recruiting farmers for a five-year wheat growing improvement project.

Copeland says he would like to see growers from all over the state volunteer for the project before fall wheat planting begins.

"This project will take the most promising management practices from MSU to member growers in a coordinated, comprehensive program intended to substantially improve their production practices," Copeland says.

"This will include blending firsthand grower experience with our best management recommendations to help all of us develop a better knowledge of the wheat crop and how it should be managed for maximum yield under Michigan conditions," he says.

### MSU Wheat Program Trials

The MSU Wheat Improvement Project will demonstrate different management practices in strip tests on different participating farms. The following provides a guideline that each producer can elect to demonstrate.

1. **Plant Populations**
   - 1.5 million plants per acre
   - 1.8 million plants per acre
   - 2.2 million plants per acre

2. **Date of Planting**
   - Results will be compiled on the basis of whether the participant planted:
   - before the fly-free date,
   - from the fly-free date to 10 days after the fly-free date,
   - more than 10 days after the fly-free date.

3. **Single Versus Split Nitrogen Application**
   A total of 80 pounds of spring-applied nitrogen will be recommended for all participants, who will then elect to either apply all nitrogen as urea prior to spring green-up; or apply 40 pounds prior to spring green-up and another 40 pounds at growth stage 6.

4. **Fungicide Use for Disease Control**
   Participants who choose to apply a fungicide based on scouting may apply either Baleton or Tilt; however, each must be applied in accordance with the label.

5. **Other Information**
   Other information collected from each participant will include variety planted, herbicide(s) used, total fertility program etc.

Participation in this program will be for a six-year period. Participation in the program will be for a six-year period and will include:

- **Yield Tracking**
- **Crop Scouting**
- **Herbicide Use Monitoring**

Participation in the program will be for a six-year period and will include:

- **Yield Tracking**
- **Crop Scouting**
- **Herbicide Use Monitoring**

More information about the wheat growing campaign can be obtained from Copeland by calling him at (517) 353-9545 or by contacting the county MSU Extension office.

In spite of the fact that most of the new wheat varieties released by MSU in recent years have yield potentials exceeding 100 bushels per acre, the average over the past six years is around 49 bushels per acre.

The trend puzzles agronomists and worries leaders of Michigan's milling industry, which depends almost entirely on the state's production of soft white and soft red wheat.

"We really don't know the reason," Copeland says. "Possibly it is a matter of climate, or perhaps it's because wheat planting is treated as an afterthought as the crop year winds down or maybe it's a lack of good management. Whatever the reason, we'd like to solve it because winter wheat should be a lucrative cash crop for Michigan growers."

In the 1970s, Michigan growers harvested around 900,000 acres of wheat. By 1992, the acreage harvested had dropped to about 630,000 acres.

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Telfarm Dairy Management Stats - How do you Compare?

Sherri B. Nott, Dept. of Agricultural Economics, MSU

Future profitability in dairy farming is more likely if your farm can perform better than the average in several categories. This discussion of how a group of Michigan dairy farmers did in 1992 compared to 1991. The base data and the methods used will help you judge how you are doing. The trends discussed are continuing in 1993.

The net farm profit from operations on a 200 dairy farm sample averaged $47,572 in 1992. The managers kept records with MSU Extension’s Telfarm project. Each farmer provided inventory information, a crop report and 75 percent or more of gross sales came from milk.

A similar group in 1991 made $42,946. However, the 1992 farms averaged 113.63 cows, or 6.96 cows more than in 1991. To equalize for size, many of the items below are based on a per cow basis. The net farm profit averaged $419 per cow in 1992, up $16 from 1991.

Gross income in 1992 was $353,531. Milk sales were the largest single item averaging $2,515 per cow, or $278 more than in 1991. Milk price received was $13.44 per cwt, for 18,712 pounds of milk sold per cow. This was after all adjustments for fat and quality premiums.

In 1991, the price was $12.27 and the amount was 18,233 pounds. The 2.6 percent increase in milk sold per cow is about on the long-term trend.

The combination of price, quantity and more cows gave $47,126 more to the average farm in 1992 compared to 1991. This more than offset the losses on the cropping side.

Cash crop sales were over $3,000 lower in 1992, and inventory slipped by nearly $7,000. Corn grain was the big loser. Combined, these crop items were about $100 per cow lower in 1992.

Cull cow sales averaged $329 per cow in 1992. Change in livestock inventory added another $103 per cow to gross income. In 1991, inventory changes were only $40 per cow. This may have changed in 1993 depending on how healthy the herd is kept, the number of calves born and the inventory price used per head.

Expenses included cash interest, depreciation, hired labor costs and all other cash business items. In 1992, these expenses totaled $365,956, or $2,693 per cow. In 1991, they were $2,525 per cow. They went up 6.6 percent on a per cow basis during 1992, and could do so again in 1993.

Purchased supplements and feed crops were $600 per cow in 1992. That's 16 percent more than in 1991.

Flood and drought conditions around the country in 1993, may have resulted in higher feed prices which could make the increase even more in 1993. However, a lot of the cost increase was due to special weather problems in 1992; they didn’t appear to repeat in 1993.

Cash wages and related labor expenses averaged $366 per cow in 1992. This was up 8.8 percent on a per cow basis. This was unexpected given 1992 was a recession year when managers might have been able to hold down the increases.

Depreciation was $264 per cow in 1992. This is income tax depreciation on buildings and equipment. It is 6 percent more than in 1991, and probably reflects new investments. Individuals control this item by the capital purchases they choose to make.

Interest paid averaged $131 per cow in 1992. This was 18 percent lower than in 1991, reflecting lower interest rates being charged. This dropped further in 1993 as managers refinanced old debts to lower interest rates. That is where refinancing will also be at the new, lower rates.

Crop costs averaged $254 per cow in 1992. These cover fertilizer, lime, seeds, chemicals and supplies. These supplies averaged to $139 of cash crops in 1992. If your farm grows all it grows, this cost could be $190 lower and still reflect good management.

All other expenses totaled $1,078 per cow. These were up 5 percent compared to 1991. Several of these items vary a little with milk per cow. Examples are veterinary and medical, milk hauling, electricity and supplies.

Crop yields on owned land were 101 bushels of corn, 13.2 tons of corn silage and 3.6 tons of hay per acre. They were all lower than in 1991. Yields for oats in 1992 were 58 bushels and wheat was 55 bushels per acre, both up from 1991. Yields on rented land were lower.

Other profit measures indicate the average performance of Michigan dairy farms in 1992. Management income was $-2,546; profits were not enough to pay 6 percent on capital used $6.25 per hour for unpaid family labor and operator labor.

Labor income was $14,754. The rate earned on owned capital was 5.2 percent. Net worth as a percent of assets averaged 75 percent as of Jan. 1, 1993, which is the same as a .25 debt to asset ratio.

These figures indicate what your competition is doing. If you plan to be in business 10 years from now, you should be doing as well or better.
Fingertip Controls and CommandARM

Effective use of reliable electronic technology, widely used in automotive and industrial applications for years, combined with the shape, placement, and color of the controls, provides a system that optimizes operator comfort and ease of operation while minimizing hand and arm movements. The CommandARM moves with the seat when the operator makes adjustments or swivels it, so the controls are always at the operator’s fingertips.

The chassis design is so innovative and unique that it enables these tractors, equipped with 16.9R-30 MFWD tires set at 60-inch spacing, to have a 16-foot turning radius—the shortest in its size class. As cultivating or spraying, the operator uses the taxi control, visibility, maneuverability, comfort, tent groundspeed in light-load operations such as spraying, and good traction and up to a 10 percent PTO power bulge. To provide maneuverability and visibility during turns, swivel mounts permit the optional MFWD fenders to pivot during turns. The MFWD axle driveline, located above the MFWD axle, is mounted higher than the 60 Series chassis.

The 8000 Series CommandView cab provides unobstructed visibility to the front tires (for row-crop applications), over the hood, to the sides, and to the rear hitch with 62 square feet of glass area. There are no cab side posts or backlight supports for the one-piece front glass panel to restrict the operator’s vision. For added comfort, the fully adjustable air suspension seat swivels 20 degrees to the right and 15 degrees to the left.

The CommandView cab has 65 percent more interior volume than the 60 Series SoundGard Body. Low interior sound levels and tuned sound quality contribute to a pleasant cab environment. Five pairs of attaching points and two convenience outlets (one is standard) are provided for mounting monitors and communication equipment.

The model 8010, 8200, and 8300 are powered by a six-cylinder 7.6-liter John Deere diesel. The 8400 features a new six-cylinder 8.1-liter Diesel engine. Both engines are turbocharged and air-to-air intercooled for increased performance, and for today’s row crop applications, the 8000 Series engines use exhaust gas recirculation to achieve better fuel economy.

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The career I’m most interested in is:

and farm supply, chemicals and fertilizers, equipment, and fruit and vegetables.

Students graduating from this three-semester, certificate program have job opportunities ranging from working on a farm to working in retail. An internship in the student’s area of interest is required beyond the program courses to provide hands-on work experience.

Many students in production agriculture major in agribusiness to enhance their future employment opportunities. Each student receives advice and instruction specific to their priority interest, such as marketing, pesticides, fertilizers or retailing.

Through the Agribusiness Management program, students also have the opportunity to complete the requirements to receive their pesticide applicator’s license and their crop advisory license.

This program can also be tailored toward the environmental field, allowing a student to seek job opportunities as a technician in this field.

Admission into this program requires a high school diploma or GED with a Caverage or higher grade point average. Neither the ACT nor SAT is required. In the past, any graduate from the program has been placed in their particular area of training. If graduates wish to continue for a four-year degree, they can receive up to half of their Ag Tech credits as transfer credits for a related four-year major.

The Agribusiness Management program includes several areas of interest: elevator and farm supply, chemicals and fertilizers, equipment, and fruit and vegetables.

The Agribusiness Management curriculum is an option in the Food Systems Economics and Management major. This program is designed to meet the needs of students interested in careers in agricultural input supply, agricultural production, commodity assembly and processing, and also agricultural marketing organizations. The program provides students with the chance to diversify, making themselves better prepared for the job market.

There are a few scholarships available to those who qualify. For example, the Michigan Ag-Business Association offers an excellent scholarship for individuals in this program.

The Agribusiness Management program offers an excellent opportunity to learn what you need to become employed in the area of your interest,” Simmons said.

He went on to say that the program was built around the opportunity area he wanted to pursue. "I could take the courses that pertained to my interest," he explained.

When Simmons talks to others about the two-year Agribusiness program, he tells them that if agribusiness is what they want to study, "the two-year program is a great opportunity to learn and discover their exact interest. It allows you to meet many people and instructors at MSU." In more simple terms, he noted, "The two-year agribusiness program is a direct path to what you want to learn. It’s basic, to the point, and provides great opportunities for both learning and employment."
**Roundup Ready™ Soybeans Expected by 1996 Season**

by Deb Laurell

A Roundup Ready™ Soybean that offers less expense, saves time and reduces the number of weed control headaches is expected to hit the market in 1996, pending governmental approval.

The new soybean contains a gene that allows Roundup™ herbicide to be applied for broad-spectrum weed control - a huge technological leap, considering the herbicide could previously be utilized only in soybeans for precise spot sprays or rope-wick applications.

According to Dr. Karen Renner, of MSU's Crop and Soil Sciences Department, the Roundup resistant soybean has been in their research trials for the last three years. Monsanto developed the Roundup resistant gene and made the gene available to seed companies.

Renner went on to explain companies expect to market the soybeans in 1996 pending the approval of several federal agencies including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration. Approval from these agencies is required because the new soybean varieties are a genetically engineered crop.

According to Renner, benefits of the Roundup Ready Soybean are dependent upon yield potential. If the new technology and varieties have the potential to produce the same yields as conventional varieties, then there will be definite benefits.

Renner explains that with Roundup resistant soybeans, the producer has a wider herbicide application window. "We can control weeds post-emergence with Roundup anywhere from three and with some varieties, up to 10 inches," she said.

Other benefits of Roundup resistant soybeans are reduced cost per acre for herbicide and the simplicity of the herbicide program.

"Roundup at one quart per acre, with an average use rate, would cost the producer $10 an acre," commented Renner. "Currently many of the post-emergence herbicide programs average $25 per acre, so the producer would have a substantial herbicide dollar savings."

Renner expects the anticipated cost difference of Roundup Ready Soybean seed and traditional varieties will only be $1 per bag, not a significant difference.

Another benefit is the simplicity of the herbicide program, says Renner. "Currently when weeds are controlled post-emergence in soybeans, we often are tank mixing two or three herbicides to control various weed species," she said. "Roundup has broad-spectrum control of grass and broadleaf weeds, eliminating the need for several different herbicides."

The Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee (MSPC) has donated approximately $10,000 of Michigan soybean check-off dollars to Roundup resistant soybean research, since it could prove beneficial to producers both economically and environmentally, according to MSPC Executive Director Keith Reinhold. He explained that Roundup becomes inactive when it hits the soil, a definite benefit to the environment.

What's the expected impact to no-till trends?

Renner and Reinhold both agree that the Roundup resistant soybean itself will not necessarily increase no-till trends. However, the herbicide resistant soybean should enhance it. Reinhold predicts that instead producers considering no-till will consider the Roundup resistant soybean as an added advantage.

However, Renner explains it will make a difference in both no-till and conventional cropping production. She currently has one study funded jointly by Monsanto and the Soybean Promotion Committee looking at two different planting times.

"In this study, we are looking at burndown applications and preemergence timing versus postemergence herbicide applications," said Renner. "This study will help us determine the best way to control weeds in no-till systems if we have the opportunity to plant Roundup™ resistant soybeans."

What do some of the companies offering the soybean have to say?

Not much! Only three out of seven companies contacted by Michigan Farm News, ICI Seeds, Pro Seeds and Pioneer Hybrids, were willing to comment about the status of their Roundup Ready™ Soybeans.

Ron Jacobs of Pro Seeds said his company is hoping to market three different varieties in 1997. Likewise, ICI Seed is aiming for product introduction by 1997, providing the product holds real advantages for the farmer, said company representative Bill Banker said.

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Pioneer hopes to hit the market with their version of Roundup Ready™ Soybeans by 1996, according to company representative, Hoch Schmidt. These plots are part of a Roundup Ready™ Soybean research project at MSU, funded jointly by Monsanto and the Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee.
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Tim and Sandy VerHage, of Allegan, have recently been selected as the state winning 1994 Outstanding Young Dairy Cooperators (OYDC). They represented Michigan Milk Producers Association's (MMPA) District 2 and the Kalamazoo Local in the annual OYDC conference held Aug. 17-19.

The VerHages were selected earlier in the year by fellow dairy farmers in their district to participate in the program. As the winning cooperators, the VerHages will represent MMPA at various industry and association activities.

Tim and Sandy VerHage along with daughters Kristi (left) and Julie, operate a 50-cow herd with a rolling herd average of 23,046 pounds in addition to farming 300 acres. Tim and Sandy have won MMPA's Quality Award for the past three years running!

Doug and Cheryl Chapin, from Romulus, were selected as the runner-up cooperators. They represented MMPA's District 5 and the Alma Local in the contest. Selection of the OYDC is based on the applicant's farming operations, farm-related and community activities and demonstrated leadership abilities.

The State OYDC Conference, held at MMPA headquarters in Novi, Mich., is designed to provide information about milk marketing activities, cooperatives, milk testing procedures and other current events within the dairy industry. The contest has been held annually over the past 44 years.

"The OYDC program identifies outstanding young leaders in our organization and provides the opportunity for them to gain a greater understanding of milk marketing activities and MMPA," says Elwood Kirkpatrick, MMPA president.

All 11 of MMPA's district Outstanding Young Dairy Cooperators will be officially recognized at the 1995 Annual State Delegates meeting to be held next March.

The VerHages represented MMPA's District 2, which covers Calhoun, Allegan, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, Allegan, Van Buren, Cass and Berrien counties.

MMPA is a milk marketing cooperative owned and controlled by approximately 3,500 dairy farmers.

U.S. Dairy Industry Concentrated on Fewer, Larger Farms

Nearly half of the U.S. dairy herd was concentrated in large dairy farms (with 100 or more milk cows) in 1993, according to a USDA Economic Research Service summary.

These large dairies represented just 13.6 percent of all U.S. farmers with milk cows, but they were responsible for about 50 percent of total milk production. New technologies have required extensive capital investment that is most feasible for large dairy operations.

Since 1977, farms with fewer than 30 milk cows have declined continuously as a share of all farms with milk cows. The share of farms with 30-49 milk cows gradually increased until 1990, but then began a slow decline.

The share of farms with 50 or more milk cows increased in recent years, with farms having 100 or more milk cows increasing most in both number and share of all farms with milk cows. The largest farms are increasing most in the West and Southwest. The traditional milk-producing states of the Northeast and Lake States have seen their share of milk production become stable and then decline in recent years.

Wisconsin, California, New York, Pennsylvania and Minnesota will probably remain the five leading milk-producing states. Except for California, however, these states will see their relative shares of total U.S. milk output decline. California's dairy industry has grown rapidly during the last 30 years and will probably become the largest producer on an annual average basis in 1994. New Mexico's dairy industry also has good prospects to become of the top 10 producers in the next few years.

The West and Southwest have accounted for an increasing share of total U.S. milk production. Increased demand for locally produced milk due to rapid population growth and the cost incentives associated with milder climates encouraged the growth of very large specialized dairies in Southern and Central California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and Florida. Dairy herds of 700 to 1,500 cows are common in those areas, but rare elsewhere.

During 1977-93, milk per cow rose by 39 percent, reaching 15,554 pounds per year. Total milk output in the United States rose to 150,954 million pounds in 1993.

Technological achievements have significantly influenced the structural changes in the U.S. dairy farm industry. Capital-intensive technologies for milking and feeding have generally increased the minimum economically feasible size of a dairy operation, increased production efficiency, and influenced specialization. Genetic improvements, higher rates of concentrate feeding, and better feeding management have also helped increase milk production per cow.

Emerging technology and environmental concerns will affect the location and structure of dairy farming in the near future. Environmental regulations on air quality and waste handling may limit the type of milk production technologies that can be used, especially in regions where the largest dairy herds are highly concentrated. The trend toward large-scale, more specialized farming is expected to continue.