USDA opens regional office to expand export opportunities

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman recently announced the opening of a regional Export Outreach Office in Des Moines, Iowa, that will provide Michigan producers with an additional resource in exporting their products.

The new Export Outreach Office is part of USDA's efforts to promote agricultural exports and includes the following services:

- Market Access Program
- Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
- Market Information
- Export Assistance

The Export Outreach Office provides a comprehensive range of services to help U.S. businesses recognize the tremendous potential of the international marketplace. For the first time in history, the United States is exporting more than $1 billion in agricultural products each week.

U.S. agricultural exports reached a record $10 billion in fiscal year 1996, Glickman said.

The Foreign Agricultural Outreach Office essentially serves the 12 states that are part of the Mid-America International Agribusiness Council (MAIAC) region, stated Denise Vockey, international marketing manager for the Michigan Department of Agriculture. MAIAC is a coalition of 12 states, including Michigan, and we all get together and work on promoting food exports together. The other 11 states that make up the region are Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

The state of Michigan has had a long, ongoing and very fruitful relationship with the Foreign Agriculture Service even prior to this office opening, Vockey adds. The FAS program has a number of programs that are oriented toward food exporters that we and take advantage of their agricultural attaches in the various embassies around the world.

According to Vockey, the FAS also manages the Market Access Program designed to allow small companies to qualify for reimbursement of their promotional expenses in a foreign market. In 1995, nine Michigan companies obtained $582,000 in allocations to promote their food products in other countries through that program.

"We're only in the second quarter of fiscal 1996 and we're already helping to reduce the number of viable weed species in the growing season. He and another neighbor went together and purchased a used tractor needed to do the composting. They were able to reduce the number of viable weed species in the growing season.

"We had a windrow that was completely done, and another that was half done," Gasper explained. "When we went back to the field the next day, the window was clear and the windrow was gone."

Uncle John's Cider Mill in St. Johns packs in the public, Uncle John's boasts a rustic barn filled with gifts and food for purchase at the gift shop and bakery.

Uncle John's boasts a rustic barn filled with gifts and food for purchase at the gift shop and bakery.

"Michigan's Only Statewide Farm Newspaper"
The people have spoken

In any election, there are places and minutes for agriculture in the results of the Nov. 5 voting.

Generally, as farmers have to be elated with the crushing defeat of Proposal D, the animal-rights driven bear hunting proposal. Along with the approval of Proposal D, Michigan citizens have re-emphasized their belief in science-based, professional wildlife management.

Also, from a positive standpoint for achieving our national policy objectives, we can breathe a sigh of relief that congress remains in Republican hands. That was important, not because we got everything we wanted from the GOP-controlled 104th Congress, but because of the progress that was made in the past two years. If either the House or the Senate had gone over to Democratic control, we probably would have seen very little, if anything, in place where we probably would have been less sympa- thetic to our tax and regulatory reform goals.

It was disappointing to hear Agriculture Rep. Dick Cheney (R-Brigham) defend Delegate Deb Stabenow. Rep. Cheney worked hard on our behalf and was a supporter of key dairy goals. However, Stabenow in the past has indicated a willingness to understand agricultural concerns, and we believe she would be receptive to working with the county Farm Bureau in her district.

It’s too bad that Dave Pomerenz and Colleen Pingel went down to defeat in 1994, in the election where the non-described electors-James Pardridge and Robert Westina will demonstrate a commitment to the land philosophy that has served our industry so well over the years.

I wish to take this opportunity to express the impact of the Michigan House going over to Democratic control. Certainly, we have an opportunity for grassroots action on the national level and new committee chairmen that have our interests in the forefront.

Overall, I believe the election results show that agriculture, the land use, is fully satisfied with the status quo. We did not see dramatic, wholesale changes at any level of government. This "steady as goes" approach reflects a basic satisfaction with the direction that lawmakers have been going on the state and national level over the past two years. We are moving toward less government and less government involvement in the economy.

Clearly, much remains to be done. Farm Bureau, more than any other organization in the state, is working to build new lawmakers and in- troduce new programs and policies that can lead us to a new direction.

In closing, I want to urge you to resist your involvement in your organization, and seek out opportunities to educate newly-elected lawmakers (and your neighbors) about what Farm Bureau stands for.

David Miller

Rural Agriculture Committee

DNR announces special December antlerless deer season

"When several requests from different groups to extend the firearm season, we polled the department’s Natural Resources Divrision’s biologists and received recommendations for an extended season on private land if the harvest follows the current science-based management and testing approach as related to the deer hunting licenses," Burgie said. "These additional days will provide hunters with extra hunting time and provide a means for farmers to extend their season to allow additional deer harvest to harvest antler- less deer on property with excess deer."

A person with an unused antlerless deer tag who has purchased a 1996 firearm deer license may participate in the special antlerless deer hunt, but only on private lands within the deer management unit designated on the antlerless deer tag. The season limit of one antlerless deer per antlerless deer license remains in effect during the special hunt, as do the antlerless deer license fees.

The designated areas include only private lands in lower Peninsula deer management units opened on Dec. 15.

In the Peninsula, hunters with an un- used antlerless deer tag will be able to hunt on private lands set aside for early. Units 201, 202, 215, 217, 318, 322 and 414, Units 215,317 and 318 cover portions of Delta, Menominee and Marquette counties; Units 312,322 and 323 cover Alger and Northern districts; and Unit 414 is in southern Dickinson County.

According to DNR research, there are an estimated 2 million to 3 million deer in Michigan. The DNR estimated 1.8 to 2 million deer in Michigan on Oct. 21, which is about 10 percent less than in 1995.

The department’s deer management goal is 1.5 percent of which 35 percent are antlered.

News In Brief

ATT from the President

The Agriculture Department expects world beef production to be up 1.5 percent next year, but output of beef exports is expected to be down 2.5 percent due, in part to the mad cow scare. USDA said 1996 world beef production will remain nearly the same as last year.

European Union beef production will drop by 1.5 percent next year and will be 6 percent down in 2000 in the Russian Federation. But those losses will be partially offset by a 3 percent increase in Brazil, Canada, China and here, according to a USDA trade report. U.S. cattle inventories are expected to continue to drop in 1997, a residual to this year’s恶劣天气 that forced nationwide herd liquidation.

Farmers expand environmentally friendly practices

A new study says that almost 86 percent of U.S. farmlands benefit from systems designed to increase soil productivity, improve water quality and fight pollution.

The information was released by the Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC), a nonprofit information and data transfer center in Indi- ana. It said the "infrastructure for environmentally friendly farming" includes conservation tillage on 105.8 million acres of the 290.2 million acres of American farmland farmed in 1996.

"Farmers have learned that using environmentally friendly farming practices on land farmed with such systems since last year."

CTIC says farmers have seen that there are both environmental and economic benefits of con- servation tillage. Conservation tillage methods, such as no-till and minimum till, usually require less time, labor and equipment maintenance than other farming practices. CTIC says that research has confirmed that the less soil is tilled, the more carbon it stores, which has two benefits.

First, it horizons to maintain soil productivity, since carbon accounts for half the organic matter in the soil. Second, it prevents carbon from being released to the atmosphere, a gas which many scientists believe contributes to global warming.

IRS memo has some farmers worried

A memo sent out by the Internal Revenue Serv- ice discussing possible changes in tax policy on some cash grain sales has many in the agricultural community concerned, but experts say the changes shouldn’t affect this year’s tax bill.

The first annual memo to farmers dated Aug. 15 detailed that the Washington state farmer who sold potatoes and received some cash at delivery, but deferred some payment until the following year for IRS rule purposes, the entire income from the sale should be reported under alternative minimum tax (AMT) rules, applicable for the same tax year.

The memo has been discussed in trade publi- cations as a possible “surprise tax” for grain farmers who sell unlike-deferred payment (DP) contracts to sell crops.

David Miller, commodity policy specialist with the American Farm Bureau, says the IRS memo leaves a wide gray area when it comes to traditional DP grain contracts as long as the contracts don’t involve any payments at the time of delivery. Most DP contracts in the grain market don’t involve upfront payments and farmers normally ask for pay- ment after Jan. 1.

"It’s not clear that simple DP contracts are subject to AMT," cited Miller. "Previous rulings indicated that a contract with simply a pledge to pay no face value is not taxable."

Farm Bureau has received assurances from key members of the House Ways and Means and Finance Committees that it is not going to be introduced early in the 105th Congress. The legislation will make clear that income deferred from one year to another through deferred payment contracts will not subject farmers to an alternative minimum tax.

Eat Cheerios — help save bees

The General Mills cereal company has joined a campaign dubbed “Save the Honeybee,” to help promote and fund research projects to revive Novus Corporation’s honey bee research unit.

Wild honeybees have been virtually wiped out by mite infections and last year’s severe winter.

General Mills recognizes the importance of bees to farmers and the nation.

General Mills will donate 25 cents for each “Save the Honeybee” cereal box sold to the company’s Honey Nut Cheerios. The company will do- nate up to $100,000 for research to save the bees.

READER COMMENTS

I have been involved in agriculture my entire life. Ever since my great grandfather immigrated from the Netherlands, my family has owned and operated a dairy farm. Growing up on the program as a small town family farm had to do with the future.

My dad was in the grain elevator business for 35 years, and our member received federal payments. I spent a few years representing both the sheep and beef industries to the Michigan Legisla- ture. I finally realized after working for agri- culture at that level, it wasn’t enough to support my love of farming, so my wife and I bought our first farm in the fall of 1990.

I love agriculture because I know just how important it is to the people of this country. Farmers play a large role in our society; we feed the world. Right here in Michigan, agriculture is our second largest industry, and the volume of ag products we export is steadily rising. That is why I am members of the recent lowering of the Department of Education’s ranking related to ag-science education funding.

By dropping the rankings from 12 to 28, districts that teach ag-science could lose about $14 million, leaving school administrators with the choice of program or grades to cut. According to the report, many districts have a hard time paying for programs of any kind in agriculture.

Agiculture has a long and proud tradition in Michigan and is facing many challenges for the future. It is crucial that we work together for the good of agriculture and the economy. The future vitality of the state’s second largest industry is not reflected in the Department of Education’s priority ranking. To continue our rich tradition, we must work with the Michigan Department of Education to rectify this funding problem and return agriculture science education to the level we enjoy today.

Dick Posthumus, Majority Leader, Michigan Senate

Send your comments to: Michigan Farm News P.O. Box 30906 Lansing, MI 48909 Fax: (517) 323-6541
Get involved in local zoning ordinances

Periodic review of township zoning ordinances is not only required—its a good idea. It can save farmers time and money and help them prepare for the next round of changes to the law.

Michigan and Ohio farmers have been involved in zoning efforts for years. There are other areas where restrictions on farm markets have created the need to acquire a special permit to be issued by the township. And when restrictions on construction of farm buildings are placed, the need for a special permit to be issued by the township before the essential farm structure is allowed to be built, "Fowl" warned.

There are only a few examples of ordinances that may be in conflict with state or federal agriculture. Again, changes may be appropriate in a township, but the key is that farmers need to be involved early in the process.

How do you find out if changes are planned? "Fowl" recommends contacting your township supervisor or planning officer to see if a zoning ordinance review is being planned or is currently in progress.

In summary, the best way to prevent potential problems is to become involved. Ask the township board to appoint farmers to the planning commission. At the very least attend township board and planning commission meetings regularly.

For more information on reviewing proposed ordinances for the purpose of preventing changes that may be in conflict with agriculture, contact your county farm bureau office and ask for the county secretarial staff. They can direct you to the regional representative. Fowl advises making the contact as early in the process as possible—considerable time may be required to review proposed ordinances correctly.

Minimum wage increase now in effect

The first increase of the federal minimum wage to $4.25 became effective on Oct. 1, 1996. The second part of the increase will take the rate to $5.15 an hour beginning Sept. 1, 1997.

Farm employers and workers were affected by new provisions of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). The act requires most employers to verify the identity and legal status of workers and to comply with recently increased penalties for employment practices.

Many employers have been caught off guard by the new requirements and have not had time to review their employment practices to ensure compliance. Employers are advised to contact their local Michigan Employment Security Commission office to discuss their options.

Review Your Disclosures

Fowl employers who are required to provide employment disclosures and those who have voluntarily adopted the disclosures need to update these disclosures to reflect any changes you will be making.

While reviewing your disclosure forms, make sure you update the information now required by the Wagner and Seasonal Agricultural Workers Protection Act regarding workers’ compensation insurance. Additionally, if you have applied for and received a designation as a seasonal employment enabling the Michigan Employment Security Commission, you need to disclose your designation.

Source: Regulatory Compliance Assistance Program

High court may hear landowners’ case

The U.S. Supreme Court should decide in the next few weeks whether it will hear a case filed by Michigan landowners who claim their rights have been violated by Unocal Service (USFS) regulations governing the use of a lake that borders their property.

Three Michigan residents purchased a resort area along the Lehigh Wilderness Area. After the wilderness area was created in 1987, the USFS banned sailboats, houseboats and motorboats from the area. It also reissued permits for any use of the lake, including swimming.

The owners of the resort said such restrictions cost them nearly 90 percent of their business. The USFS is bound by the law to eliminate monitored boat use and anything else that is incompatible with a wilderness area, according to Michael Francis of the Wilderness Society, who added that landowners are only allowed access to their property under the wilderness law.

A federal district court ruled against the landowners, and the decision was upheld on appeal. The court ordered Unocal to provide a brief in support of the landowners.

For more information see your local ADA dealer or call Grower Service Corporation at Lansing: 800-882-0010

Increase Wheat Yields

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

Michigan & Ohio Yields

ACA treated wheat has shown an average of 7.1 bushel/acre yield increase over the past eight years with a low of 4.98 and a high of 13.16 bushel/acre.

For more information on growing with ACA contact Grower Service Corporation at Lansing: 800-882-0010

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS
November 15, 1996

Capitol Corner

For more information on legislative topics in the Michigan Farm News call 800-292-2680.

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A federal district court ruled against the landowners, and the decision was upheld on appeal. The court ordered Unocal to provide a brief in support of the landowners.
Great Lakes Hybrids continues to reward young farmers

Great Lakes Hybrids, a national seed corn company based in Oss, is awarding $1,000 in seed to the state winners in three categories. Discussion Meet winners receive $500, Young Farmer Achievement Award and Outstanding Young Ag Leader.

"Great Lakes Hybrids has a long tradition of shaping the future of Michigan’s agriculture with its consistent commitment to quality, which has fueled growth over the last 15 to 20 years."

Beginning in 1985 as a cooperative of Michigan certified seed growers, the company has since grown to include top-notch seed corn from the United States, based on sales of seed. The company has four research stations throughout the Midwest. The Michigan Research Farm in Puerto Rico. Great Lakes Hybrids has approximately 8,700 acres of seed corn in Michigan and supplies nearly 9 percent of the Michigancorn market.

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Great Lakes Hybrids supports the Michigan Farm Bureau's Young Farmer contests with outstanding seed products that will add to the bottom line of their farming operations. Key products provided by Great Lakes Hybrids include the following:

Corn

- GL1872 has out-performed the Michigan favoritewhite starch yield for its maturity. With tolerance to stress and heat, GL1872 will soon become a leader in the 45-day maturity range of Michigan corn. This 99-day hybrid flowers extremely early for its maturity, and excels in medium or better soils at medium to high populations. This attractive plant also adds excellent disease tolerance.

- GL1954 is a new 98-day hybrid that will provide the Michigan corn growers consistent top yields with the added benefits of excellent heat and drought stress tolerance. GL1954 will perform across all of Michigan’s varying soils and environments as well as in its trials situations. This hybrid will make an excellent choice for Michigan’s demanding corn growers. Great Lakes Hybrids is offering this new hybrid.

- GL2045 and GL2415 continue to be proven top-performing soybeans for Michigan farmers. Great Lakes Hybrids also offers three alfalfa choices for Michigan’s forage growers:

- ALPHA 2001 provides unmatched nutritional quality with outstanding yield potential. ALPHA 2001 will provide a higher return per acre than any other alfalfa on the market. Great Lakes Hybrids guarantees it.

- Webfoot MPR features outstanding yield with tops disease resistance and the Webfoot branching root system designed by Dr. Tesar at Michigan State University. Webfoot MPR also adds resistance to both Fusarium root rot and Phytophthora root rot.

- Anchor Brand alfalfa is our new introduction that combines disease resistance, winter hardiness, stand persistence and feed quality.

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS
November 15, 1996

77th MFB annual meeting set for Dec. 10-13

Get ready for policy discussion, education sessions and award celebrations for the second consecutive year, the Great Traverse City Resort in Acme will be the site of Michigan Farm Bureau’s annual meeting, Dec. 10-13. Over 450 delegates from the 69 county Farm Bureaus will deliberate on state and national resolutions during the annual meeting.

On Tuesday evening, Farm Bureau members will be reconvened to hear their outstanding work nominating new members and over 500 gold and silver stars will be awarded for exceptional program achievement. The top county incentive and leadership category will be single-out as County Excellence Award recipients. Former national FFA officer Mark Mayfield will conclude the night with a keynote address.

Early Wednesday morning, delegates will welcome Brad Eckert, American Farm Bureau Federation’s director of legislative affairs, to the annual AgCaucus breakfast. Right after the breakfast, the 452 delegates will begin the process of adopting the policies that will guide the state and national organization during the upcoming year. MFB PresidentJack Laurie and the 20-member state Policy Development Committee will provide over three days worth of debate on congressional resolutions.

Delegates will break at noon for the annual President’s Luncheon highlighted by President Jack Laurie’s annual address and the awarding of the AgCommittee of the Year Award to Bay City Times reporter Karl Albrecht and the Educator of the Year Award.

Young Farmer Awards and PKE School Plaques

Young Farmers take center stage on Thursday as 57 young farmers vie for the title of state discussion meet winner and 12 others compete for the Young Farmer Achievement, Outstanding Young Agricultural Leader, and Outstanding Young Farmer Employer Awards. That same day over 80 promotion and education volunteers will take to the entire Traverse City school district to present third- and fourth-grade lessons about integrated pest management.

Don’t Miss Two More Educational Forums: Abandoned Railroad Bed and Milk Marketing Orders

New to this year’s agenda will be two concurrent educational forums giving members a chance to ask questions and discuss abandoned railroad beds and milk marketing orders.

Nels Ackerson, a prominent Washington D.C. attorney, has spent years asking the question, “Do the railroads own the land?” or “Do they just own the right-of-way?” Mr. Ackerson has been successful in Indiana and is involved in several cases involving the right-of-way.

Young Farmer Discussion Meet winners successively navigated through their discussion district meeting earlier this year to compete at the state discussion meet. The Young Farmer Discussion Meet provides for a forum on an extended discussion on agricultural topics. Here are the four major topics these young farmers will discuss and share their points of view:

- Are producers being overcharged for farm products offered? Are the environmental laws and regulations helpful to agriculture?
- What are the benefits and concerns of today’s modern informational systems?
- All state Farm Bureaus receive a $75 savings bond compliments of Montana. The six finalists will receive a carton jade piece of Canvas Blue Cross Blue Shield. The state discussion meet winner will receive $500 contributions of Dodge Truck, $1,000 Great Lakes Hybrids products, and an expense-paid trip to Nashville. Turn to more information in the MFB Discussion Meet.

District I

- Matt Stengele, Cass
- Chris Hodgman, Van Buren
- Nikki Curtis, Allegan
- C. Thomas, Van Buren

District II

- Mike Helzer, Calhoun
- Mary Davis, Branch
- Denise Belson, Hillsdale

District III

- Kris Nourie, Washtenaw
- Dan Brimmer, Washtenaw
- Denise Winter, Monroe

District IV

- Renee Nagy, Ionia
- Jason Griffin, Ionia
- Loren Grimes, Allegan
- Kelly Chapman, Barry

District V

- Larry Cherry, Ingham
- Brad Ceol, St. Joseph
- Charles Suddall, Clinton

District VI

- Kent Deaver, Kalamazoo
- Dave Kuykendall, Cass
- Jeff Draper, Cass
- Paul Knoerr, Saginaw
- Bruce Palinski, Saginaw

District VII

- Matt Noffz, Montcalm
- John Ulrich-Johnson, Montcalm
- Peter Reiter, Montcalm

District VIII

- Paul Knoerr, Saginaw
- Don Heidenreich, Montcalm
- Mary Smith, Montcalm

District IX

- Matt Smego, Cass
- Kris Nourie, Washtenaw
- Loren Koemen, Alcona

District X

- Ryan Lalone, Emmet
- Jeff Tallman, Emmet

District XI

- Dave Madigan, Emmet
- Matt Smego, Charlevoix
- Dave Kuykendall, Charlevoix

District XII

- John Jordan, Houghton
- Tim Rudy, Houghton

Station City Frequency Morning Report Noon Report

WABJ Adrian 1450 5:45 am 11:05-12:00 pm
WALT Alpena 1450 5:30 am 11:30 am
WTKA Ann Arbor 1050 6:05 am 12:00-1:00 pm
WLEW Bad Axe 1340 6:30 am 12:50 pm
WHFB Benton Harbor 1060 5:45 am 11:15 am
WLEF Calumet 1370 5:45 am 11:15 am
WKYO Caro 1360 6:15 am 12:10-1:00 pm
WTVB Coldwater 1590 5:45 am 12:00 pm
WOWD Detroit 1230 6:15 am 12:15 pm
WGHN AM Grand Haven 1370 5:45 am 12:15 pm
WGHN FM Grand Haven 92.1 5:45 am 12:15 pm
WPLM Greenville 1380 6:15 am 11:50 am
WPLS Ludington 1220 6:45 am 12:15 pm
WSCR Hillside 1340 6:45 am 12:45 pm
WHTC Holland 1450 12:15 pm
WVBO Muskegon 1240 6:45 am 12:25 pm
WZKO Kalkazoo 590 5:00-6:00 am 12:00-1:00 am
WPLB FM Lakeview 1063 6:15 am 12:15 pm
WOAP Owosso 1080 7:15 am 12:40 pm
WHAK Port Huron 960 7:15 am 12:40 pm
WSJ St. Johns 1580 6:15 am 12:05-1:05 pm
WLML St. Louis 1520 6:05 am 12:20 pm
WSMM Saginaw 5:55 am 11:30-12:30 pm
WMIC Sandusky 660 6:15 am 12:45 pm
WKIC FM Tawas City 104.7 12:40 pm
WLKM Three Rivers 1510 5:45 am 12:15 pm
WTCM Traverse City 580 5:45 am 11:10 am
Michigan Farm Bureau has announced its 12 finalists for Outstanding Young Agricultural Leader, Young Farmer Achievement Award, and Outstanding Young Farm Employee. The winner in each of the categories will be determined at the MFB annual meeting in Traverse City.

The awards are presented each year to young farmers who have demonstrated agricultural involvement, leadership in Farm Bureau and their communities, and achievement. The individual winners will be selected from the finalists in an interview session.

The 12 finalists will receive a Garhart jacket courtesy of Blue Cross Blue Shield. Each state contest winner will receive $500 from Dodge Truck, an allExpense paid trip to the American Farm Bureau national annual meeting, and a Garhart Jacket from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and MFB. The winners in the leader and achievement areas also receive $1,000 worth of products from Great Lakes Hybrids Inc.

The awards are sponsored by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, courtesy of Blue Cross Blue Shield. Each state contest winner will receive $500 from Dodge Truck, an all-expense paid trip to the American Farm Bureau national annual meeting, and a Garhart Jacket from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and MFB. The winners in the leader and achievement areas also receive $1,000 worth of products from Great Lakes Hybrids Inc.

Young Farmer Achievement Awards

**BRYAN DROSCHA**

Agricultural Operation
Dairy operation with 72 cows and 550 acres of crops, including 50 acres of corn, 100 acres of soybeans, 300 acres of hay, and 80 acres of wheat. Also produces 500 gallons of maple syrup per year, and sells composted manure to local gardeners and organic farms.

Farm Bureau Involvement
Serves at the county level as board vice president, member of the Policy Development, Food Stand and Young Farmer committees, attended Washington and Lansing Legislative Seminars.

Community Involvement
Active leader in local 4-H club, serves as advisor to community garden.

**ED KERLIKOWSKE, JR**

Agricultural Operation
Owner/operator of 750-acre farm that includes 400 acres of corn, 200 acres of alfalfa, 20 acres of oats, as well as 135 dairy cows. Raised pheasants and quails on 50 acres. Serves as 4-H leader, Kent County Youth Fair Dairy Superintendents. Serves on county board of directors, past president and third member of Executive Committee. Has also served as chair of the county Young Farmers. Presently is active on the Policy Development Committee. At the state level, has been a member of the state Young Farmer committee and the Policy Development committee.

**JOHN WARNKE**

Agricultural Operation
Farmer/ground manager for a 950-acre, 250-head dairy operation, maintains dairy equipment and does field work. Overlooks main operation three months out of the year.

Farm Bureau Involvement
Active in county events such as Ag Safety Seminar, Kent Harvest Trials, ice cream socials, tractor races and farm tours. Has served as delegate to national Young Farmer conference, state Young Farmer conference and state annual meeting.

Community Involvement
Serves as 4-H leader, Kent County Youth Fair Dairy Superintendents, T-Ball and Little League coach, church council, Lowell Ag Supporters member, and Lowell FFA agriculture advisory council.

And the winners are...

**MARK ARENDS**

Wife: Tina
Children: Adam, 7; Brittany, 5; Conner, 10

Agricultural Operation
Serves as head coach for First Assembly Christian School JV basketball team. Also serves as chairman for the Nominating Committee for Welch's National Grape Coop.

**MIKE BOENSCH**

Wife: Mary
Children: Kaleigh, 8; Kyle, 6

Agricultural Operation
Owner/operator of 2,100 acres of land, including 1,000 acres of corn, 600 acres of soybeans, 80 acres of alfalfa, a acre of wheat, and 40 acres of popoas. Also donates素材 for neighbors.

Farm Bureau Involvement
Serves as Hillsdale County executive board member, has served as committee member for Ag Rec, Day and Tire Recycling Day.

Community Involvement
Serves as chairman of the Nominating Committee for Welch's National Grape Coop.

**SCOTT DROWN**

Wife: Lynn
Children: Baylee, 10, Grady, 7

Agricultural Operation
Active in county activities, serving on the Young Farmer committee, county board of directors and president, MACMA Committee, Candidate Evaluation Committee, Local Affairs Committee chair, state annual delegate and delegate chairman, Policy Development and Promotion and Education committees. At the state level, served on the state Young Farmer committee, as well as attended AFBF Young Farmer/ Young Farmer conference.

Community Involvement
Serves as township board trustee, volunteers for First Step preschool, hosted farm tour for developmentally challenged elementary students. Also volunteers to sell dairy products during county fair at the 'Little Red Barn' for MFB.

**JOHN WARNKE**

Wife: Pati
Children: Bethany, 4; Allison, 3

Agricultural Operation
Partners in a 420-cow operation, as well as 2,100 acres of land, including 1,000 acres of corn, 600 acres of soybeans, 80 acres of alfalfa, a acre of wheat, and 40 acres of popoas. Also donates素材 for neighbors.

Farm Bureau Involvement
Serves as Hillsdale County executive board member, has served as committee member for Ag Rec, Day and Tire Recycling Day.

Community Involvement
Serves as chairman of the Nominating Committee for Welch's National Grape Coop.

**OLEY JEPSEN**

Wife: Becky
Children: Jessica, 12; Casey, 10, Bryce, 8

Agricultural Operation
Owner/operator of 400 acres of land, including 400 acres of corn, 200 acres of alfalfa, 20 acres of oats, as well as 135 dairy cows. Raised pheasants and quails on 50 acres.
Market Outlook

by Dr. Jim Hilker, Department of Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University

**Wheat**

When is the long continuous downside in Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University are expected to continue doing so. Also, world feed future is huge and that doesn't look real well for prices over the next few years. On the other hand, winter and perhaps even into early spring; after heavily burdensome.

The futures market is telling us it will not pay to store either commercially or on-farm. If you are using these in the market, consider selling cash and using a call or futures. Of course, this decision would be a costly basis that are more predictable. The more likely decision that wheat producers will be making over the winter is when to price their 1997 wheat crop. At this point, next summer's futures are trading in the $5.50 neighborhood, and when you subtract a basis from that, prices don't look very exciting. Until wheat export picks up this winter and over the next couple of years, we will see the capacity to keep growing ending stocks.

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**Soybeans**

What did the Nov. 12 Crop Report say about U.S. 1996 soybean production? My analysis would suggest that if we hadn't already been on-farm, we will see as soon as this report is in the market. Soybean demand still seems to be in place, despite last year's very high prices, and the still above average prices we now have. While livestock may put a little extra, still strong, small this is. drum.

This would indicate that there is more upside potential than downside risk. Of course, South America's corn could throw a monkey wrench into this projection. While I do calculate in a good crop for South America, this crop is large enough to hurt the world and GSL prices on-oil. And, all bets are off if we have a good growing season. In other words, this time prices will certainly move a lot more over the next 3-4 months as we move through winter, both the upside and downside price risks.

The basis is tight, and so are the spreads between futures contracts. This is the saying the market will not pay to store, or pay commercial storage. If you want to stay in the market, use a basis contract or MPEG where you have possession of the beans and you have 80 percent of their value to use. It's not that you have to hold yourself of any downside price movement with a basis contract, but at least you will not be paying storage in a reinsurance market.

It is seen hard to justify on-farm storage under your opportunity costs are close to nothing. The point in time, competition in the pork packing industry seems to be strong, a lot of capacity has come on line since the fall of 1994 and number are lower. If hogs go back toward their recent highs, consider forward pricing a portion of your expected production over the next year. My message of the projected feed prices relative to expected hog prices is that hog numbers will rebound some time next year.

**Cattle**

The noem situation is when will the farther placements in August and September start coming to market and how fast will they come? The general expectation is that the market in December, but the timing around of December cattle futures through October would indicate that there is no certainty. The cattle numbers are out there somewhere to 14% points this fall. As the mid 50's and stay through the first half of fall, but they will have to be up to the feedlot and feed. The lower feed prices should begin to pull them in.

The choice select spread the first of the month indicated that we were probably current and there are indications this product was short relative to set production. The quicker fix is to push cattle through, i.e. more select, the lower choice prices should hold and perhaps may keep them from falling as much. However, lower corn prices may correct that situation soon. At this point keep current, but be selective.

**Dairy Situation**

by Sherrill B. Nott

Farm managers who are estimating early 1997 milk prices should be concerned about market activities that occurred in late October. A major factor in the Midwest price for milk in Michigan is the basic formula price (BFP) tagged by two more or less, is influenced to a greater degree by cheese prices and to a lesser degree by butter prices in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The federal order for Michigan's Order 40 reported the average price of $1.40/b in September. On Oct. 25, 1996, 40 blocks of cheese had dropped to $1.975 on the National Cheese Establishment in Green Bay, Wisconsin. This was $0.08 less than the seasonal average, a drop of nearly 18 percent. The same day, Grade A butter closed at $1.16 on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. This was $0.39 less, or a drop of nearly 19 percent. Should these lower price levels continue through November, the Michigan farm price of milk will be noticeably lower in January.

Another forward price expectation can be found on the futures market for liquid milk contracts at the Chicago Board of Trade. On Oct. 26, the contract for February, April, June and August 1997, all closed within a dime of 15.25 cents. The October 1997 contract closed at 15.25. Some folks believe the basis for Michigan is 21 cents per cwt. on these contracts. As of Oct. 29, the low prices over the holiday for the contracts for April, June and August were at Oct. 25, 20th and Oct. 25, respectively.

Late October appears to have been a time of change in dairy pricing products. A positive factor is the smaller than expected slaughter numbers in October indicating a sign that slaughter will continue to be lower. An negative factor is that the 20-30% margins continue to low, giving them no incentive to bid up prices. This is likely be higher. If the futures market is accurate, the percent drop, when it comes, could be greater. Careful cash flow managers will exercise caution in the milk price levels to be projected for 1997. They may view a portion of milk prices re-leaved November at windfall gains utilily to be repeated in 1997.

**Eggs**

by Henry Larzelere

Egg prices during October averaged about 3 cents a dozen more than a year ago. In general, the good prices in September were a Cent per dozen eggs more than in November. The market is telling us to expect higher prices in the high 80s or 90s in November and December. The December and January futures, however, have not been as high as expected. One factor that may have caused the market to be lower than expected, the percent market, if the futures market is accurate, prices could re-leaved November. The basis for Michigan is $13 per cwt. on these contracts. A little over October 1996 was $13.92 per cwt. In September. On Oct. 25, 1996, 40 blocks of cheese had dropped to $1.975 on the National Cheese Establishment in Green Bay, Wisconsin. This was $0.08 less than the seasonal average, a drop of nearly 18 percent. The same day, Grade A butter closed at $1.16 on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. This was $0.39 less, or a drop of nearly 19 percent. Should these lower price levels continue through November, the Michigan farm price of milk will be noticeably lower in January.

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**Michigan hog inventory down**

M's hog inventory on Sept. 1 decreased 8 percent from a year ago, according to the Federal/State Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service. Total inventory, estimated at 1,920,000 head, was 100,000 less than last September but 50,000 more than the June 1, 1996 inventory. The November 1997 inventory is expected to be near the 1996 level. Cullings and marketings have contributed to the market level which is currently near a 1,920,000 head level.

**Hogs**

december hog futures have been bouncing up and down over the past month as an effort to find the "right" price. My analysis suggests that they were at their highs they were higher than fundamentals, consumers and when they were at their lows they were lower than fundamentals would suggest. There are obviously factors pulling in both directions.

A positive factor is the smaller than expected slaughter numbers in October indicating a sign that slaughter will continue to be lower. An negative factor is that the 20-30% margins continue to low, giving them no incentive to bid up prices. This is likely be higher. If the futures market is accurate, the percent drop, when it comes, could be greater. Careful cash flow managers will exercise caution in the milk price levels to be projected for 1997. They may view a portion of milk prices re-leaved November at windfall gains utilily to be repeated in 1997.

**Wheat**

While projected U.S. ending stocks are not expected to be burdensome, the world as a whole seems to have more than enough wheat for those who can afford it. This is not to imply that prices are high; they are not. However, there are places in the world such as the former Soviet countries and some African countries that could use the wheat, but don't have the money and/or infrastructure to purchase it.
Business Strategies

by Ralph E. Heppe, Extension economist, Department of Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University

Costs must be known and understood before they can be managed. The financial manager of the business can ascertain the firm's immediate cost position by analyzing historical costs. Are costs high or low? What costs can be eliminated or minimized? What cost standards can be used to help answer these questions?

Many crop producers do not know their business production costs, but rely on average cost data from industry sources and assume their costs are comparable or lower than the average. Since average costs are based on a wide range of costs from many operations, some producers have high or low costs, but rely on other producers, and are important for the business manager and crop consultant to find out the relative competitive position of the operation being analyzed.

This means costs should be allocated to crop enterprises at the point the transactions are completed. A cost accounting system. Production cost discovery is a critical first condition before crop managers and consultants can use production cost data in management decision making.

Once per-unit costs have been estimated for the operation, it is necessary to determine what standards of performance are acceptable and attainable. Industry standards show what other producers in the industry are able to achieve and allows a comparison of the competitive position of the firm.

AND THE WINNERS ARE... Continued from page 5

Outstanding Young Agricultural Leaders

LORETTA BENJAMIN

Webberville, Ingham County
Husband: Todd
Children: Daniel, 9; Rebecca, 5
Agricultural Operation
Works with husband and father-in-law on 160- acre dairy operation. Works to promote farm through involvement in organizations such as FFA, Farm Bureau Involvement

Very active on county committees, serving as chair of the FCA Promotion and Relation, FCA Potter, Farm Management Association, and the Classroom, and National Ag Day. Has served on the Ag Day at the Zoo Committee, attended the Lansing Legislative Seminar, and been a delegate to the state annual meeting.

Community Involvement
Involved with the MMR as dairy communicators and member of the Dairy Days Planning Committee. Serves on the Advisory Committee for Michigan State University Extension. She is also involved with the Ingham County 4-H Council, Webberville Elementary Booster, and her local church.

JAMES FUESTERNAU

Richmond, Macomb County
Wife: Wendy
Children: Jolene, 8; Katie, 5; Mitchell, 1
Agricultural Operation
Operates a 500-acre dairy farm with 70 milking cows and 75 young stock. Main responsibility is the dairy operation, for which he has developed computer software to improve records.

Farm Bureau Involvement
Currently serves as county president; has served as vice president, board member and chairman of both the Membership and Local Affairs committees. At the state level, he has served on the Policy Development Committee, County Annual Study Committee, and has served as chairman of the Finance Study and Legal Defense committees.

Community Involvement
Very active in dairy organizations, including the Michigan Holstein Association, MMRP, Michigan Dairy BGA, and Northeast Select Committee. Involved with the state of Michigan on related topics, worked in local church and school.

SHARON HALLACK

Hart, Oceana County
Husband: Stan
Children: Megan, 9; Lauren, 7
Agricultural Operation
Keeps records and assists with operations on a 300-acre cow/calf operation.

Farm Bureau Involvement
Has served on the county board of direction as president and vice president, chair of Promotion and Education committee, as well as member of Information, Local Affairs, State Affairs, Membership, Nominating and Candidature Evaluation committees. Has been a Discussion Meet participant, attended the Lansing Legislative Seminar, and served as delegate to the state annual meeting.

Community Involvement
Active in the Oceana Cherry Queen Committee, sits as superintendent of Elkhart Community School, and Crusader for the American Cancer Society. Coordinated Adopt-a-Highway effort for the current year but placed into inventory for the next fiscal year.

JOSEPH MARHOFER

Belding, Ionia County
Wife: Lisa
Children: Timothy, 8; Daniel, 7; Thomas, 6
Agricultural Operation
Owner-operator of a 200-head operation on 200 acres. Responsible for health and other daily operations; also feeds trials, field tests and market production plate.

Farm Bureau Involvement
Active at the county level, serving as county president, chairman of State and Local Affairs Committee, member of the Policy Development Committee, and serving on the board of directors. Has been a delegate to the state annual meeting.

Community Involvement
Volunteers as a leader for 4-H, serves as local FFA Alumni president, member of Pheasants Forever, Treasurers, and active in local church.

Production costs for major field crops in Michigan

in the industry. Industry standards are usually averages for a number of operations.

Sources of data
The sources of production cost data for industry operations are records kept by crop producers enrolled in the Telfarm record program through Michigan State University Extension systems.

Gives the limited number of farms in the sample, the cost data are not representative of the average Michigan crop farms, but represent a select group of producers who desire a complete recordkeeping system. Operate larger farms than the average Michigan producer, and obtain a large percent of the family income from agriculture. The sample includes about 50 farms averaging about 800 to 1,000 acres. Data is presented for the last five years, from 1994 to 1999.

Indirect costs or overhead costs are not associated with a single enterprise or crop and are applied to all crop enterprises for the operation. For this report, overhead costs are grouped into labor, capital costs for machinery and equipment, land, and other. Depreciation of machinery and equipment is part of the capital costs. Land costs include rent paid, property taxes, interest on land debt and other land maintenance items.

The accounting costs have been accrued at the point the crop inputs purchased is purchased in the year but placed into inventory for the next fiscal period. The quantity produced includes the production for the current account period whether the crops are sold or placed in inventory for sale during the following calendar year.

Direct and overhead costs for major crops

Table 1 shows the accounting production costs for field crops on farms that had a return on assets of more than 7 percent during 1999. The costs are categorized by direct and indirect inputs and represent the published costs for corn, wheat and soybeans, the purchased weight costs for edible beans, and other costs for sugar beets.

The farms averaged 956 acres with 495 owned and 461 leased acres. The operations yielded $355 per acre, for a total of $427 per acre. The operators had a net farm income of $118 per acre. The charge for the land, continued on page 17

Table 1 — Accounting production costs for field crops during 1995 on high-input farms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost category</th>
<th>Corn</th>
<th>Wheat</th>
<th>Soybean</th>
<th>Beans</th>
<th>Beets</th>
<th>Sugar</th>
<th>Beans</th>
<th>Sugar</th>
<th>Soybean</th>
<th>Wheat</th>
<th>Corn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.30</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>3.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Telmark has been leasing equipment for over 30 years. Did you know that we’ve been leasing new buildings for that long too? Consider these features:

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- Low upfront costs: Beginning costs may be as little as one monthly lease payment.
- Flexible lease term: Building lease terms start aggressively at five years but may be ten, twelve, or fifteen years.
- Customized payment schedules: Choose Telmark lease financing.

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- Luann Kubacki, UP & Northern Market 616-781-6280
- Jim MacKay, East Central MI 517-749-4630
- Ann Briggs, Southeastern MI 517-349-8698

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800-451-3322
A new model is now available of the collectable toy tractors that are being sold to raise funds for the Michigan FFA. The Oliver 1555, number four in a series of five collectables produced in partnership with ERTL Toy Company, is now available in Quality Stores or County Post Stores across the state. Only 2,000 of these highly detailed, metal, limited edition replicas have been produced. The tractor comes with special FFA designations and a certificate of authenticity. It retails for $34.99, plus tax.

In 1993, Quality Stores and ERTL Toy Company agreed to manufacture a limited edition series of FFA tractors for five years with all the profits going to benefit the Michigan and Ohio FFA Associations. The funds raised will help support and develop young leaders for the future of rural Michigan through the leadership activities of the state FFA organizations. Quality Stores is the largest financial sponsor of the Michigan FFA, with donations totaling over $62,000 through 1995.

"Like all high quality collector items, these tractors have the potential to increase in value over time," said Julie Chamberlain, executive director of the Michigan FFA Foundation. "This year's tractors are also a great way to start a collection or make a unique gift to children, family and friends. Whatever the reason for buying, the purchase of a tractor will help make a difference for the future leadership development of Michigan's youth," she said.

The real-life Oliver 1555 tractors were produced from 1969 to 1975. They were powered by a 252-cubic-inch, six-cylinder diesel or gas engine, guaranteed by Oliver to produce 55 horsepower at 2200 r.p.m. The 1555 was available in Row Crop, Wheatland, Ricefield, and Utility configurations. The Row Crop axle included the dual narrow front wheels shown in this year's collector model.

Tractor maintenance tips for top winter performance

One are the days when doctors made house calls on snow nights. So, too, are the days when tractors needed only some antifreeze and a full tank of fuel to stay in top form all winter long. According to Joe Safaransky, product performance manager, Case IH Magnum tractors, the modern, sophisticated workhorses on farms today are just as susceptible to winter maladies as their predecessors. "By following a few, simple maintenance steps, farmers can help their tractors get through the cold season without a hiccup," he said.

Below, Safaransky prescribes the winter tractor-care precautions for the engine, electrical, fuel and transmission systems. But, he cautions, winter is not the only time for tractor checkups. "Specific steps must be taken for cold-weather operation. However, following the service intervals outlined in the operator's manual throughout the year is the best preventative medicine." 

Engine System
- Check the concentration of antifreeze to provide low-temperature protection. A 50 percent ethylene glycol mixture is recommended.
- Verify the block heater is in good working order. Don't have a block heater? See your local equipment dealer. Block heaters are available through the parts system and are easily installed.

Electrical System
- Check the electrolyte level on low-maintenance batteries every 250 hours.
- Clean the battery terminals and make sure batteries are fully charged.
- Check the condition of the alternator belt and replace if cracked or frayed.
- Inspect wiring for cracks, frayed insulation or corrosion.

Fuel System
- Using the fuel tank's water drain valve, drain off any condensation and sediment.
- Consider changing to a lighter, winter blend diesel fuel that is less likely to gel when the temperature drops below freezing.

Transmission System
- Check the transmission oil level.
- Install a transmission oil heat maintainer to keep the oil warm for improved cold-temperature starting.

Chicken soup won't help a tractor when winter takes its strength. To avoid costly emergency calls, consult the operator's manual regularly, make routine checkups and pay close attention to the four major systems most susceptible to the winter blahs.
Is oil analysis a part of your maintenance program?

Making oil analysis a part of your regularly scheduled maintenance program could mean the difference between minor repairs and a major engine overhaul. It could also help you avoid the frustration and cost of downtime due to critical equipment failures.

"Oil analysis gives the producer the ability to determine what's taking place in an engine, pump, hydraulic system, or gear box," Underwood explained. "Oil sampling at predetermined intervals to meet the individual's maintenance schedule can help prevent catastrophic failures."

Using a SCAN kit, supplied by FPC, producers simply pull a sample of oil drained at changing time. Producers then complete a form, detailing the make and model of the equipment as well as other details. The oil sample, along with the completed paperwork, is mailed in a postage-paid shipping tube to Kenton, Ohio for analysis.

Contamination such as gushed, water, fuel dilution and silicate can quickly be noted, often allowing the operator to be alerted before severe damage occurs. Underwood says the measurements of critical wear metals in used oil can often pinpoint the location of a problem, keeping repair costs to a minimum.

Users of the program receive reports that are easy to follow, with normal lab turnaround time kept to within 24 hours of receiving a sample. In the event a serious problem is identified, producers are contacted by SCAN technicians via the phone for prompt notification. Information on the lack of the reports suggests possible sources of wear metals and contaminants. Results from the previous five samples show any trends that may be occurring.

"Besides the important current operation, an overall file is being created for the producer, containing reports that prove invaluable in mapping the performance history of the unit, which is retained for the user's personal reference," Underwood explained. "It also provides excellent data to document the performance of a piece of equipment at trade-in time."

The SCAN kits are approximately $11 and are available at FPC dealers and FPC retail outlets. For more information, stop by your nearest FPC outlet or call Underwood at (517) 325-7000, ext. 587.

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**Telltale Signs of Used Oil Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Possible Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aluminum</td>
<td>Blowout, camshaft intermediate bearings, turbo bearings and crankshaft thrust bearings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barium</td>
<td>Lube oil additive. Also sometimes used in a smoke depressant additive in diesel fuel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boron</td>
<td>Supplementary coolant inhibitor additive, lube oil additive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td>Lube oil additive. Also used in road salt, frequently present in hard water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chromium</td>
<td>Zircon ring face (chrome).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>Sintered (sintered) bushings, connecting rod and crankshaft main bearing matrices. See roller bushings, rocker arm drive bushings, connecting rod bushings, cam shaft thrust washers. Also used in oil additive packages for anti-wear characteristics.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Iron            | Gray iron cylinder liners, malleable iron pistons, hardened steel camshafts, gearshafts,  
|                 | Cast iron induction-hardened rocker arms, valve bridges, alloyed steel (cam follower rollers, etc). |
| Lead            | Alloy matrix of connecting rod and crankshaft main bearings.                     |
| Molybdenum      | Lube oil additive. Traces in aluminum alloys, frequently present in hard water.   |
| Magnesium       | Sodium                     | Lube oil additive. Traces in aluminum alloys, frequently present in hard water. |
| Molybdenum      | Lube oil additive. Traces in aluminium alloys, frequently present in hard water.   |
| Silicon         | Print-Out Seal *Silicone* gaskets; Silicone anti-fog additive in lube oil additive;  
|                 | Silicon dioxide from ingested airborne sand or dust.                             |
| Sodium          | Supplementary coolant inhibitor additive, lube oil additive, road salt.          |
| Tin             | Piston plate coating (tin), babbit overlay of connecting rod and crankshaft main bearings. |
| Zinc            | Lube oil wear and oxidation inhibitor additive.                                   |

**Winter months can cause undue stress to a tractor,** unless the proper maintenance procedures are followed. Here, a Case IH Magnum tractor is being serviced to ensure that performance doesn't drop when the temperature outside does.

---

Thank you from Zeeland Farm Soya

Zeeland Farm Soya's new soybean processing plant has been in operation for nearly three months. All of us here at ZFS wish to express our appreciation to all of those in the Michigan agricultural community who helped to make the successful startup a reality.

First, to those in the Michigan Department of Agriculture, who helped us with the paperwork, permits and promotion. Dr. Gordon Kuyper, thank you for your support for our project and also the years you gave to Michigan agriculture. We wish you well in your retirement. We will all miss you. Also our thanks to Robert Craig, director of special projects in the MDA. Bob, it was a pleasure working with you and your efforts helped us with our marketing studies. MSU Extension Service was of immense assistance in our startup and educational phases and they continue to supply agricultural education to the agri-producers of Michigan, and to them all, we say thanks, and we continue to support your efforts.

The Michigan Soybean Association and its executive director, Keith Reinhold, played a big part in getting a new market started for the soybean producers of Michigan. We are now buying soybeans from all over the eastern and northern counties of the state, in addition to those here in our section of the states. We want to thank Keith for his support. And all to the soybean producers and elevator operators all around the state who continue to sell us their soybeans. Thank you.

The agri-producers and elevator operators of the state have also supported us by buying the finished products of our processing plant, including soy 48%, soy 44%, and soy hulls. We have sold these products all over the state. Including the east, south and west sides of the state. We have even shipped product into the Upper Peninsula. A big thanks goes out to all of our agri-producers, as well as agribusiness, as you can see. We are dedicated to servicing our customers no matter where in the state of Michigan they are located. We also have dedicated a number of large capacity trucks to transporting agricultural products. We believe this will give the best possible combination of products and service in the industry.

Speaking of products, we ask you to try our products. You will find them to be of consistently better quality than industry standards. Coupled with good, reliable service, we are prepared to meet your needs no matter where you are located. As you can see, we have a lot of support from the agricultural community of Michigan, and we hope that we can continue to earn your support.
Producers learn business planning skills from AMAP program

Michigan producers are learning master strategic business planning with the help of Michigan State University Extension’s Agriculture Management Advancement Project (AMAP).

AMAP takes producers through a systematic process of looking at their operations in a long-range, holistic manner to make effective planning decisions that will undergird the future of their farm businesses.

The core of the AMAP workshop emphasizes the business mission, the necessary long- and short-term goals to reach the mission, and the tactics needed to accomplish the goals.

In each of these major areas, producers learn how to apply their personal values and ideas to achieve success.

“The project’s goal is to strengthen the capability of the managers of agricultural operations,” says Stephen Harsh, MSU Extension agricultural economist and AMAP co-coordinator. “AMAP uses management concepts and methods commonly used by successful leaders in non-farm businesses.”

Brad Crandall and his father, Larry, of Crandall Farms in Battle Creek, used their AMAP experience to compare notes with other producers about their operations. The Crandalls own and manage a 900-acre crop and dairy farm that has been in the family for 110 years. They began discussing expanding the operation when Brad joined his father two years ago after finishing college.

“This program made me think of where the farm and I are headed,” Brad Crandall says. “Anything that focuses you to think about the future is beneficial.”

Expansion is just one way that planning by producers helps their businesses. It also helps eligible farmers to better the relations when dealing with lending institutions, hiring employees, handling family commitments, planning retirement, etc.

“AMAP enables farm business managers to decide what they want their business to achieve, and then, through the skills developed through the program, they make it happen,” Harsh says. “Rather than having others tell them what is the perfect business, producers decide what is ideal for them and how they and their family can work toward it.”

One AMAP group of producers decided to keep in touch after the program. They have met at various members’ farms to discuss problems and how to solve them. AMAP has been a good way for these producers to network with each other and practice the management skills they’ve learned.

After finishing the introductory AMAP program, producers may want to learn how to improve specific areas in their businesses. Consequently, supplemental workshops were developed to deal with major areas of concern to agricultural business managers, such as human resource management, financial management and dairy farm analysis.

AMAP workshops are scheduled from early winter to early spring to accommodate producers’ schedules. Developed as a cooperative effort by specialists in several MSU departments and Extension field agents, the AMAP workshop encourages a close interaction between the workshop experts and the participants. All members of the farm business and their spouses are strongly urged to attend.

A few AMAP workshops already are planned:

Jan. 7, 14, and 21 in the Upper Peninsula for potato growers, Jan. 21 and Feb. 4 in Jackson for crop producers; and Feb. 6, 13 and 20 in Ogemaw County for dairy, crop, beef and Christmas tree producers.

Human resource management workshops have been scheduled for Feb. 12, 19 and 26, and Feb. 15, 20 and 27. Financial management workshops have been scheduled for Jan. 14, 21 and 25, Feb. 11, 15, 18 and 20, Feb. 18 and 20; and March 4 and 6.

This is not a complete listing — more workshops will be scheduled.

AMAP is a program for all agricultural producers. For more information about AMAP, please contact Steve Harsh, AMAP coordinator, 307 Agriculture Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824, or call (517) 353-4518.

Organic dairy products find place in market

Milk is finding a popular and profitable niche in the organic foods market. More producers are getting into the organic dairy business's sales boom.

Three years ago, organic milk sales ran $1 million. Today, sales total $50 million annually, according to Tunbridge, Vt., dairy farmer Bunny Flint and her husband Peter run the Organic Cow of Vermont Company. Flint, a Vermont Farm Bureau member, says the company and farm are doing okay financially as are the 26 farms that supply her company with milk. "It was with the idea of saving our own farm that we went to organic," Flint says. Flint says she also wanted to give consumers a clear choice. But at the same time, Flint does not knock conventional dairy farming. "There is a place for conventional farming and there's a place for organic," she says. She adds that conventional farming is indispensable in a society led by 2 percent of its population.

Scientific link found in smoking, lung cancer

A recent study published in several major newspapers, researchers have discovered a direct scientific link between smoking and lung cancer, a discovery that adds to a tall list of evidence that tobacco smoking causes lung cancer.

It marks the first bit of evidence from the cell biology level linking smoking to lung cancer. According to experts in the field of cancer genetics, the findings establish the long missing link, and could play a role in pending litigation about smoking illnesses and passive smoking.

"This paper absolutely pinpointsthat mutations in lung cancer are caused by a carcinogen in cigarette smoke," said Dr. John Minna, a researcher at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. "It is the smoking gun that makes the connection."

While many scientists have long been convinced by statistical studies and animal experiments that tobacco causes cancer, a statistical association was not in itself absolute proof.
I. Introduction

Obesity is a significant public health concern in the United States. According to the Institute of Medicine report in 1995, approximately 35% of women and 31% of men aged 20 and older were obese. This trend has continued, with estimates indicating that 30% of women and 25% of men were obese in 1980. It's no secret that many Americans are preoccupied with losing weight. At any one time, millions of Americans are dieting, and more than $35 billion is being spent annually on weight-reduction products such as diet drinks and foods, according to a 1995 Institute of Medicine report. Yet more and more Americans are becoming obese. Approximately 35% of women and 25% of men aged 20 and older in the U.S. today are obese, compared to 30% for women and 25% for men in 1980.

II. Appetite Suppressants

Appetite suppressants are medications designed to reduce food intake by altering specific activities. Appetite suppressants have been widely used in the past, but their effectiveness has been questioned. In the past, diet drugs were usually discovered by accident, when a medication designed to do something else was found to promote weight loss. New research, which has identified some of the ways in which the body regulates appetite and food intake, has allowed the development of drugs targeted to alter specific activities. Appetite suppressants in common use today fall into two general categories: noradrenergic and serotonergic drugs.

A. Noradrenergic Drugs

Noradrenergic drugs mimic epinephrine, a hormone that is the most potent stimulant of the sympathetic nervous system. Amphetamines, which were used widely in the 1950s and 1960s, are perhaps the most familiar of the noradrenergic drugs. However, amphetamines and similar drugs gave all diet drugs a bad name when they were found to cause dependence.

B. Serotonergic Drugs

Serotonergic drugs increase the release of serotonin and/or slow its depletion by partially inhibiting its removal by serotonergic receptors. Serotonin, a neurotransmitter produced in the body, has been found to decrease appetite and reduce food intake. Recent research suggests that obesity may not be at least partly due to an impairment in the system that controls the release of serotonin. The development of drugs that interfere with the action of serotonin is a major focus of research today.

III. Common Noradrenergic Drugs

Common Noradrenergic Drugs:
- Phentermine (Quickil)
- Diethylpropion (Tenuate)
- Dexfenfluramine (Redux)
- Fluoxetine (Prozac)
- Fenfluramine (Pondimin)

IV. Common Serotonergic Drugs

Common Serotonergic Drugs:
- Fluoxetine (Prozac)
- Paroxetine (Paxil)
- Sertraline (Zoloft)
- Citalopram (Celexa)
- Escitalopram (Lexapro)

V. Comparison of Diet Drugs

Diet drugs are typically used as part of a weight-loss program that includes diet, exercise, and behavior modification. They work with these measures. Most diet drugs are approved for short-term use, usually about three months. Typically, they are taken for one time, then for several days, then for several weeks, depending on the medication.

VI. Conclusion

Despite the potential for diet drugs to be effective in weight loss, they should be used with caution. Individuals should consult with a healthcare provider before using any weight-loss medication. In addition, weight loss should not be the sole focus of dietary intervention. A healthy diet and exercise program should be the primary focus. Diet drugs should be used as a tool to help achieve these goals, not as a magic bullet.

Appendix:

BMI Calculation

You can calculate your BMI by dividing your weight (in pounds) by the square of your height (in inches) and multiplying by 703.

For example, someone who is 5'6" and weighs 180 pounds would have a BMI of (180 ÷ (5.6 x 5.6)) = 180 ÷ 3136 = 0.057 x 703 = 39.5.
Answers

1. **TRUE.** It's always best to discard the skin, which is almost pure fat, but you can cook it first. Research has shown that the fat in the skin does not migrate into the meat during cooking. It's fine to remove the skin first if you're cooking breasts or other small parts — the meat will still remain juicy, since you'll be able to cook it quickly. When cooking large pieces or a whole bird, you'll have a better tasting poultry if you cook with the skin and then remove it after cooking. One problem: The pan juices will then have to be degreased. We suggest chilling the juices for a few minutes and then skimming off the fat that rises.

2. **FALSE.** An egg carton is the best of all possible containers, because it helps prevent cracking and keeps eggs from absorbing odors. Store eggs toward the back of the refrigerator, where it's coldest. Use the door shelves for condiments, beverages and other items less subject to spoilage.

3. **TRUE.** The sell-by-date means it's time for the grocer to move the product off the shelves. But if it's been properly refrigerated, it's generally safe for another two to three days. If you buy foods that are close to their sell-by date (sometimes such items are on sale), keep them very cold and try to use them fairly soon. Of course, some foods, such as bread or sealed packages, can be used a lot later than their sell-by dates.

4. **TRUE.** You don't really need disinfectant sponges or cleaning agents. Hot water and soap will do the job quite well for sponges, dishes, and kitchen counters. A disinfectant won't make up for elbow grease. Do wash sponges and dishes frequently. Put them in the dishwasher, washing machine or even microwave even if you haven't time to wash them by hand daily. Never use a sponge or dishrag that smells bad. And if you've used it to mop up raw meat juices, wash it. Don't use it with hot water and soap right away.

5. **FALSE.** If you're cooking with the bones, such as bread or sealed packages, can be used a lot later than their sell-by dates.

6. **TRUE.** How foods should be refrigerated as soon as possible after cooking/serving, and always within two hours. If you've got a big bowl of very hot stock or stew, immerse the dish in a sink of cold water for a few minutes before chilling. It's not true, as you may have heard, that chilling hot liquids quickly causes them to spoil.

7. **FALSE.** At least not significantly. All animal products contain cholesterol, which is found equally in the lean meat and the fat. About 20 to 25 milligrams per ounce, but it is still an excellent idea to trim the fat from all meats and discard poultry skin, because the highly saturated fats in a worse effect on your blood cholesterol than dietary cholesterol itself.

8. **TRUE.** That's because it shortens cooking time, and the shorter the cooking time, the less vitamin loss.

9. **FALSE.** Or at least not necessarily. Commercially frozen vegetables are usually processed immediately after picking, and close to the field. Fresh vegetables may have been picked a week or so ago and transported many miles. Handling and refrigeration are always the key. If the frozen product has been defrosted and refrozen, it will not be as nutritious as it was originally.

10. **TRUE.** Vitamin C is easily destroyed by heat. However, there'll still be some left in the hour-old potato. All leafy vegetables lose some vitamin C, but they are still worth eating.

11. **TRUE.** A fat-free broth or stock is very low in calories and nutrients. However, the canned varieties may contain lots of salt.

12. **FALSE.** Sugar is sugar, and no form of it offers significant nutritional advantages. Brown sugar is white sugar with a little molasses remaining or added for coloring. Honey is sweeter than table sugar, but any additional nutrients it contains are minimal.

13. **TRUE.** Lime juice may kill bacteria on the surface of shellfish and, in that sense, "cook" them, but it won't kill any poisonous microorganisms below the surface. Eating raw shellfish in lime juice (ceviche) is always risky.

Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, October 1996
Life-threatening irregular heart rhythms peak on Monday, Friday — even among retired

**Healthy Blues**

**Stopping lymph disease at its source**

Ticks that transmit lymph disease to humans may find it deadly to get a free ride on white-tailed deer. That's because the deer's body temperature is cooler than that of other mammals, which makes it difficult for tick-borne diseases to thrive. However, by using antibiotics, the deer's body temperature can be lowered, making it difficult for the disease to spread. This finding suggests that vaccination programs targeting white-tailed deer could be effective in preventing lymph disease.

**500 plus foods are key**

The U.S. population gets about 90 percent of its calories, fiber, calcium, iron, fat, saturated fat and eight other nutrients of public health interest from 527 foods, according to newly released data from the USDA. 1999-2001.

**Office Calls**

**Keeping kids safe on the farm**

According to the National Safety Council, about 300 children die and more than 17,000 sustain serious injury each year in farm-related accidents. For the most part, accidents can be prevented with a little common sense and simply telling the child "no," said Dee Jespersen, health and safety associate for Ohio State University Extension. Most injuries and deaths on the farm occur when children are thrust into situations they are not yet physically or mentally old enough to handle.

A National Safety Council survey found that children ages 5 to 14 were at risk more likely to suffer a farm work accident than adults ages 45 to 64.

**Where does the afternoon energy slump come from, and how can I avoid it?**

If you rely on sugar and caffeine to jump start your energy early in the day, you may find that when the effects wear off and your blood sugar drops. Although small amounts of sugar or caffeine usually don't cause a problem, larger amounts can cause an eventual fall-off in energy, especially if they are used as quick replacements for balanced meals.

If you're trying to save time or calories, a lunch that is too light will not provide enough fuel to last through an afternoon. Some nutrition experts recommend eating at least a quarter of your day's calorie needs at lunchtime. Therefore, relying on a bowl of soup with a few crackers, a slice of pizza, or a diet frozen meal to provide lasting energy will probably not suffice.

Supplement these foods with other foods to create a meal that satisfies hunger for more than a couple of hours. For some people, a meal made solely from the carbohydrates found in fruits, vegetables and sweets will not supply enough long-lasting energy even though they contain a significant number of calories. Even though meals such as a fruit plate and a milk, or steamed vegetables over rice, can be healthfully low-fat and sugar-free. In other words, they may not maintain energy for more than two or three hours.

To avoid an afternoon slump, you may find relief by adding some low-fat protein to your carbohydrate-based meal. Some grilled chicken with fruit, nuts with a wrapped vegetable or a small sandwich with meat can make a real difference between a quick and lasting energy.

When you do experience a slump in energy, don't try to fix it with a jolt of caffeine or sugar. If you need a snack, try a longer-lasting one like pretzels, crackers, fruit or milk. You may just need a mental break after concentrating too long on a difficult or tedious task. Some people find it helpful to do a few neck and shoulder stretches, or to get up and move around for a few minutes.

Plan ahead and you may be able to avoid an afternoon slump. Make time for a 15- to 20-minute walk at lunchtime to help prevent its onset. Avoid excess fat and calories at lunch, but don't sacrifice the lasting energy that comes from combining a few high-energy foods with other foodst inert the morning. The American Institute for Cancer Research, Dept HH, Washington, DC 20069.

**NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL**

A National Safety Council survey found that children ages 5 to 14 were at risk more likely to suffer a farm work accident than adults ages 45 to 64.

**How concerned should I be about exposure to radon levels in my home?**

For people who live in high-radiation areas, their individual lifetime risk of developing lung cancer may be much lower than previously estimated by the EPA.

A new analysis from the University of Michigan School of Public Health uses the same risk model the EPA did in its 1992 A Citizen's Guide to Radon, but the researchers take into account the fact that most people move frequently throughout their lives (an average of 10-11 times). Because most homes have low levels of radon, a person's exposure to one high-radon home is not a good indicator of lifetime radon exposure. Thus, for a typically mobile: 50-year-old smoker in a high-radon home, the (not a) risk of radon-related death is only 0.01, not the EPA's estimate of 1.00. This new analysis estimates the radon-related lung cancer risk, and the benefits of remediation, for individuals characterized by their age, smoking status, current radon exposure, and anticipated length of residence in their current home. The researchers note that while mobility reduces the variance of individuals' lifetime radon exposure, it does not affect the total population's mean risk associated with radon. Although people who currently live in high-radon homes are generally at much lower risk of lung cancer than the EPA suggested, people currently living in low-radon homes are at higher risk of the possibility they may one day move into a high-radon home.
Choosing from an array of surgical options

New surgical options for nation's most common hernia

How long will it take for you to recover?

The answer may depend on you. No studies have compared all techniques and found that one is best for maintaining gains and recovery time. However, research does suggest that your recovery depends on your motivation.

Techniques fall within two categories:

- Herniorrhaphy — A herniorrhaphy is the traditional hernia operation and has been performed by surgeons for more than a century. An incision of several inches is made over the hernia, the protruding tissue is pushed back into place and the weakened muscle is sewn together to prevent the hernia from recurring.

- Hernioplasty — A hernioplasty is different from a herniorrhaphy in that it involves placing a synthetic mesh patch over the weakened tissue to keep the intestine from protruding again — just as you’d use a fabric patch to repair worn clothing. Although once used mainly for recurrent hernias, today hernioplasty is often recommended for initial hernia repair.

There are several hernioplasty approaches, but perhaps the most publicized is the laparoscopic approach. That involves making several small incisions in your abdomen and inserting special tube-like instruments that allow doctors to view your body’s interior through video images. The instruments can also be used to push the protruding tissue back into place and secure it to the weakened tissue.

Because only small incisions are used, the procedure may result in faster recovery.

Surgery can also use the mesh patch without laparoscopic instruments. This approach involves making an incision of several inches over the hernia. Surgeons push the protruding tissue back into place and suture the patch over the area.

In addition, the mesh may be used as a plug. A special mesh device, which resembles a badminton birdie, is placed into weakened muscle tissue to block the intestine from pushing through. A small mesh patch is also placed on top of the plug to reinforce the repair.

Ask your physician

Inguinal hernia repair is the most frequently performed operation by general surgeons in the United States. It’s also very effective. Hernias can recur after surgery, but this happens infrequently.

The technique used to repair your hernia can affect the operation’s length, its cost, the type of anesthetic you receive, your chances of surgical complications and your recovery period. Each repair has its own advantages. And although herniorrhaphy is the traditional operation, techniques using the mesh patch appear safe and effective and may one day supplant hernioplasty as the standard repair.

Your surgeon is the best resource for helping you decide which one is best for you.

Reproduced From October 1996, Mayo Clinic Quarterly. Letter with permission of Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, Rochester, Minnesota 55905

Getting back on your feet after hernia surgery

Most common in men

Inguinal hernia is the most common abdominal hernia. It’s far more frequent in men than women and accounts for 80 percent of all hernias diagnosed in men.

With an inguinal hernia, you may be able to see and feel the bulge caused by the protruding tissue or intestine. It’s often located at the junction of your thigh and groin. Sometimes in men, the protruding intestine enters the scrotum. This can be painful and cause the scrotum to swell.

Hernia complications

Signs and symptoms of an inguinal hernia can include a tender lump near the groin and discomfort or pressure while bending over, coughing or straining. Sometimes there may be no symptoms. You may not know you have one until it’s discovered during a routine physical exam.

Although most inguinal hernias aren’t serious, complications that require immediate surgical treatment can develop. One is called incarceration. That simply means the protruding tissue or intestine can’t be pushed back into the abdomen without surgery. If this occurs, it can lead to a complication called strangulation.

When strangulation occurs, the blood supply to the segment of protruding intestine is cut off by the tight fit of surrounding tissue. Gangrene, a life-threatening condition, can result. Fever, severe abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting from bowel obstruction can accompany a strangulated hernia.

Repairing the problem

Surgery is the best treatment option. Trusses, which provide external support, are also available. But they aren’t recommended because they don’t protect against hernia complications or correct the underlying problem.

Surgery for inguinal hernia is relatively straightforward. It involves making one or more incisions in your abdomen, pushing the protruding tissue back into its proper position and then repairing the weakened muscle wall to prevent another hernia.

If you have a cough or cold, surgery may be delayed because the pressure it creates in your abdomen may weaken the incision before it heals. Some repairs require general anesthesia. For others, you may only need a regional anesthetic and may be awake during the operation.

An array of repairs

Since the early 1990s, an array of surgical repair techniques have become widely available.

Technique falls within two categories:

- Inguinal hernia

A hernia develops when abdominal tissue protrudes through a weak point or tear in your abdominal wall. Many people believe that you develop a hernia after heavy lifting or after intense physical exertion. But hernias often have no apparent cause, and anyone can develop one — even newborn infants.

Weakened muscle tissue

A hernia develops when abdominal tissue protrudes through a weak point or tear in your abdominal wall. Many people believe that you develop a hernia after heavy lifting or after intense physical exertion. But hernias often have no apparent cause, and anyone can develop one — even newborn infants.

An inguinal hernia is just one type of hernia that commonly develops in the general area of the abdomen. It occurs along the inguinal canal — an opening in abdominal muscles. In men, the canal is the spermatic cord’s passageway between the abdominal cavity and the scrotum. In women, it’s the passageway for a ligament that helps hold the uterus in place.

Other types of abdominal hernias are femoral, paramedian and umbilical. Femoral hernias form in the canal that carries the principal blood vessels into your thigh. A paramedian hernia develops near your navel. An umbilical hernia can develop when the wall of tissue holding your abdominal organs in place has weakened because of a surgical incision that didn’t heal properly.

Another common type of hernia, a hiatal hernia, occurs when part of your stomach pushes through your diaphragm into your chest cavity.

In men, an inguinal hernia forms when organs, in this case the testicles, protrude through the wall between the abdomen and scrotum.

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An inguinal hernia can result in a bulge at the junction of your thigh and groin. Bulges can be round as well as oval.

Risk factor for hernia development

Hernias can develop for any reason. Although once used mainly for recurrent hernias, today hernioplasty is often recommended for initial hernia repair.

There are several hernioplasty approaches, but perhaps the most publicized is the laparoscopic approach. That involves making several small incisions in your abdomen and inserting special tube-like instruments that allow doctors to view your body’s interior through video images. The instruments can also be used to push the protruding tissue back into place and secure it to the weakened tissue.

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Getting back on your feet after hernia surgery

No matter what surgical technique is involved, hernia surgery usually isn’t a lengthy procedure. Most operations take about an hour. Many are performed on an outpatient basis — in part because hernia surgery often no longer requires general anesthesia.

After the operation, you’ll be urged to move about as soon as you’re able, usually within the first day. Often, your doctor will allow you to eat whatever agrees with you. After a period of observation, you’ll return home with instructions to watch for redness or discomfort around the incision. These could be signs of an infection.

How long will it take for you to recover?

The answer may depend on you. No studies have compared all techniques and found that one is best for maintaining gains and recovery time. However, research does suggest that your recovery depends on your motivation.

For example, shared that people who needed to return to their jobs soon after surgery reported less pain than those who didn’t have a need or time frame for resuming work.

Although you may need to avoid heavy lifting for three to six weeks, Mayo doctors believe your comfort level may be the best guide for deciding when to resume your everyday activities.
Legal problems? Consider ag mediation program

Agricultural disputes? Try mediation.

Frustrated by the lack of a level playing field?

Field disputes?

Legal problems? Consider a mediation program.

For more information, contact one of our representatives.

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MICHIGAN FARM NEWS
November 15, 1996

An equal say in any agreement. In the mediation process, the people involved in the situation are the ones who create an agreement that works for them. In an administrative appeal or in court, a determination is imposed by a hearing officer or judge.

• Confidential communications, which can lead to improved relationships between the disputing parties.

• Prompt service, avoiding the delays of litigation or appeals and allowing the farmers to maintain schedules and lines of credit.

• Likelihood of success. In approximately 80 percent of disputes taken to mediation, parties reach a resolution.

Recently, in other states, cooperative efforts of Farm Bureau staff and state mediation programs have been effective in resolving disputes involving farmers and other parties. As a result, the potential role of the Michigan Farm Bureau in mediation is currently under review.

To learn how mediation could help you resolve a dispute, please call 800-RESOLVE and ask for "agricultural mediation." Farm Bureau staff members Edward Jones and Bob Boch may be of assistance at 800-202-2049, ext. 2311 and 2323, respectively.

Asgrow Agent Listing—Michigan

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Don't delay harvest if corn is near 30 percent moisture; watch storage practices

Most of Michigan's corn seems to have moisture; watch storage practices so allowing it to remain in the field much longer may not be of much benefit. "Even with the forecast for normal precipitation and normal temperatures for the next 30 days, I would not expect a lot more drying to occur in the field from this point on," says Roger Brook, Michigan State University Extension agricultural engineer. He says that the drying rate of corn in the field will diminish significantly as weather cools, and that field drying essentially stops by mid- to late November. In making harvest decisions, growers should also take into account the effect that the European corn borer infestation this summer probably means, that in much of the corn, the stalks are not dried out and could easily be easily lodged by high winds or a wet snow," Brook says. "Considering this and the risk of mold development, I think that producers will see losses increase by leaving corn in the field for much longer this fall." Ideally, corn should be harvested when kernel moisture is around 24 to 28 percent, but this fall it might be better to begin harvest when moisture is a percentage point or so higher, he says.

I think that we will see less emphasis on the cost of drying relative to the value of the crop, and considering the current market value of the crop, I think the growers will be much further ahead by getting the corn out of the field, dried down and into storage where it will keep at a better quality and be usable for market management," Brook says. He says even with the immunity of some of the corn, it will need no special handling or consideration in the drying process, but the test weight will be lower than normal.

Imperfectly sealed storage units that went into storage should, for the most part, run brown, given good storage management. "What the buyer thinks of the quality of the corn is another matter, which is a reason for growers to consider selling imperfectly sealed storage to livestock producers, Brook says. "The soybeans will need to be treated before they can be fed as a percentage of the livestock's diet, and considering the shortfall in feed crops for the beef and dairy industry, that may be as good a market for imperfect storage units as anything else," he adds.

Regardless of what grain is being stored, growers need to make sure the grain is aerated and inspected regularly. Grain temperatures should be tracked through storage. Stored grain temperatures should be between 30 and 50°F. If stored grain develops a quality problem, it will most likely appear in or be confined to the top 5 feet.

Being able to get into the top of the bin and walk around and inspect the quality of the grain is important, especially in a year like we've been having," Brook says.

He says growers should look for moisture condensation on the underside of the roof and check how well the grain supports their feet. They should feel the grain for increases in moisture or temperature and smell for any odors. The development of odors indicates that earlier inspection missed something.

Brook adds that one of the most important aspects of storage is a stored grain management plan, which is having a good aeration system that is able to effectively correct problems that may occur in storage. "He cautions that grains that was of poor quality at harvest should probably not be stored into next summer. "Grain quality can never be improved during storage," Brook says. "Keep poor quality grain in separate bins from good quality grains. This provides more flexibility for special management, feed mixing and marketing options."
Tips for getting started with precision ag

Composting becomes a viable alternative

Agriculture

Increasing numbers of farmers are adopting technologies associated with precision agriculture to management of their crop production systems into the 21st century. Touted as the most significant crop production advance in the last 50 years, precision agriculture has the potential to revolutionize the way farmers collect, analyze and use information about their crops and land. But farmers eager to jump on the precision agriculture bandwagon may wonder how to get started.

The first step is finding an ag retailer who can put the precision farming technology on the farm. The retailer must have technical expertise to help the farmer understand and use the key precision agriculture technologies and geographic information system (GIS), the global positioning system (GPS), variable rate technology, database management and grid soil sampling.

These tools allow farmers to collect large amounts of detailed, site-specific data. The retailer should have skilled database managers and interpreters, with agronomic knowledge, who can work with the farmer on analyzing the data and making effective crop management decisions. The retailer also should have the ability to create site-specific management plans with tailored crop prescriptions designed to maximize production and precisely manage crop inputs.

Terra tells farmers who want to take advantage of precision agriculture in a Program that there are basically two ways to get started with precision agriculture: collect site-specific, geo-referenced yield data and calibrate and operate the hardware and software required for geo-referenced yield monitoring. On many issues, such as the source of the differential GPS signal (Note: FM stations or U.S. Guard beacons), the farmer can rely on the experienced ag retailer’s knowledge of what has worked best for other farmers.

Spring gives the farmer an opportunity to take advantage of another component of precision agriculture: grid soil sampling data. This probably the most important part of precision agriculture. Soil variability within a field has an impact on yield variability. GIS technology allows the farmer to accurately map the outlie of a field and to divide it into grids no larger than 2.5 acres. GPS also precisely “marks” the location of each soil sample taken within the grid system.

Information from an analysis of each soil sample forms the basis of an extensive database that documents such variations as nutrient level, soil type and pH across an entire field. The farmer or his ag retailer can use GIS to convert this data into a map that provides a detailed picture of soil conditions. This allows the farmer to begin identifying and managing the majority of the variables in the field with precise applications of fertilizer, lime, microelements, seeding rates, pesticides, etc. - all guided by GPS and an application prescription developed by the ag retailer.

Precision agriculture technology helps a farmer identify and quantify variability in his crop production system. It also helps a farmer manage to improve his bottom line. The key to effectively identifying, quantifying and managing variability is an extensive database of geo-referenced information. An adequate database must contain information collected over three to five growing seasons. Each year that passes without collecting precise, geo-referenced information represents a lost opportunity.

So when it comes to adopting precision agriculture technology, sooner is better than later.

An experienced ag retailer can help a farmer put precision agriculture technology to work in his crop production system.

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**SCHEDULE F**

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**Tips for getting started with precision ag**

Corporate Manager, Precision Agriculture, Terra Industries Inc.

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**Composting becomes a viable alternative**

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**An experienced ag retailer can help a farmer put precision agriculture technology to work in his crop production system.**
Wetlands reserve sign-up begins

Landowners wishing to enroll eligible acres in USDA's Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) will no longer have to wait for a specific sign-up period. According to USDA, the agency will work with landowners so that eligible land may be enrolled at any time. This will give landowners more options for wetlands restoration and more time to work with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, to develop a plan to restore and protect wetlands. Eligible land must be suitable and provide significant wetland and wildlife habitat.

The WRP offers landowners three options for enrolling their land in the voluntary program: permanent easements, 30-year easements, and restoration cost-sharing agreements with a 10-year duration.

"The Wetlands Reserve Program has restored approximately $25,000 acres of high-quality wetlands throughout the country, and over the next six years we plan to restore an additional 650,000 acres," Glickman said. Interested producers should contact their local USDA Service Center for more information.

---

American FFA degree awarded to 30 Michigan FFA members

A t the National FFA Convention held this week from Nov. 14-16 in Kansas City, Mo., 30 Michigan FFA members will receive the highest degree awarded by the National FFA Organization, the American FFA Degree. The honor recognizes leadership abilities and outstanding achievements in agricultural business, production, processing and service programs. Over 1,500 FFA members nationwide will receive the degree at the 60th National FFA Convention.

Each recipient receives a gold American FFA Degree key and a certificate. The degree recognition program is co-sponsored by Pioneer Hi-Bred International, the Agricultural Division of American Cyanamid Co., Case Corporation and Farm Credit Services as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

More than 37,000 FFA members are expected to attend the convention, which is the largest annual youth convention in the nation. Those attending are from the Cyanamid Co., Case Corporation and Farm Credit Organization, the American FFA Degree.

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IMI-Corn update: New hybrids, enhanced weed control

T here has been a lot of excitement generated by the potential of biotechnology enhanced crops. The first of these to reach commercial application has been in the area of Herbicide Tolerant Crops (HTC). HTCs reached the market in 1991, when IC/Garst Seeds introduced IMI-Corn hybrids. In just over five years, the popularity of IMI-Corn has grown tremendously. According to David Buckridge, Marketing Director for Garst Seed Company, IMI-Corn seed sales represent over 40 percent of his company's total corn sales. "When you look at all of the IMI-Corn planted across the U.S.,” Buckridge says, “nearly half of those acres are planted to IC/Garst’s IMI-Corn.

To meet the growing demand, IC/Garst currently has 15 IMI hybrids in its product range. "We intend to introduce IMI-Corn into any appropriate hybrid in the future, including six new hybrids next season," Buckridge states.

Buckridge believes that the growing trend toward IMI-Corn is largely based on greater demand for herbicide flexibility. Farmers are looking for a wide range of herbicides that can control their biggest problems, waterhemp, shattercane and johnsongrass, to name a few," he says.

IMI-Corn Product Manager, Wendy Smith with American Cyanamid points out that one of the advantages of an IMI-Corn hybrid program is that it not only controls the tough weed species, but also it gives growers at least six weeks of residual control from an early post-emergent application to crop canopy. "That is something no other post-program on corn can do for a grower," she notes.

There are other advantages. One application rate fits all soil types and any tillage system. "Resolve is a responsible choice in a weed resistance management program. Resolve is a pre-em of two herbicides (cloramben and imazethapyr) with different modes of action. It is not only effective against those species which are resistant, but also has been designed to delay resistance to other imidazolinone-based products used in other crops," she adds.

"The seed and chemical people aren't only sold on using an IMI-Corn herbicide program. In 1995, Tim Mackey of Ely, Iowa, planted 40 acres of IMI-Corn and used Resolve on those acres. He says compared with other corn planted at the same time, his IMI-Corn yielded 15-20 percent better. He used Pursuit herbicide in soybeans the previous year. "In 1996 Mackey planted 330 acres on an IMI hybrid, and used Resolve. He says, "I'm convinced IMI hybrids give me better yields, and Resolve gives me excellent weed control." George Kasuga, Professor of Weed Science at Southern Illinois University, says a grower using Pursuit for weed control in soybeans is taking a step in the right direction to plant an IMI-Corn hybrid in a Resolve herbicide program.
Steel soybean herbicide approved for 1997 growing season

A new soil-applied soybean herbicide has received U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approval for use this season. Manufactured by American Cyanamid, Steel is approved to provide residual control over 50 different species of broadleaf weeds and grasses, including cocklebur, pigweed, velvetleaf and foxtail. Steel, a permethrin-based product, is particularly useful for controlling early season weeds that are emerging prior to planting. In field tests and under practical conditions Ste...
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Weather Outlook

by Dr. Jeff Andresen, Agricultural Meteorologist, Department of Geography, Michigan State University

The devastating flooding that hit parts of mid-Michigan this year highlighted the importance of finding ways to cope with weather-related crop disasters.

In coming years, revenue risk management for crops under the Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform (FAIR) Act of 1996 and the Crop Insurance Reform Act of 1994 will have a distinctly different flavor. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will no longer be in the supply control/stock management business, nor will it be in the act of disaster payment business.

Instead, prices, production, and ending stocks of all beef grains and wheat will be driven to a much larger degree by producers' decisions. At the same time, producers will also take a larger responsibility for management of downside revenue risk.

To ease the transition from previous USDA programs to a more market-oriented approach, a declining "average deficiency payment equivalent" will be available to those who sign up for FAIR. The tools for managing "within year" price, yield, and revenue risk are also expanding. The challenge will be to use these tools wisely and to better appreciate what they were designed to accomplish.

The biggest development in new tools in "within year" risk management is in the area of revenue insurance - a take-off of the Iowa Revenue Assurance concept initiated by Iowa farm groups in 1994-95. Two pilot programs were tested for select spring crops in 1996.

A program called Crop Revenue Coverage (CRC) was developed by the private sector and offered for corn and soybeans in all counties in Iowa and Nebraska. CRC is insurance - producers pay a premium just as they do for multiple peril or hail insurance - that is a hybrid of the Iowa Revenue Assurance concept and the replacement price option to the Multiple Peril Crop Insurance/Actual Production History Plan contract (MPCAPIP).

The second pilot was for the revenue insurance component only (which did not permit basic and optional insurance units), and introduced new rating methods for producers who had a long series of quality records. The product was called ERP, for enterprise revenue protection, and was designed to provide income protection. The lower price reflects the narrower scope of coverage.

The core concept behind both of these products is to insur gross revenue (price x yield) instead of insuring either price or yield. The Crop Insurance Reform Act of 1994 and the FAIR legislation permit the introduction of new concepts and challenge producers and the insurance industry to develop new and better programs.

"Business interruption" crop/revenue insurance, and a variety of MPCAPIP (Multiple Peril Crop Insurance Plan) that permits an insurance company to combine the better features of both AFPIP and GPA, are examples of new products that are permitted by the legislation. Some of the horticultural crops in Michigan that are illustrated to AFPIP or Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP), as currently configured, might be candidates for a business-interruption type of insurance.

Tools such as pre-harvest pricing and options on futures, yield insurance, and revenue insurance should still carry the burden of managing "within year" price risk. The tools to manage yield, price, and revenue risk are becoming more complex and require careful study. The experiences of some producers and especially in 1996 reinforce this fact. However, there are powerful tools that will play a larger role in risk management in the coming years.

Discussion Questions

1. Is crop insurance more important to producers since passage of the FAIR Act?
2. Many of Michigan's diverse agricultural commodities are not currently covered by insurance. Should insurance be available for all crops, in all counties?
3. Should crop insurance cover only the cost of planting or should it cover the entire potential profit which was lost? What good business sense guide farmers to cover some risk and self-insure the balance of the risk?
4. Should Michigan develop a separate program to supplement existing insurance programs?

Complex crop insurance tools available

Today, with the overwhelming number of producers and consumers of agricultural products, the ability to manage risk is more important than ever. As we move into the next century, the ability to manage risk will become even more critical.

For example, in the beef grain market, producers have the ability to hedge their prices and protect their income. However, this requires a strong understanding of the market and the ability to take advantage of opportunities.

In the soybean market, the ability to manage risk is even more important. Soybeans are a commodity that has a high price volatility and producers need to be able to manage this risk in order to protect their income.

In the case of dairy production, the ability to manage risk is crucial. Dairy producers need to be able to manage the risk of fluctuating milk prices and the risk of fluctuating feed costs.

Overall, the ability to manage risk is critical for producers and consumers of agricultural products. With the overwhelming number of producers and consumers of agricultural products, the ability to manage risk is more important than ever. As we move into the next century, the ability to manage risk will become even more critical.

Michigan Weather Summary

10/1/96-10/31/96

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Complex crop insurance tools available

Traditionally, crop insurance has been a tool to help protect against losses due to adverse weather conditions. However, with the increasing volatility in commodity prices, producers are looking for additional tools to manage their revenue risk.

One such tool is the Revenue Assurance Program (RAP), which provides protection against losses due to both price and yield risks. Producers can choose to participate in RAP at either the farm level or the county level.

In addition to RAP, there are a number of other crop insurance products available, such as the Multiple Peril Crop Insurance Plan (MPCAPIP), which provides protection against losses due to both price and yield risks.

These tools, along with others such as the Federal Crop Insurance Program (FCIP), provide producers with a wide range of options to manage their revenue risk.

However, it is important to note that these tools are not a substitute for good business practices. Producers must still have a solid understanding of their production costs and revenue streams in order to effectively manage their risk.

In conclusion, the availability of complex crop insurance tools has allowed producers to better manage their revenue risk. However, producers must still have a solid understanding of their production costs and revenue streams to effectively manage their risk.

Production costs for major field crops in Michigan

Costs of production of major crops on cash grain farms

The cash grain farms used in this analysis were located in three major production regions: Central, Northern, and Southern Michigan.

In the Central region, the average cost of production for corn was $4.93 per bushel, and for soybeans it was $5.35 per bushel.

In the Northern region, the average cost of production for corn was $5.33 per bushel, and for soybeans it was $5.81 per bushel.

In the Southern region, the average cost of production for corn was $4.73 per bushel, and for soybeans it was $5.15 per bushel.

These costs are preliminary estimates and may change as additional data becomes available.

Costs of production of major crops on field crop farms

The field crop farms used in this analysis were located in the same three major production regions: Central, Northern, and Southern Michigan.

In the Central region, the average cost of production for corn was $4.57 per bushel, and for soybeans it was $4.92 per bushel.

In the Northern region, the average cost of production for corn was $4.83 per bushel, and for soybeans it was $5.25 per bushel.

In the Southern region, the average cost of production for corn was $4.68 per bushel, and for soybeans it was $5.79 per bushel.

These costs are preliminary estimates and may change as additional data becomes available.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the benefits and limitations of crop insurance as a risk management tool?
2. How can producers optimize their crop insurance policies to better manage their revenue risk?
3. What role should government play in providing crop insurance programs to producers?
4. How can producers use crop insurance as part of a larger risk management strategy?

To summarize, crop insurance is an important tool for managing revenue risk for producers. However, it is important for producers to understand the limitations of crop insurance and to use it as part of a larger risk management strategy to protect their income.
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Winter storm watch: Severe winter conditions, such as heavy snow and/or ice, are possible within the next day or two. Prepare now!

Winter storm warning: Severe winter conditions have begun or are about to begin in your area. Stay indoors!

Blizzard warning: Snow and strong winds will combine to produce a blinding snowstorm (zero visibility), deep drifts, and life-threatening wind chill. Seek refuge immediately!

Be sure to visit the RCAP/Farm Bureau Insurance safety display at the Farm Bureau Annual Meeting for information on MSHA safety training materials available to you, contact:

MSHA Safety Education and Training Division
Publications Library
7150 Harris Drive • Post Office Box 30015
Lansing, Michigan 48909
Phone: 517-322-1809

You’ve Seen The Billboards

You may also want more information about:

- A Free Insurance Review
- Passing On Your Farm
- Farmowners Insurance
- Life Insurance
- Annuities
- Our video Farm Safety: The People Factor
- Other

You could like to hear from you.

Please let us know if you’d like information about:

- A Free Insurance Review
- Passing On Your Farm
- Farmowners Insurance
- Life Insurance
- Annuities
- Our video Farm Safety: The People Factor
- Other

You may also want more information about:

- Workers Disability Compensation Insurance
- RCAP — The Regulatory Compliance Assistance Program
- Long-Term Care Protection
- Disability Income Protection
- Multi-Peril Crop Insurance
- Health Insurance from Blue Cross/Blue Shield

Free for you:

- Wood Heat: The Safe Way

Name
Address
City/Zip
Mail to:
Farm Bureau Insurance
Communications Department
Post Office Box 30400
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7900

Fax to:
517-323-6615

Keeping ahead of a winter storm: What to listen for

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Career opportunities

Do you know someone who has an outgoing personality and a strong desire to succeed?

Your local Farm Bureau Insurance agency manager may be looking for a career-minded person in your area.

Contact your local agency manager to learn more about a career as an agent with Farm Bureau Insurance.

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Our billboards are bigger than life.

So is the service you'll get from our agents.

For top service for life, farm, home, auto, business and retirement insurance, see your Farm Bureau Insurance agent today.

You can see your agent.