New facilities at Michigan State ready

Ottawa County judge rules in favor of preserving farmland from development

In June 2019, an Ottawa County judge ruled in favor of residents within a rural Ottawa County township’s farmland preservation, curtailing the development of a major subdivision with a large turkey farm owned by Harley Sixtsema as its neighbor.

The impact on many times throughout the state—residential-interests pitted against the long-standing agricultural base in the township. What makes this conflict unique is that the Allendale Township Planning Commission originally approved the request to zone the 37 acres needed for the complex subdivision and the township board subsequently approved the request.

At that time, the planning commission did give him (Twister) the zoning change and were aware of Mr. Sixtsema’s concerns and put in some requirements in the approval of the plan that they thought might help at least control some of the anticipated problems that might occur between the two different uses,” explains Township Supervisor Jim Beelen. “They had a buffer strip, including a berm with some plantings on it, and they also required a statement in the deed that this subdivision was located next to a farming operation and they were protected by the Right-to-Farm Act.”

It wasn’t until Ottawa County Farm Bureau member Harley Sixtsema, the owner of the large turkey farm, began a petition drive in the spring of 1995 that the revised granting the subdivision was overturned. In August of that year, voters in the growing township west of Grand Rapids overwhelmingly rejected the zoning change sending the developer, Philip Ponce, to the Ottawa County Circuit Court. “This is a landmark case for Michigan,” explains Dr. David Skjervold, executive director for the Rural Development Council of Michigan. “It proves that individuals, farmers and the community have the right to decide what type of development should occur in their township.”

Fomer then sued the township claiming a taking and that his constitutional rights were violated, Beelen adds.

“They claimed that our zoning of the property essentially rendered it valueless,” explained Jim Nelson, the attorney who represented Allendale Township. “And we should therefore compensate them for the loss of the property. So our defense was to claim first under the due process claim, they essentially have to demonstrate that the zoning of this property is not reasonable.”

That is when the township called in experts on land values, MSU crop and soil scientists, and Skjervold to testify on the validity of the zoning ordinance.

“This case was on the cutting edge of zoning issues,” Nelson adds, “because more and more we are faced with the urban sprawl into agricultural areas. And more and more we are beginning to realize that it does cause a conflict. It used to be if you develop out in the country somewhere, there was no problem doing that. And people would do that without any concern about compatibility between the two uses. Now, you put a residential development next to a high-intensity agricultural operation, you’re going to have conflict. And we certainly addressed those conflicts with this case.”

The rule by the judge further proves the point that local communities are willing to go the extra step in preserving farmland in Michigan,” adds MFBL Legislative Counsel Scott Berret. “The growth of residential property in Ottawa County is very similar to other parts of the country and each township needs to evaluate how they are going to handle residential growth.”

To assist the township in better handling the conflicts which arise in a general agricultural area, the township has organized a committee comprised of their planning and zoning administrative, a township board member and three farmers. We organized this committee to look at our zoning ordinances and see once if we can’t come up with better ways of dealing with these situations where you do have residential use butting up to farming interests,” Beelen adds.

“I think prior to the formation of this committee,” he states. “We have a commitment to preserving farmland. It’s how we deal with the residentially zoned areas that are going to be adjacent to farmland. You’re always going to have that line somewhere, and that’s where this situation was. It was right at that line of residential and agricultural.”
News in Brief

Clean air proposal out of touch with reality

A critical deadline for agriculture is looming, Detroit News, Washington, D.C., according to the Environmental Protection Agency's National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). For some, the deadline will mean new, national air quality standards will measure average cancer readings and particulate matter (soot and dust). EPA estimates that 34.3 percent of the public's matter can be influenced by air pollution.

While the EPA plan to improve air quality may have been well intentioned, the end result will be economically disastrous and, ironically, will not improve air quality. The new air quality standards are a textbook example of what happens when overzealous regulators fail to employ common sense and sound data in their decision-making process.

Ask farmers in California what the future holds if this proposal, already rubber-stamped by the Clinton family, and friends can have a ball...at a Busy Week! A set for the schedule.

Start the 1999 elections with opportunities for candidates to seek election to many township, county, state and federal public offices. These offices include township clerk, county commissioner, state representative, state senator and U.S. representative, to mention just a few.

In past elections, many Farm Bureau members as well as other candidates for local, state and federal public offices have some experience, but others have not. Whatever the outcome, the candidates have learned from their experience that a well planned and executed election campaign is very important. They have also learned that election campaigns require time and money, it is important to begin thinking early about the effort to win.

To assist Farm Bureau members who are thinking about being a candidate for any public office in 1998, Michigan Farm Bureau will sponsor a "How to Win an Election" Campaign Management Workshop. The workshop will be held September 16-17 at Farm Bureau Center in Lansing.

Kelleys Island Biological Station field day slated for Aug. 6

Profitable farming in a changing environment is the theme for M.U.'s Kelleys Island Biological Station (KIBS) Field Day, set for Aug. 6, at the station's Farming Systems Center.

"The goal of the day field is to highlight some of the ecological research that's going on at KIBS and throughout the farm fields of Michigan," said Dale Mutch, MSU Extension IPM agent based at KIBS.

The field day will begin in 2:30 p.m. Demonstrations will focus on nitrogen management, cover crops, landscape-level insect management and dairy forage. Presentations and a poster session by farm managers who have participated in on-farm research will be scheduled from 5 to 6 p.m. An evening pasture walk will be offered and the station's Farming Systems Center will be open to the public.

Piedmontese: Tomorrow's beef today!

Mike Schlabach will discuss Certified Beef Program. Door prizes to be awarded throughout the day. Come and Bring! Several area breeders will have their animals on display.

From more information or directions, call Roy or Sandy Mroz (810) 667-7389.

Call [313] 963-2050 to get your Michigan Farm Bureau order form

Take me out to the ball game!

Detroit Tigers and FFA - Fundraising

Partners

Tiger fans are fun with you! FFA, yes, your family, and friends can have a ball...at a Detroit Tiger baseball game, and you can help the Michigan FFA at the same time. When you order Tiger Baseball tickets using the FFA order form, $4 will be donated to Michigan FFA for any game in the 1997 season.

Don't wait! Call your FFA advisor to get your Michigan FFA order form, then call your Friends who have never purchased a FFA ticket before and get some popcorn and Cracker Jaks and get ready to have a ball.

But wait, there's more

Sunday, Sept. 7 is FFA Day at Tiger Stadium. On Sept. 7 at 1:00 p.m. the Tigers play the Anaheim Angels. When we sell 1,000 tickets, there will be a pre game FFA show on the field conducted by our FFA members, with one lucky person winning the honor of throwing out the first pitch (names will be drawn from Sept. 7 ticket orders). You'll also have special seating when you use the FFA order form. The Tiger mascots will even stop by during the game.

If that isn't enough, there will be some special surprises on Michigan FFA Game Day, Sept. 7. It's important to use the FFA Tiger baseball order form when ordering your tickets. It's the only way you can have a ball and help your Michigan FFA. Use the order form for group and individual orders. You make as many copies of the order form as you need. Get your whole community and take them out to the ball park!

Michigan Farm Bureau News
July 15, 1997

Campaign management workshop helps win an election

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It will provide useful information and opportunities for hands-on experience in preparing an effective election campaign. Topics covered will include the formula for winning, campaign laws and reports, selecting the right issues, raising and spending money, working with the media, organizing the campaign, obtaining volunteers, getting out the vote.

If you may be a candidate for any public office in 1998, you are encouraged to attend the workshop and let other candidates know of the opportunity. Any candidate may be a candidate and could benefit from the Campaign Management Workshop, please share this information with them in case they would like to attend. Spouses and campaign managers are encouraged to attend with the candidate.

There will be a fee charged to attend of about $55 per person to cover materials and meals. Persons attending must be Farm Bureau members. To obtain an enrollment form, please contact the Public Affairs Division by calling 517-325-6560.

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MICHIGAN FARM NEWS
July 15, 1997

NATIONAL

Kill the death tax

Moving with surprising speed, both the House and Senate have passed legislation to reform the federal estate tax — referred to as the death tax.

The House bill increases the current $600,000 death tax exemption to $1 million by 2007. The exemption would rise to $550,000 in 1998, $750,000 in 1999, $700,000 in 2000, $750,000 in 2001 through 2004, $800,000 in 2005, $850,000 in 2006 and $1 million in 2007. In 2007, beginning in 2008, the exemption would be indexed annually for inflation.

The Senate bill increases the $600,000 exemption to $1 million by 2006. The exemption rises to $425,000 in 1998, $540,000 in 1999, $600,000 in 2000, $675,000 in 2001, $725,000 in 2002, $750,000 in 2003, $800,000 in 2004, $900,000 in 2005 and $1 million in 2006. The bill also provides an additional $1 million exemption for family-owned businesses including farms.

Prior to passage of the bills, state Farm Bureau supplied the American Farm Bureau with 23,000 letters written by members in every state.

NATIONAL

Balanced budget agreement

In addition to the House and Senate action to reform the death tax (see above), provisions were also passed dealing with capital gains, health insurance deductions for the self-employed and the federal gasoline tax.

Both House and Senate bills cut the capital gains tax rate for those in the 28 percent bracket to 10 percent for taxpayers in the 28 percent bracket. Congress was on recess until July 8. When Congress reconvened, the two bills went to a Conference Committee to work out the differences between the House and Senate versions.

Additional letters from members were delivered to Michigan congressmen shortly after their return and should prove to be helpful in showing members of the Conference Committee that they should adopt the most far-reaching proposal.

MFB Contact: Al Almy, ext. 2490 •

Particulate matter standards

Earlier this year, the Environmental Protection Agency published proposed standards restricting emissions of nitrogen and particulate matter (PM) into the atmosphere. The standards are based on existing fine PM 2.5 standards and the fine PM 10 and coarse PM 100 standards.

The proposed standards, with some slight changes, are the new rule requires EPA to conduct a full scientific review of the health effects of fine particles before designing any new attainment areas or regulating new controls. EPA will be allowed up to five years to monitor and analyze data on particulate matter. Non-attainment areas will be given three additional years to submit air quality plans and EPA will have 18 months to review the plans and an unspecified time to comply with the new standards. The delayed implementation and slightly modified standards were an attempt to define the growing bipartisan opposition in Congress and from business and labor. Democrats and Republicans are now preparing legislation to overturn the final rule.

MFB Position: Farm Bureau is supporting the legislation.
MFB Contact: Al Almy, ext. 2490 •

Migrant and Seasonal Worker Protection Act

The Migrant and Seasonal Worker Protection Act (MSPWPA) has created problems for many farmers who hire migrant and seasonal workers. To alleviate many of these problems, H.R. 2040 has been introduced by Congressman Charles Canady (R.-Fla.). The bill would make the following changes to MSPWPA:

• Ensures that a farmer will not lose his MSPWPA farm family exemption if his employees work for another farmer or farm worker at the same time if the farmer uses a state employment service to obtain referrals of potential employees, or if the farmer obtained referrals for employment from other migrant farm workers.

• Specifies that when farm workers voluntarily enter into car pooling arrangements, or such car pools are undertaken pursuant to any federal, state or local law (such as clean air attainment regulations) that such car pooling does not constitute farm labor contracting activity within the MSPWPA definition; thus, a farm worker driving a car pool will not be considered an unregistered farm labor contractor, and his employer will not be held in violation of MSPWPA.

• Requires Departments of Labor personnel charged with enforcing MSPWPA to meet with a farmer both before and after any inspection visit to discuss the purpose of the inspection visit and the result of the visit.

• Grants farmers a 10-day grace period in which they can correct violations of MSPWPA before either Department of Labor can levy a penalty or before a legal action can be brought.

• Exemptions from MSPWPA regulation will only be considered if unregistered or an approved state employer.

• Specifies that a farmer from MSPWPA liability for housing violations that are caused by or are within the responsibility of housed migrant farm workers.

MFB Position: Farm Bureau supports the legislation.
MFB Contact: Al Almy, ext. 2490 •

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Visit our web site at: www.mfb.com

Serving Michigan farm families is our only business

Since its beginning in 1971, Michigan Farm Radio Network's only objective has been to serve Michigan's farm families. This dedication to serve agriculture is shared by 27 local radio stations in Michigan. Through these stations, Michigan Farm Radio Network provides the latest in market analysis, weather and news to Farm Bureau members daily on the following stations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Morning Report</th>
<th>Noon Report</th>
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<td>580</td>
<td>5:45 am</td>
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Continued on page 6
Analysts had estimated that if the planted acreage was the largest in history, this year's soybean harvest could be two million acres higher than private soybean acres over last year. The USDA figures are more than 6 million acres, representing an increase of six million-plus acres over last year. The USDA figures are more than two million acres higher than private soybean analysis had estimated. If the planted acreage holds, this year's soybean harvest will be the largest in history.

For corn, USDA says farmers nationwide planted nearly 80.2 million acres of corn. The figures represent the highest amount of corn acreage since 1985, which would be the second largest corn crop in history.

### Amendments to P.A. 591, the Land Division Act and voting record

S.B. 345 was sponsored by Sen. Leon Silke (Bristol-Webb Lake). The bill was amended and was referred to the House Agriculture Committee where a substitute version was adopted. Farm Bureau strongly supported the substitute version. However, due to the bill failed to receive enough votes so it was adopted on the House floor. S.B. 345 was then substituted on the House floor by Rep. Allen (D-West Branch), which ultimately passed the House of Representatives. The bill is now on the way to the Governor for his signature.

S.B. 345, as passed by the House, amends the Land Division Act in the following areas:

- Limits the local unit of government's zoning authority over the time of division.
- Establishes the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) rules for water and sewer to apply for all divisions of land smaller than 1 acre at the time of a building permit is requested, rather than at the time of division.
- Establishes the local health department rules for water and sewer to apply for all divisions of land larger than 1 acre at the time a building permit is requested rather than at the time of division.
- Provides for penalties for violation of the act.
- Provides for a process to track the transferrings of exempt divisions.

Potential problems with S.B. 345:

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- Establishes the local health department rules for water and sewer to apply for all divisions of land larger than 1 acre at the time a building permit is requested rather than at the time of division.
- Provides for penalties for violation of the act.
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- Increased Exports 1 Billion Bushels
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- Increased Ethanol Production to 500 Million Bushels
- Supported "Animal Initiative" Research to Increase Michigan Corn Consumption
- Increased the "Floor" Price for Corn

### USDA corn and soybean acreage report

The Agriculture Department released in late June its corn and soybean planted acreage report, showing both crops will reach at least 10-year-plus highs.

For corn, USDA says farmers nationwide planted nearly 80.2 million acres of corn. The figures represent the highest amount of corn acreage since 1985, which would be the second largest corn crop in history.

Soybean plantings will hit nearly 78.9 million acres this year, making this year the highest number of planted soybean acres since 1982. The numbers represent an increase of six million-plus acres over last year. The USDA figures are more than two million acres higher than private soybean analysts had estimated. If the planted acreage holds, this year's soybean harvest could be the largest in history.
STATE

Truck Registration Fees

A part of the Governor's transportation refor
form package, S.B. 581, as introduced and as it passed the Senate Transportation Commit
ee, would have raised $38 million per year in ad
ditional funding for state roads and bridges. It would have raised the additional funding by increasing registration fees for all truck plates by 25 percent. On the Senate floor, however, a substitute was adopted to increase fees on a gradual basis. Fees for trucks with a gross vehicle weight up to 80,000 lbs. would be increased 50 percent, trucks between 80,001 and 150,000 lbs. would be increased 40 per
cent, and trucks above 150,000 lbs. would be in

The following senators supported Farm Bureau's position and voted "YES-:

Berrymen Donakos
Baum Emmons North A. Smith
Gardy Gorges Judd
DeGree Goggin Schuette Van Rengeen
Dorel Krohko Schwartz Young

The following senators did not support Farm Bureau's position and voted "NO-:

Bennett Compact Miller V. Smith
Bouchard Geale O'Brien Stallings
Bullard Hart Peers Sale
Berry Buffalo Pechumas Vaughn

MSU dairy scholarships awarded

More than $5,000 in scholarships has been awarded among 16 Michigan State University students who intend to pursue careers in dairy production or in the dairy food industry. The scholarships, based on academic merit and professional goals, were awarded for the 1997-98 academic year at MSU.

The funds are provided each year by the Michigan Dairy Memorial Scholarship Foundation Inc. Scholarships of $1,000 each have been award
ed to incoming freshmen Sarah Zagata of Sebewa
igan, Nathan Desjarlais of Baraga, and John Whitmore of Hazen. Scholarships of $2,500 each have been award
ed to Troy Bowman, of Alto; Luke Haywood, Hazen;
Tony Szuba, Beulah; and Joe Studebaker, Alcona. The third group of students includes those who have been recognized for their contributions to dairy production or to the dairy industry. These students include students from Oswego East, Battle Creek, and East Kentwood High Schools.

MSU's Dairy Expo is intended for the entire dairy family

That is beginning to look like the search's biggest dairy event, the Michi
gan Dairy Expo, July 22-26, will feature a nearly equal mixture of shows, workshops and seminars for youth and adult dairy producers. About 500 of the state's top dairy animals are expected to be shown at the event, which will fea
ture 4-H and FFA youth events, adult state breed shows and more than 50 commercial exhibitors from 10 states.

Richard Pursley, Michigan State University spe
cialist in dairy youth events, says the event has been in the discussion and planning stage for several years. "Our ideas and hopes really didn't begin to materialize until the Pavilion for Agriculture and Livestock Education was built — that proved to be the catalyst for what had been talked about for some time," Pursley says.

The adult portion of the event will include, beginning on July 25 (Friday) of Expo, the state shows for holstein, brown Swiss, Arnhold, red and white holstein, jersey and guernsey breeds. Included in the dairy management seminars for producers will be discussion on July 24 (Thurs
day) on increasing dairy herd reproductive efficien
cy and, on Friday, discussion with some of the state's top producers on how they are positioning their farms for business in the next decade. On Saturday, discussion will focus on how the new dairy policy will affect milk marketing in the future.

"We have some of the top speakers in their respective fields for the seminar, and I'm sure that producers will benefit from the information that will be provided," Pursley says.

The youth events will include the All-Michigan Dairy Youth Show and the Showmanship Contest, the State 4-H and FFA Dairy Cattle Judging Con
tests, and a Dairy Quiz Bowl. Youth workshops will focus on herd health, feeding and showing dairy cattle, and dairy cattle judging.

The top picks of the breed shows will be exhi
bited on Friday and Saturday, and the "Supreme Champion" will be selected from the breed show winners at the Dairy Expo concludes.

More information about the Expo can be ob
tained from Pursley by writing to him at the Depart
ment of Animal Science, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824-1225, or calling 517-355-8319.

MMPA hosts 60th 4-H/MMPA Milk Marketing Tour

Over 30 members and adult leaders of 4-H Clubs and FFA Chapters from several Michigan counties gathered at Michigan Milk Producers Asso
ciation (MMPA) headquarters in Novel on June 12-13 for the 60th Annual 4-H/MMPA Milk Marketing Tour. This two-day conference, co-sponsored by MMPA and Michigan State University Extension, is the longest running 4-H activity in Michigan. More than 6,000 students have participated in the tour over the past 60 years.

Retired MMPA general manager Jack Barnes met with the students for a special anniversary presentation. Barnes participated in one of the first 4-H/Milk Marketing Tours and was later a long-time MMPA employee, serving as the general manager for 26 years.

This year's tour focused on milk marketing principles and the business of dairy cooperatives. Several MMPA managers and President Elwood

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Don't forget to use your Farm Bureau VISA wherever you have it. Don't forget to book your trips with Farm Bureau Travel.
**Market Outlook**

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

**CORN**

Good crop progress over the majority of the Corn Belt has dropped corn prices sharply, but we have a lot of growing season to go, including the critical pollination period. At this point, grown new crop bids, the market seems to be anticipating sharply above trend yields. It took a bullish Plantings Report and a positive Stocks Report to stop the slide, at least temporarily.

On June 30, the USDA released an updated Planned and Planting Intentions Report and the quarterly Stocks Report. While the USDA won’t update their Supply-Demand Report until July 31 to include the new information, I have updated my analysis as shown below in Table 1. The latest survey showed producers will plant 80.1 million acres of corn, up 700,000 from last year, but 1.2 million acres less than their March intentions.

The USDA also released the quarterly Stocks Report and it showed feed use was higher than expected in the third quarter. We would expect this to continue through the fourth quarter. Corn exports may also be running behind expectations, and it appears they will come in about 15 million bushels below the June estimates—although this sharp drop in prices may help.

Now let’s see how all of these affect the supply-demand situation. First off, I increased feed use for 1996-97 by 50 million bushels to account for the high rate of use. I then lowered the export estimate by 15 million. This lowered projected ending stocks from 960 to 874. While 174 million bushels would only be considered barely adequate early in the marketing year, once the market sees for down (shocks if so-called) a good corn crop, it’s considered more than sufficient, which explains the old crop price drop.

At this point, I am assuming a 1997 corn yield of 136 bushels per acre, 12 bushels above trend due to the good condition of the crop over most of the Corn Belt. If we harvest corn for grain at 17.5 million acres, we use about six for silage, we would have a 9.62 billion bushel corn crop. This is 220 million below the June projection. After substituting for use, which show year-to-year increases in all categories, we end up with a projected 1.095 billion bushel carry. A stocks-to-use ratio of 1.16 percent as this analyst would show, would lead to an annual average price of $2.45 and a harvest price, $2.30. This indicates to me that the market is either assuming a yield of about 3 bushels per acre higher, or an equivalent amount in lower use, or some combination.

Why are any old crop unpriced, you might as well wait for a weather scare, perhaps during pollination. However, if conditions are good going into August, it will be time to consider letting remaining old crop go. Consider waiting on further new crop pricing decisions. These low prices may wait for a weather scare and we have lots of summer left for weather scares.

**SOYBEANS**

The 1996-97 ending stocks report for wheat was slightly lower than expected, but not nearly enough to offset the million acre increase in spring wheat plantings relative to March intentions. Not only are there more acres, but we expect a higher average yield. At 48 bushels per acre, this is 220 million bushels below the June projection.

As shown in Table 3, this will leave us with a 12.6 percent ending stocks-to-use ratio for 1997-98, which is more than adequate and marginally in use. This puts this crop for the fall under $6. As of the first part of July, the market pushed prices down to a level that points to way above-trend yields.

Soybean prices have made some gains, so let’s wait until September, if we have to, to see if the beans are made.

**HOGS**

Prices are high and have been for a while, sow slaughter has been very low and has been for a while. Generally these are the reason and the sign, respectively, that suggests rapid expansion. It seems for the Marketing Board it has hoped to see rapid expansion and it showed very little expansion taking place. So we waited for the June report, released June 26, to show rapid expansion was not occurring. The market has been very tight for the last 1 percent from a year ago compared to the 3.6 percent that was expected. Market hogs were only up 2 percent for the year as a whole, and that is last year as well, although the pig crop was up 2 percent in the past quarter due to increases in the pig stocks. The one sign that expansion is occurring at a perhaps a little faster rate than the breeding herd number suggest is the farrowing intentions. June-August farrowing intentions are 105 percent of a year ago and September-November intentions are up 109 percent. When we compare the current breeding herd intentions and numbers, there are signs that farrowings per sow per year are going up.

Most of the big hogs have suggested the soybean market was in an exploitive situation, up or down. The reason for my prediction was the similarity between this year’s soybean market and last year’s corn market—very tight old crop stocks and an unknown new crop coming. The unfortunate part is that the soybean market exploded down. The reason they used that was still going fairly strongly through the third quarter, making projected ending stocks even tighter than they already were. However, the Planted Acreage Report showing huge acres with good crop progress, along with potential imports waiting to take the edge off, and the market collapsed.

The June Planting Intentions Report showed the producers either had or were going to plant 70.9 million acres of soybeans. This is 6.7 million acres more than last year’s 8.3 more than 1995, and 2.1 million more than producers had planned in March. We have shown that we have had rising corn prices.

As shown in Table 3, this will leave us with a 12.6 percent ending stocks-to-use ratio for 1997-98, which is more than adequate and marginally in use. This puts this crop for the fall under $6. As of the first part of July, the market pushed prices down to a level that points to way above-trend yields.

**WHEAT**

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Soybean prices have made some gains, so let’s wait until September, if we have to, to see if the beans are made.

**DAIRY**

As early as July 15, the USDA will release their mid-July cattle report. It is expected to show fewer beef cows and smaller calves. The January report indicated that the calf crop would be down due to the late calf crop. The unknown is the damage done by the extreme winter in the northern cow/calf areas. The next question is, will the decline become a 60-70% decline? or will it be much less. This will depend on the herd size. The next question is, will the herd size be drastically reduce by fall? or will it be much less. This will depend on the herd size. The next question is, will the herd size be drastically reduce by fall? or will it be much less. This will depend on the herd size. The next question is, will the herd size be drastically reduce by fall? or will it be much less. This will depend on the herd size. The next question is, will the herd size be drastically reduce by fall? or will it be much less. This will depend on the herd size.

**COMMODITY PRICE TRENDS**

**Table 1—Corn**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Acres planted</th>
<th>Acres harvested</th>
<th>Bu/harvested acre</th>
<th>Stocks (million bushels)</th>
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<td>183</td>
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<tr>
<td>Projected</td>
<td>375</td>
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<td>Production</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>220</td>
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<tr>
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<td>70.9</td>
<td>53.6</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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**Table 2—Wheat**

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<th>Bu/harvested acre</th>
<th>Stocks (million bushels)</th>
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<td>31.2</td>
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<td>Stocks</td>
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<td>8.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimate</td>
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<td>13.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
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**Table 3—Soybeans**

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<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Acres planted</th>
<th>Acres harvested</th>
<th>Bu/harvested acre</th>
<th>Stocks (million bushels)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Soybeans</td>
<td>105.0</td>
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<td>Projected</td>
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MICHIGAN FARM NEWS
July 15, 1997

EEE Active Surveillance Program begins new season with aims at reducing infection

The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA), the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCCH), local health departments, and Michigan State University (MSU) will be continuing their efforts to detect Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis (EEE) in Michigan this year. The disease, commonly known as "sleeping sickness," has occurred in southern Michigan in recent years. The EEE Active Surveillance Program includes participation by local veterinarians to identify suspected cases of EEE in horses, confirmation of suspected EEE cases in horses by MSU, trapping of mosquitoes by local health departments, testing these mosquitoes for the virus by MSU, and identifying sentinel wild birds. Several counties have already had active surveillance this spring. Additionally, the MDCCH laboratory will test blood from suspect human cases.

"The goal of the cooperative program is to protect the health of Michigan's equine population and to prevent human exposure to the illness by alerting areas in Michigan where the risk of becoming infected is the highest," said MDA Director Dan Wyatt.

"EEE is caused by a virus that is transmitted by mosquitoes to people, horses, birds and various other mammals. During 1996, there were no reported cases of EEE in horses, people or other mammals; however, 20 horses died of the disease in 1995 in southwest Michigan," said Dr. Steven Halstead, equine programs coordinator, MDA.

Dr. Richard W. Halstead, an associate professor of entomology at MSU, anticipates a large population of mosquitoes for this coming season, thus surveillance needs to be continued to prevent illness in people and horses. Although human infection with the virus is rare, six Michigan residents and one child from Indiana, who spent time in southern Michigan, have contracted EEE since 1995. Of those two cases as reported by MDA.

Detecting an outbreak of EEE is extremely difficult because the disease is fatal in 90 to 95 percent of horses and 60 percent of humans that become infected. Birds recover quickly from the disease and serve as a reservoir for the virus. Human and horses do not contract the disease from each other, and can only become infected after being bitten by mosquitoes that feed on infected birds. Doctors that develop symptoms of EEE may be the first indicators that the virus is in a particular area and active. The nature of the disease is not significant to any human.

"EEE has identified that human cases are not due to being bitten by mosquitoes because of the extremely low incidence of human infection. The EEE surveillance program recommends that horse owners contact their veterinarian to discuss vaccination against EEE. Veterinarians should report all suspected cases of EEE to MDA's Animal Industry Division at (517) 335-1199 or (616) 329-1479. Cases should be immediately reported to local health departments, who will contact the MDCCH. The EEE Active Surveillance Program has enlisted the support of at least 60 equine veterinarians, 13 local health departments throughout lower Michigan. Seven county mosquito abatement agencies, three county volunteer researchers, and two major universities. The program will continue throughout the summer and into early fall.

Market Outlook

Continued from previous page

begins to decline and for milk consumption to begin to improve, surplus production from California will continue to move towards the Midwest. The fundamental supply and demand situation in the dairy industry is not significantly out of balance. Just as last summer's small shortage caused a rapid increase in dairy contract prices, this spring's small surplus is causing a rapid drop in dairy product prices. It is likely that dairy product markets will tighten later this fall resulting in the ability of the BFP to move up significantly. In the meantime, dairy product prices and, therefore, farm level prices have been relatively stable at the current very low levels. Significant improvement in dairy farm income will likely await September milk checks.

EGGS

Henry Laszlorenze

Egg prices at the end of June were about 8 cents a dozen less than last year. For the entire month of June, the prices averaged between 10 and 15 cents a dozen less than in 1996. Feed ingredients and other costs per dozen eggs below the previous year per cent above current year per cent in the middle, there was a sharp increase in the overall prices resulting in the ability of the BFP to move up significantly. In the meantime, dairy product prices and, therefore, farm level prices have been relatively stable at the current very low levels. Significant improvement in dairy farm income will likely await September milk checks.

Most-favored-nation status for China

After a heated debate, the House extended most-favored-nation trade status to China for another year. Opponents of the accord included Mr. Chness, said the House. "This is an exciting cooperative arrangement. If cooperatives are to maintain returns to their farm families, they must pursue relationships like this to increase efficiencies for members in the movement and marketing of their milk," said Schieffer. "It's just that simple. MDA and ICMA share a common interest working together to maximize returns to their farm families."

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Europeans "valuable information." It says that labeling for gene-altered products are not intended to scare the public away from genetically altered products.

"This can't be tolerated, especially when segregation is done, based purely on political goals, and not based on science at all," said Barshefsky. She added that American farmers stand to lose up to $3 billion in European exports if sales of genetically altered products lag because of the EU rules.

The EU claims the labeling simply provides Europeans "valuable information." It says the labels are not intended to scare the public away from genetically altered products.

### Win one year's use of a New Holland Genesis tractor

**Enter your idea in Farm Bureau's Idea Exchange**

The American Farm Bureau Farmer Idea Exchange is a long-running program to surface ideas developed by farmers and showcase throughout the country.

"Farmers are the world's best innovators," explains Organizational Development Coordinator Rob Anderson. "The Idea Exchange is meant to recognize the creativity farmers have put to good use in their farming operations."

There are 16 specific categories in which entries may be submitted, including: soil quality, livestock, crops, management systems, input efficiency, equipment, energy, marketing, safety and handicap helpers, farm shop ideas, water management, wildlife, farm buildings and rotational grazing.

If you have an innovative idea in any of these categories, contact your county secretary for an entry blank or Anderson at (800) 292-2680. When you have completed the appropriate entry form, send it to Michigan Farm Bureau by September 15 to complete the application process.

### EU approves labeling for gene-altered products

The European Union in late June gave its blessing to a proposal that would require companies marketing gene-modified products to label the product. The proposal also requires companies to, in the absence of a label, provide an accompanying document with the product.

U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky, addressing the Senate Agriculture Committee, said the EU's plan to label or segregate genetically altered products may violate world trade rules and could trigger a formal U.S. complaint.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southwest MI</td>
<td>Rob Render</td>
<td>616-659-8915</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southeast MI</td>
<td>Ann Briggs</td>
<td>616-328-3878</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central MI</td>
<td>Jerry Johnston</td>
<td>517-666-6796</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southeast MI</td>
<td>Luan Kubaski</td>
<td>616-283-3878</td>
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<tr>
<td>UP &amp; Northern MI</td>
<td>Collin Zehr</td>
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<td>Northern IN</td>
<td>Jim MacKay</td>
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<td>UP &amp; Northern MI</td>
<td>Nancy Blauert</td>
<td>517-862-5192</td>
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<td>Southeast MI</td>
<td>Luan Kubaski</td>
<td>517-743-4630</td>
</tr>
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</table>

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**Kalamazoo County Farm Bureau president hosts open house**

Rob Richardson and his family opened up their farm south of Vicksburg to visitors June 30. They conducted tours of their new oxine nursery facility and hosted a pig roast.

Rob Richardson began planning for the addition in November. Strict township zoning regulations proved to be a hindrance, but a special-exception use permit was finally granted. Finding the location was the most difficult part of the process, according to Richardson. The facility is tucked into the woods with appropriate setbacks from residential areas. Building began in late February and pigs entered the facility for the first time July 2.

Earl-weaned pigs enter the Richardson facility at 14-15 days old, then are fed for seven weeks until they weigh 55 pounds. Liquid manure is stored below the ground concrete tank.

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<tr>
<td>Central MI</td>
<td>K.A. Helm Enterprises</td>
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Today, children are eating out more often and at a greater variety of places than ever before. As a result, parents and caregivers may have less control over the quality of foods their children eat. An important question is whether eating away from home improves or worsens kids' nutrient intake. The answer to this and other questions related to where, and how much kids eat can be found in a new government report. This report is based on data compiled from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s 1989-91 Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals and the companion Diet and Health Knowledge Survey. Major findings for children aged 2 to 17 years follow:

- More than half of all children eat three meals a day. Skipping morning or midday meals increases with age. Teenage girls consume the fewest number of meals.

- Contrary to beliefs, children "know" how much they need to eat.

- Fear that their children may become overweight, along with the belief that children are incapable of regulating their own food intake, leads many conscientious parents to strictly control their children's food intake. Yet research demonstrates that controlling children's food intake can actually contribute to childhood obesity.

- To determine if children can self-regulate their calorie intake, researchers fed preschoolers aged 3 to 5 years a high- or low-calorie fruit-flavored drink and then allowed the children to eat as much as they liked for lunch. Calorie intake during lunch was measured and information was obtained on the children's body fat stores and on parents' body fat, eating and child-feeding practices.

- The preschoolers with more controlling parents were less able to adjust their food intake in response to the caloric content of the drinks and had higher body fat stores than the preschoolers of parents who were more flexible in their child-feeding practices. Constrictive child-feeding practices, such as insisting that children eat only at meals rather than when hungry or full, all the food on their plates, interfere with children's ability to self-regulate their calorie intake. Also, restricting children's access to palatable foods or forcing children to eat "nutritious" foods to obtain rewards may foster children's preferences for energy-dense foods high in sugar, fat, and salt. Both these food acceptance patterns are associated with childhood obesity.

- Genetic and environmental factors influence children's eating behavior. Among environmental influences, parents' own eating and dieting history and their attitudes and behaviors relating to child feeding can impact children's food intake and risk of obesity. While genetic predisposition cannot be changed, parents and caregivers can play an important role in creating an environment in which children develop food acceptance patterns conducive to health. Parents should provide children with a wide variety of nutritious foods, but children should be allowed to control the amount of food they eat.

- Childhood obesity: Reversing the trend. American children are getting heavier. The prevalence of obesity among children and teenagers increased from 5% in the 1960s to 11% in 1988-91. The first step in reversing this unhealthy trend is to recognize the contributing factors.

- Obesity is caused by energy imbalance or consuming more calories in food than expended in exercise. Both genetic and environmental factors (e.g., diet, physical activity) contribute to this energy imbalance. Because children's calorie intake appears to meet or be slightly below recommended levels, factors in addition to calorie intake explain the rise in obesity. Children's low level of physical activity contributes to their obesity. In particular, time spent watching television and using the computer takes time away from being physically active. Researchers in Boston found that children aged 10 to 15 years of age who watched more than five hours of television a day were five times more likely to be overweight than children who spent less than two hours a day watching television.

- To reverse the rise in childhood obesity:
  - Provide children with a wide variety of foods from each of the five food groups and include foods in the "starchy" group (such as cold cereals and chips) in moderation.
  - Encourage children to be physically active. National physical fitness and sports organizations recommend that children exercise vigorously for 20 minutes or more at least three times a week. Vigorous activities include brisk walking, running and competitive sports like swimming.
  - Promote positive attitudes about food and physical activity by being a role model.
  - Help children feel good about themselves regardless of their weight.
  - Capitalise on children's zest for play, fun and joy to help them adopt a healthful lifestyle.
  - The primary goal of childhood nutrition is to provide adequate energy and other essential nutrients to promote optimal growth and development. Diets for overweight children should, therefore, provide enough calories for growth without promoting weight gain. Regular monitoring of children's growth by a health professional determines whether or not calorie intake is adequate to maintain weight or reduce the rate of weight gain.
  - Adopting a healthy lifestyle early in life – a nutritionally balanced diet and increased physical activity – may go a long way toward reducing obesity in adulthood.

Source: Nutrition Reports
Report card for America's eating habits

The USDA's Agricultural Research Service is completing its 10th nationwide look at America's eating habits as part of its Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals. The "grades" for how people ate in 1994 are already in, and let's just say that if the folks at USDA were our parents, many among us would be grounded.

Yes, based on responses from almost 5,000 people across the country, the average American is now eating the minimum recommended three servings of vegetables a day (the advice is to have three to five servings). But more than half of the country isn't eating even that much. And 40 percent of the vegetables that are eaten come in the form of selections like french fries and mashed potatoes. On any given day, while one in four people eats fries, only one in 10 eats a daily green or deep yellow vegetable - the type with antioxidants and other substances now associated with better health and longevity.

As for fruit, the average number of servings eaten a day is one and two-thirds, while what's called for is two to four servings. Three out of four Americans fall short of the two servings-a-day minimum recommendation.

People also aren't doing well in dairy, grains and other "required" categories. They are overdoing it in the popular "elective," added sugars and fats. Now, unless you're ahead of the "class," turn off that TV and ... make a salad (or buy one ready-made).

Vegetables

We're at the low end of the recommended three to five servings daily, with almost half coming from potatoes. We average only half of a serving of dark green and deep yellow vegetables a day - about two bites worth.

Fruits

Only 24 percent of us are eating the minimum recommended two servings a day. And that's only when you include apples from apple pie, etc.

Grains

About 85 percent of our grain-based foods are refined rather than whole grain, which contributes to a huge fiber shortfall.

Dairy

Two to three servings a day are called for.

We're averaging one and a half servings daily. Women over 20 are averaging only one serving a day.

Meat, poultry, fish

Men don't exceed the five to seven ounces recommended each day. Women eat four ounces daily.

Added sugars and fats

No more than 27 percent of calories are supposed to come from these sources, but we're up to 40 percent.

Exercise

One-third of men and almost half of women "rarely" or "never" work up a sweat.

Check your serving-size IQ

To coax us into eating right, the govern-ment's official Food Guide Pyramid suggests that we plan our diets by the numbers. So here's your daily meal plan: two to three servings of cheese, milk or yogurt; two to three servings of meat, fish or poultry; two to three servings of vegetables; two to four servings of fruit; and six to 11 of bread, cereal, rice or pasta.

It's definitely a well-rounded diet. But does anyone have a clue about just how much food equals one of those perfect portions? Do you know how your own meals are stacking up? Take the quiz below to check your serving-size IQ.

1. How many cherries add up to a fruit serving?
   a. 15
   b. 20
   c. 35
2. A serving of pasta would fill:
   a. an ice cream scoop
   b. a cereal bowl
   c. four
3. A standard slice of a paperback book is how many servings?
   a. two
   b. three
   c. four
4. When you spread peanut butter thickly on a slice of bread, as in the TV commercials, how many servings is that?
   a. one-third
   b. two-thirds
   c. one
5. Women are advised to have no more than two servings of alcohol a day. How many come in a bottle of wine?
   a. six
   b. eight
   c. ten
6. An ounce-and-a-half of cheddar cheese - one serving - is the size of:
   a. one donut
   b. two dominos
   c. three dominos
7. Enough broccoli to fit your daily vegetable ideal would fill how many cups?
   a. one
   b. one-and-a-half
   c. two

Answers:

1. (a) 15 cherries - a midway point between a serving that equals just 75 fat-free calories and one that adds a banana and a small glass of orange juice and you're up to four.
2. (a) When a half-cup scoop's a serving, it's not hard to pile up enough pasta to be the daily minimum of six starchy foods. That's just one large plate of spaghetti.
3. (b) The sanctioned serving size for beef, pork, chicken and fish is three ounces, the size of a deck of cards. Because meat's a big source of saturated fat, however, a daily total of three servings is actually high. Don't forget that the official "meat group" includes beans.
4. (a) A thick smear of peanut butter is about two tablespoons - which the government calls a third of a serving. What, now, too, got lumped into the meat group (they're high in protein and fat), and experts say your peanut butter counts as an ounce of meat. (Just don't eat too much.)
5. (a) A third of a bottle equals two servings of wine. A standard "glass" is four ounces, although some restaurants go well past as much as ten. That's two servings - and then some.
6. (c) Dominos' worth of cheese isn't a lot. A typical chef's salad has six. Two of your day's three dairy servings. Add a cup of yogurt and a cup of milk - one serving each - and you could be over the top.
7. (b) To reach the daily minimum of three servings, you'd need to eat just a cup-and-a-half. Even with helpful vegetables, the government makes its points small.

Source: 1995 HEALTH magazine
Hope for snorers
A technique that shrinks excess soft tissue around the upper airway (including the tongue, roof of the mouth and nose) may eventually offer a new way to treat sleep apnea, a disorder that causes people to stop breathing while they sleep. In a study published in the May/June Stanford researchers described how they shrunk pig’s tongues using a wide-kid instrument that emits radio waves. The special needle electrode makes radio frequency energy to nearby cells, destroying them. Scar tissue created by the heated lesion takes up less space. Preliminary tests in people suggest the method can diminish heavy snoring – one of the classic signs of sleep apnea – by shrinking tissue on the roof of the mouth. The new method is quick, relatively painless, and doesn’t require a hospital stay – unlike some treatments for sleep apnea, which include cutting or burning away excess tissue with a scalpel or laser. Further tests are under way to verify the procedure’s safety and effectiveness.

Ice cream headache
As ice cream lovers know, swif d down an ice cream cone or gum can bring on a sudden, stabbing pain in the head, usually around the middle of the forehead. These headaches usually go away within 20 seconds, though they can last up to five minutes, according to a short report in the British Medical Journal. If you’re prone to the problem, here’s a tip: Keep cold foods and drinks from contacting the back of the roof of your mouth, since that’s the most sensitive area when it comes to eriting these headaches, says the author.

Angioplasty, stenting are preferred methods to open clogged arteries
Although new devices to open blocked coronary arteries have grown in number, balloon angioplasty is still the overwhelming choice, according to a Mayo study in a recent issue of Archives of Internal Medicine. Angioplasties were used in more than 90 percent of all coronary interventions at Mayo in 1995. “Angioplasty is considered as least as effective as any new device, even when the patient’s case is complex,” says Mayo cardiologist Dr. David Holmes. “Newer devices may be more effective than conventional angioplasty only in very specialized cases.”

Devices invented since 1988 include afterloaders (‘‘robo-roller’’ devices), lasers that ‘‘swep’’ out the plaque in arteries, and various types of stents (devices inserted into arteries to support the vessel’s structure). Stents were used in about 48 percent of all coronary interventions at Mayo in 1995, while other new devices were used in less than 10 percent of all procedures. (Note: More than one approach may be used in any procedure, the sum of all procedure types is greater than the total number of procedures.)

Better bones, fewer fractures
The drug Fosamax (alendronate sodium) not only slows bone loss in people already diagnosed with osteoporosis, but also can be used preventively to keep bone loss and fractures from occurring in the first place, the FDA ruled in May. An ongoing study of about 1,000 post-menopausal women showed that Fosamax stopped bone loss and built additional bone mass, while those taking a dummy drug lost bone over a two-year period. A second, larger study found that women who took Fosamax reduced their risk of hip and spinal fractures by about half. Eurogen also prevents and treats osteoporosis, but Fosamax is the only non-hormone treatment available.

Adolescent arteries
Artery-dugging deposits that can eventually lead to heart attacks start accumulating at every age, a study in the May issue of Pediatrics reports. Researchers reviewed 150 adolescents and young adults, and found that 87 percent had fatty plaques in their arteries. The earlier the deposits form, the more likely the arteries are to become clogged, and the more likely the patient is to have a heart attack.

Ice cream eating
Is it a myth that eating before bed makes you gain weight? You have to look at the whole day’s food intake. When I work with people who want to gain weight, I estimate the number of calories they need to maintain their weight, then add at least 1,000 calories to that.

The extra calories should be from a mix of foods, not just fatty ones. This high-calorie diet should be eaten every day for at least a month to see results. It takes more work than you might think to eat the much extra food every day. Sometimes people need to eat six or more times a day to fit all of the food in, so you may even have a snack before bed. But it’s not just the bedtime snack that makes the difference. Another thing to consider when trying to gain weight with a physical activity. Research has shown that people who do moderate weight training (and keep their caloric intake high) are more successful with gaining weight in the long run. They also gain more muscle than fat.

How long can you freeze hot dogs?
I have had 12 packages frozen for about a year. They looked fine and tasted fine.

Office Calls

According to the ‘‘Spotlight On Freezer Storage’’ bulletin from Michigan State University Extension, freezing hot dogs and other luncheon meats is not recommended practice, because it affects the quality of the product. The frozen hot dogs would be considered safe to eat, but they may not be as tasty as you’d like.

There are a couple of food-quality changes to consider. First, freezing can ‘‘break the emulsion’’ of hot dogs and luncheon meats, causing them to ‘‘work,’’ or leak liquid. Second, cured meats (such as ham, bacon, luncheon meats, hot dogs, etc.) are very salty, and this saltiness enhances the development of rancidity, or ‘‘off’’ flavors.

If people have these types of meats in their freezer already, it’s best to use them within a month’s time for the best quality.

You are lucky that your hot dogs survived a year in the freezer.

by Vicky Ferguson, RD
Most beachgoers know that packing a bottle of sunscreen and a broad-brimmed hat is at least as important as bringing the beach towels. But while awareness of the hazards of sunbathing is on the rise, the incidence of sun-related skin cancers is skyrocketing as well. By the year 2000, the lifetime risk of developing malignant melanoma, the most dangerous form of skin cancer, will be one in 75, the American Academy of Dermatology estimates. That's double the risk of just a dozen years ago, when melanoma affected one out of every 150 Americans over a lifetime.

For people who tend to develop a lot of moles, the odds may be even greater. A study in the Journal of the American Medical Association of more than 700 men and women diagnosed with melanoma and 1,000 healthy volunteers found that having just one atypical, or dysplastic, mole doubles the risk of melanoma, and 16 or more increase 12-fold the chances of developing the disease. Moles the researchers considered troublesome were flat or partially flat, larger than 5 millimeters (about the size of a pencil eraser), and varied in color, with irregular borders or mismatched halves.

Surprisingly, small moles also appear to raise melanoma risk if you have a multitude of them. People with 50 or more small, normal moles were about twice as likely to develop melanoma as people with 24 or fewer. The study involved researchers from the National Cancer Institute, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of California at San Francisco.

Of all the types of skin cancer, melanoma is the most deadly. About 7,000 people die of the disease every year in the United States — approximately six times as many as die of either of the other two main varieties, basal cell and squamous cell cancer. But when caught early, melanoma is highly treatable, making it all the more important to learn how to recognize it and get help before it spreads.

If you have lots of moles, what does this study mean for you? What steps should you take to reduce your risk of melanoma? We asked dermatologist and surgeon Gary S. Rogers, MD, of Boston University to give us some insights.

The physician's perspective — Gary Rogers, MD

The idea that certain types of moles (nevi) might develop into melanoma has been around for some time, but dermatologists disagree about their significance. There is general agreement that large, atypical moles in people with a strong family history of melanoma can turn into cancer. This is known as the Familial Atypical Mole and Melanoma (FAMM) syndrome. However, the significance of dysplastic moles in people without a family history is hotly debated.

Some would argue that the term "dysplastic mole" — meaning a mole that exhibits abnormal growth — is a misnomer, since it is unclear whether these moles are truly premalignant. While it's true that melanoma does sometimes develop from such unusual moles, it doesn't always, in many cases, it arises from a mole that appears normal or from an area of skin with no moles. And dysplastic moles occur so often in such a large number of people without a family history of melanoma — about 30 percent of the population has them — that it isn't clear that these atypical moles have any direct link with melanoma at all outside of FAMM.

This study still doesn't entirely resolve the debate about whether melanoma arises directly from dysplastic nevi. The researchers didn't look at whether patients with dysplastic moles developed melanoma directly from those moles. They studied patients already with melanoma who, it turns out, did have more dysplastic and normal moles than people without melanoma. This suggests a link between dysplastic moles, increased numbers of moles, and a higher risk of melanoma, but it doesn't show that dysplastic nevi turn into melanoma. What it does show clearly is that people with many moles — dysplastic or otherwise — are at a higher risk for melanoma. And large moles confer a greater risk than small ones.

That said, the quantity and size of moles shouldn't be the only factors you take into account in evaluating your risk of melanoma. The most important risk factor by far is family history. If someone in your immediate family (parent, sibling or child) has had melanoma, then the number of large moles you have takes on a whole new light. Some data suggest the risk may be as high as 15 times as high if a family member has had the disease.

Other risk factors include having fair skin, blond or red hair, and blue eyes. People who sunburn easily and never or rarely tan are more at risk to develop melanoma as people with olive complexion who seldom burn. Research also suggests that blistering and peeling sunscreens, especially during childhood and adolescence, make people more susceptible to melanoma later in life.

People who are at high risk for melanoma should have an annual skin examination by a primary care doctor or a dermatologist. Even if you're not at high risk, it makes sense to check your skin regularly for signs of melanoma. That way, you can tell more easily if a mole has changed or grown — probably the most important warning signs of melanoma. Moles may become elevated, change color, or become asymmetrical (the two halves don't match). In addition, any skin growth that bleeds or crusts should be looked at by a doctor. Abnormal moles are also marked by four key characteristics:

- Asymmetry
- Borders irregularity
- Color variation
- Diameter larger than 6 mm

People aren't likely to be perfectly oval or smooth. Mole that are of concern may have borders that are napped or irregular, or part of a mole may be elevated or different color than the rest. Color variations range from black to red, blue or white. If a mole exhibits any of these warning signs, see a doctor for an evaluation. In the early stages, when the skin lesion is 1 mm thick or less, melanoma has a 95 percent cure rate. By comparison, when lesions reach 4 mm thick, the five-year survival rate is just 35 percent. That's because as the melanoma lesion thickens, it penetrates into the deeper skin layers, where blood vessels and lymph can carry it to other parts of the body.

Because melanoma doesn't always arise from atypical moles, widespread removal of dysplastic moles isn't recommended. Scarring and complications outweigh any benefits that might come from preventive removal. But any suspicious-looking mole should undergo biopsy to see if it is indeed cancerous. Biopsies are usually done in the doctor's office under local anesthesia and are relatively quick and painless.

If a growth turns out to be melanoma and the disease is still in the early stages, the mole can be removed surgically, usually with an in-office procedure under local anesthesia. Surgery for more serious cases of melanoma may be done in the hospital. Studies suggest that if you take 20 to 35 years from the inciting sunburn to develop melanoma, sun protection is especially important for children and teens. And, although past sun exposure is likely to be more important than current exposure, it still makes sense to use caution when spending time outdoors. This doesn't mean you have to live like a cave dweller. The goal is to enjoy the sun wisely:

- Avoid peak sunlight hours, between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher.
- Wear a hat with a broad brim that keeps the sun off your face and neck.
- Gary S. Rogers, MD, is co-director of the Skin Oncology Program and director of dermatologic surgery at Boston University School of Medicine.

For more information on melanoma, contact the American Cancer Society (800) ACS-2345 or the American Academy of Dermatology, P.O. Box 4014, Schaumburg, IL 60168-4014, www.acd.org
Precision Agriculture

Crop scouting aids yield map analysis

by Neil R. Miller

Yield is the ultimate integrator of the factors of crop production. In the final analysis, fertility, drainage, pests, varietal characteristics, cultural practices, weather, and a host of other factors can all be reduced to one simple measure: bushels in the bin. A yield monitor, logging yields every second or two, is consequently an invaluable tool to measure the impact of these factors and fine tune production. But don’t let the elegant simplicity of a yield map mislead you. Sorting out the influences that create the yields and groans calls for shrewd interpretation and keen observations throughout the season. For example, corn development varies significantly this year, with plants on lighter soils considerably ahead of those on heavy soils. As European corn borer moths seek out plants to lay eggs on, they will move to the taller plants. If yield maps of these fields show lower yields on the lighter soils, you’ll need to distinguish whether this is due to heavier insect feeding or the lower productive potential of the sand. By scouting your fields you may be able to sort these factors out. If you rely on the yield map alone, identifying the true cause will be impossible.

Farmers who have just begun to use a yield monitor are often surprised by how much their crop yields drop when they hit a weed patch. My first question is “Where did the escapes occur?” Herbicides are often least effective in high organic matter soils (which are often also poorly drained) and low pH soils (which are often sandy and drought prone). The weeds undoubtedly cause some of the observed yield reduction, but to judge whether other complicating factors are involved, the producer needs to combine harvester observations with thorough soil testing.

Similarly, herbicide carry-over and injury is often related to pH and soil texture. To distinguish its impact from the variation in inherent yield potential of your different soils, you will need both keen field observations and a thorough knowledge of how soil pH varies across your fields.

Side dressing and cultivation are good times to record observations on crop health, drainage problems, weed outbreaks, etc. Some yield monitors can be moved to the tractor during these operations thus giving you the ability to mark these observations with GPS. If you don’t have this capability, hand drawn maps and good notes will still provide valuable insights for yield map interpretation. If you simply don’t have time, consider hiring a crop scout from your local consultant or elevator.

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Bridgette Voisinet began working for the Michigan Cattlemen’s Association (MCA) as executive vice president (EVP) on May 21. Voisinet is replacing Cindy Reising, who served for MCA in that position since 1990. Reising announced her desire to resign the position earlier this year. “We are very pleased by the over 40 candidates who applied for the MCA EVP position. Undoubtedly, each could have added something to our organization,” said Gary Voogt, MCA president. “We are pleased to have the opportunity to balance Reising’s cattle feeding background with Voisinet’s stocker cattle upbringing.”

Voisinet received her bachelor of science degree from Michigan State University in Animal Science in 1994. During her time as a Michigan State student, Voisinet worked as a Research Assistant for Dr. Roy Black in the MSU Agricultural Economics Department. Besides becoming extremely computer literate, she assisted with compilation of the computer software manuals for both the Spartan Beef and Dairy Nutrition Balancer computer programs and developed the preliminary computerized spreadsheet analysis system for the Michigan Integrated Resource Management (IRM) program.

She completed a master of science degree from Colorado State University in animal science with a concentration in Animal Behavior in December, 1996. Upon returning to Michigan, she has served the state’s agriculture industries in several short-term capacities including being the on-site registration coordinator for the 1997 Mega-Conference and Trade Show, administrative assistant for the Michigan Cattlemen’s Association, and trade show assistant for the Great Lakes Basin Grazing Network.

Voisinet says she is excited to be serving Michigan beef producers and the Michigan beef industry in this position. She remarked that she looks forward to developing a productive relationship with the MCA board and strengthening MCA’s communications channels. She envision using Internet communications, regional producer gatherings and an expanded magazine to focus on better serve current members and increase MCA’s visibility to expand membership.

Voisinet is the daughter of UP Dairy and Beef Extension Agent Ben Voisinet and his wife, Denise. The family farm is in Trunk, in the central Upper Peninsula of Michigan, where she was raised, is a stocker cattle and commercial sheep operation, which provides her with an excellent background to work with the cattle producers in the state. She currently resides in St. Johns with husband Brent, who is also a 1994 graduate of Michigan State University.

“Bridgette is a fresh face and not a stranger to hard work. She will work well with the MCA board of directors and its committees in meeting the needs of Michigan’s beef cattle industry,” Voogt commented.

With the transition of a new executive vice president, the MCA office also be changed locations on June 17. The new MCA office is located in the NorthStar Select Sites office building on Forest Road at the east end of MSU’s campus. Contact information for the new MCA office is P.O. Box 24011, Lansing, MI 48909-4041, phone (517) 333-6780, fax (517) 336-6799, e-mail MCAoffice@msu.edu.
Cash in on long-distance savings with The Farm Bureau Connection

New long-distance phone service from Farm Bureau

According to Fleming, the personal 800-number service with a flat rate of 14.7 cents per minute is an attractive option for small businesses. "While many long-distance services bill by full minute increments, The Farm Bureau Connection charges are based on six-second increments," he adds. "If you talk for one minute and six seconds, you pay for one minute and six seconds, not for two minutes, as you would with many companies. Your long-distance dollars go further because you do not pay for unused time." Fleming adds that the personal calling cards are another attractive option for members looking to avoid costly surcharges when using other long-distance cards. "The calling cards are inserted to all new subscribers and cost only 12.5 cents per minute." "We've done studies throughout the state and we've saved members between $5 and $40 a month on their bill," Fleming states. "Whether your monthly bill is $12 or $70, you can save the value of your membership and more with The Farm Bureau Connection.

Accurate billing

"With our accurate billing system," Fleming adds, "you will better understand what you are paying for, with the full confidence that you are actually using far more of the time you are paying for. You will receive a monthly bill from Farm Bureau. It's as simple as that."

How do I sign up?

Call your county Farm Bureau secretary or Michigan Farm Bureau member services at 1-800-252-2560, ext. 43295 for a brochure containing an application to simply drop in the mail.

Savage on broadleaves,

safe on corn.

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Term limits set to take effect in the '98 election year

What this means for agriculture

Exactly how having these brand new elected officials will affect the agriculture industry is yet to be determined. I think that will depend, in a large degree, who the 65 new legislators are to replace the old 65, whom we no longer know where they stand on issues and know how they are going to react," Almy said.

Nonetheless, there will be scores of new legislators for farmers to build positive relationships with. Almy said this will require Farm Bureau members and staff to educate the new congressmen about the agriculture industry.

The idea of term limits came about

The idea of term limitation was placed on the ballot and passed with a majority of "yes" votes in 1994. A year prior to that, at our annual meeting, members adopted policy supporting term limits," Almy explained.

"I think there was a feeling and that same feeling exists today that the Legislature was made up of a lot of individuals who were making a long-term, professional living from being state politicians," Almy said. "I think there was a feeling among our members that some of these folks were simply no longer in touch with the realities of the world that they were supposed to be representing."

Challenges of term limitation

Opponents of term limitation say voters have always had a chance to limit the terms of their politicians — through elections. "I think there was a feeling, however, that the power of the incumbents in winning re-election — because they had name recognition and access to dollars to run a campaign that their challengers did not have — that it was rather difficult to replace a long-time incumbent," Almy said.

"If there is a down side to term limitation for agriculture — which is a minority group who looking at the shear number of femners in terms of the whole population — we currently have persons who are very familiar and have a strong background in agriculture in our leadership positions," Almy said.

Term limits could mean losing some friends of agriculture, such as Senator Majority Leader Dick Posthumus and many others who have strong farm backgrounds.

Surfacing good candidates

In order to make sure our legislators represent our needs, many Farm Bureau members are active in committees to surface candidates for the soon-to-open positions. They strive to find deliverable people who will represent them fairly.

Michigan Farm Bureau also offers a work-shop for political candidates to learn how to run their campaigns well. "The Campaign Managers' Workshop is for people who have either made the decision to run for public office in the 1998 elections or are thinking about it," Almy said. The seminar helps them plan and carry out all aspects of their race, including how to announce their candidacy, how to raise money, how to select the right issues and more.

"When term limitation is fully implemented in the year 2002, we will see the real impacts," Almy said. Until then, citizens must fine the right candidates to represent them fairly in Lansing.

Discussion Questions

1. In your opinion, what are the most important benefits of term limitation?
2. How will the Michigan agriculture industry, as a whole, be affected by term limitations after the 1998 election? How will it affect ag in the long term?
3. What legislation from your area will be replaced because of term limitation? What can you, as a Farm Bureau member, do to fill their seat with someone who will represent you and your industry well?
4. Once the new congressmen are elected, what can you do to see that they truly represent your area well? How can you help them learn about our industry? 
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**Farms and Real Estate**

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Having retired from dairy farming, the following will be sold at public auction on the farm located 6 mi. N. on US-12, 3 1/2 mi. E. on 8 Mile Rd. in 3E Township, MI. 48430.

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114 ACRE FARM: $165,000. (F-145) 114 acres. Call Doug at 1-810-746-2391 (F-161).

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2586. Halter, chestnut information or delivery, 1-517-263-8666.

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Holland, III. Call Harold and Kate Sommer, Props. 1-810-746-2391 (F-161). Call 1-810-746-2391 (F-161) for more details.

**农地拍卖**

由于已从养牛业退休，以下将进行公开拍卖，地点位于公路上，距离东北方向3英里，距离12号公路3 1/2英里。向东南方向1/4英里。

**1996年8月22日，上午10点整**

**土地**

美少女，未注册，W 1/2 5，Sec. 4，T40N，R110W，1/4。每英亩：请拨打1-517-387-3733。

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温柔巨人：采用有爱的注册繁殖。使用过滤器。过滤器使用Sonic与母牛接触，户外环境健康。我们将培训有帮助但不使用杀虫剂认证。获得具有竞争力的报价。请拨打1-517-387-3733。

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Chemlawn，3116 Dixie Hwy。如有查询，请拨打1-517-433-5758。不允许液体或剩余电压。请拨打Dan的电话1-810-746-2391 (F-161)。

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** resizing home**

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**住宅用地**

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**农地拍卖**

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Weather Outlook

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

Sections of Michigan were struck by two major outbreaks of severe weather during the past month. In the first event, a large area of "training thunderstorms" (the observed pattern of thunderstorm formations and movements across the same area on radar) brought normal rains of 4 to 9 inches to sections of southwestern lower Michigan on the 20th and 21st. The heavy rain led to flash flooding and destruction of crops and cropland, especially in low-lying areas. The second event was an outbreak of severe weather statewide on July 2, fueled by the rare combination of low-level tropical moisture, a strong jet stream aloft, and a fast-moving cold front. Severe thunderstorms, large hail, and tornadoes were reported statewide, although most damage was in southeastern lower Michigan, where at least three confirmed tornadoes and thunderstorm "microbursts" (an area of intense, straight-line winds, sometimes exceeding 100 mph, flowing downward and out of a severe thunderstorm) caused at least 10 fatalities and left over 200,000 households without power. The outbreak was considered the worst in decades in the Detroit metro area.

More benign weather should prevail in July, with near equal odds of below, near, and above-normal temperatures and precipitation forecast for Michigan by NOAA's Climate Prediction Center. Latest medium-range forecast guidance suggests cooler temperatures for the state in association with weak northwesterly flow aloft. Above-normal temperatures in late-June led to great advances in crop phenology, although current seasonal growing degree day (GDD) accumulations still lag behind normals for the date. However, instead of the 2 to 3 week or greater deviations that were common in mid-June, current deviations are now on the order of only 7 to 10 days behind normal. Such deviations could be made up quickly, as dimensional monthly GDD totals are greatest during July, followed closely by August.

Ag companies team up for research

Case, DowElanco and Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc. have signed an agreement to collaborate on learning and determining how the interactions of various farming practices, inputs and environmental conditions can be collected, processed and turned into information to help farmers make better crop decisions.

The companies will partner to study better ways to plan, manage and harvest corn and soybeans in the Corn Belt. Farmers cooperators have been identified who will supply land for the project. A variety of environments across soils and maturity zones in the Central Corn Belt will be represented in order to study a variety of farming conditions.

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Conservation planning – the way business will be done now and into the next century

Before and during the development of the 1996 farm bill, farmers and ranchers nationwide bent the ears of their legislators, letting lawmakers know that the old top-down, rigid manner in which government had traditionally operated in the conservation arena would not work in this day and age. More flexibility, more local input into the decision-making process, and more program diversity would promote the adoption of conservation at the farm and ranch level. With the old Agricultural Conservation Program (you may know it as ACP), one program was expected to meet the many and various conservation needs of all producers. A farmer had to make his or her operation fit the program, however awkward or manageable that it may have been. The 1996 farm bill conservation provisions reflect the feedback from those making their living from the land in agricultural production. The old cost share programs are gone, the focus now rests on adaptive management that is flexible, dynamic, diverse and voluntary. The construction of this new way of doing business is the conservation plan.

Conservation planning is nothing new. The purpose of the plan is to provide a means to correct resource problems that may be present. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS, formerly the Soil Conservation Service) provides the technical expertise that may be needed to design and implement systems to improve the resource situation. In the past, a landowner would call up the NRCS resource conservationist with a resource problem, the resource conservationist would go out and assess the problem, and a conservation plan would be formulated with the producer. The conservation plan would contain technical recommendations from the NRCS Technical Guide and a contract would be drawn up with the Farm Service Agency (formerly ASCS) if financial assistance, i.e., cost share or incentive payments, were available. The conservation plan would usually focus on just one resource problem and identify one practice to correct the problem. In addition, the conservation measures to correct resource problems that could qualify for financial assistance were decided upon at the national level and applied across the board.

Not surprisingly, producers responded to this situation by making it clear that they wanted a voice in identifying the resource concern in their area and that they wanted a more integrated method of resource management. The interconnectedness of the resource base demands a more comprehensive planning system. In acknowledgment of the changing needs of producers, the 1996 farm bill conservation provisions are driven by a locally-led resource management process based on conservation planning at the resource management systems (RMS) level. This means that when a producer calls NRCS with a resource concern, the resource conservationist will still go out and assess the land, but this assessment will encompass all of the resources – soil, water, air, plant and animal – and will consider the potential ramifications of a plan on the people living in the area. A conservation plan will be drawn up based on recommendations from the NRCS Technical Guide just as before, however, various conservation measures to address the resource concerns will be identified. Jane Hardisty, Michigan NRCS state conservationist, states, "This comprehensive new approach to conservation planning allows the producer greater flexibility, and at the same time meets all of the resource needs identified." In addition, potential funding from a variety of sources will be identified, with one of the possibilities being the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. At this point a contract may be drawn up with Farm Services Agency if financial assistance from the various USDA programs will be used.

How EQIP fits in with conservation planning

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is the largest of the 1996 farm bill conservation cost share programs. It replaces many of the old cost share programs. The foundation of EQIP is the locally led process, whereby local work groups, headed by the Conservation District, identify the most significant resource concerns in a designated geographic area. Funding for EQIP is allocated based on proposals submitted to the state Technical Committee, a team of conservation representatives at the state level. The Technical Committee reviews the proposals, and the NRCS state conservationists, with the Technical Committee's input and the Farm Service Agency's concurrence, selects programs for funding. The selected proposals are called Conservation Priority Areas (CPAs). Stays the percent of the state's total fund allocation will go toward these CPAs, while the other 35 percent of the funds will be available statewide for addressing statewide priority resource concerns (SPRCs). In Michigan, the state Technical Committee is chaired by the NRCS state conservationists. Jane Hardisty, Jane explains that, "Michigan has approved 10 Conservation Priority Areas and six Statewide Priority Resource Concerns. In total, Michigan has received $4.2 million for funding EQIP." EQIP fits into the conservation process as one potential source of funds for financial assistance. Upon the resource assessment by the NRCS Resource Conservationists, resource concerns are identified and the land is in a CPA or the resource concerns fall into one of the State-wide Priority Resource Concerns, then an application for cost share or incentive payments to address these concerns can be submitted. Applications are available at NRCS, FSA or Conservation District offices. It is necessary, however, to have a conservation plan that meets all the standards and specifications of the NRCS Technical Guide and that is approved by the Conservation District Board completed before an application for EQIP can be submitted.

For a listing of the CPAs and the Statewide Priority Resource Concerns can be found on subsequent pages of this insert. To guide you through the process of applying for EQIP, a flowchart outlining the entire process from start to finish is provided inside as well.
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): A Tool for Conservation Planning

St. Joseph River Basin CPA
- Location: Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph and Van Buren counties
- Designated NRCS Conservationist: John Barlow, NRCS Benton Harbor
- Designated FSA County Executive Director: Daane Bik, St. Joseph County

**Description:**
- The St. Joseph River Basin CPA was designed to address the need for conservation practices to improve water and soil quality in the basin. The primary resource concerns include soil erosion, nutrient runoff, and habitat destruction. The CPA focuses on the implementation of conservation practices that will reduce the impact of agricultural activities on the waterways and soil quality.

- **Location:** The St. Joseph River Basin CPA covers a significant area in the St. Joseph River Basin, including Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, and Van Buren counties.

- **Share Payments:** Conservation practices eligible for cost share payments include:
  - Conservation Crop Rotation
  - Filter Strip
  - Staples or Tiller Strip
  - Riparian Buffer
  - Habitat Management
  - Nutrient Management

- **Incentives:** The CPA offers incentives for the implementation of conservation practices, with a focus on reducing the impact of agricultural activities on the waterways. The incentives include cost share payments for the implementation of conservation practices.

Creek Valley Watershed CPA
- Location: Kent, Newaygo and Osceola counties
- Designated FSA County Executive Director: Greg Overholt, Kent County

**Description:**
- The Creek Valley Watershed CPA was designed to address the need for conservation practices to improve water and soil quality in the Creek Valley area. The primary resource concerns include soil erosion, nutrient runoff, and habitat destruction. The CPA focuses on the implementation of conservation practices that will reduce the impact of agricultural activities on the waterways and soil quality.

- **Location:** The Creek Valley Watershed CPA covers a significant area in the Creek Valley, including Kent, Newaygo, and Osceola counties.

- **Share Payments:** Conservation practices eligible for cost share payments include:
  - Conservation Crop Rotation
  - Filter Strip
  - Staples or Tiller Strip
  - Riparian Buffer
  - Habitat Management
  - Nutrient Management

- **Incentives:** The CPA offers incentives for the implementation of conservation practices, with a focus on reducing the impact of agricultural activities on the waterways. The incentives include cost share payments for the implementation of conservation practices.


**Combined Land Areas for Fiscal '97**

**EQIP Priority Areas**
- Combined Land Areas for Fiscal '97

**Michigan West Coast Specialty Crop CPAs**
- EQIP Priority Areas

**Animal Manure CPAs**
- Designated NRCS Conservationist: Jim Scott, Ionia County

**Description:**
- The Animal Manure Production CPA was designed to address the need for conservation practices to improve water and soil quality in the area. The primary resource concerns include soil erosion, nutrient runoff, and habitat destruction. The CPA focuses on the implementation of conservation practices that will reduce the impact of agricultural activities on the waterways and soil quality.

- **Location:** The Animal Manure Production CPA covers a significant area in the Animal Manure Production area, including a focus on the implementation of conservation practices that will reduce the impact of agricultural activities on the waterways and soil quality.

- **Share Payments:** Conservation practices eligible for cost share payments include:
  - Conservation Crop Rotation
  - Filter Strip
  - Staples or Tiller Strip
  - Riparian Buffer
  - Habitat Management
  - Nutrient Management

- **Incentives:** The CPA offers incentives for the implementation of conservation practices, with a focus on reducing the impact of agricultural activities on the waterways. The incentives include cost share payments for the implementation of conservation practices.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): A Tool for Conservation Planning
Stream Onerkand Shoreline Protection, Stream Crossings

Critical habitats included in these systems are rotation and tillage systems for row and specialty crops, riparian buffer and conservation practices eligible for cost share payments:

Land management practices eligible for Incentive Payments:
- Conservation Reserve, Conservation Rotation Crop, Residue Management, Contour Farming, Riparian Buffer, Strip, Pasture, Contour StripCropping, Wildlife Upland Habitat, Wetland Habitat, Wildlife Habitat.


- Description: The draining of Cropland is located in Michigan's southern central area, Sem dry, shallow soils in the area, agrichemical run-off and leaching of animal waste into the river system. Wildlife habitat in the major resource concerns in this area. Conservation systems comprised of animal management systems, urban and post management systems, abandoned wells and other wildlife habitat endangerment and enhancement will be implemented by these systems.


- Description: Incentive payments for cost share payments:


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A step-by-step guide to conservation planning with EQIP

1. **To pass go you must have a plan!**

2. **Fill out an application for EQIP at your local USDA Service Center or your Conservation District office. Sign-up is continuous.**

3. **Ranking of applications by the NRCS Conservation Priority Area designated conservationist.**

4. **Selection of applications for funding. Selection occurs on the 15th and 30th of each month. The top third after ranking will be selected pending availability of funds.**

5. **Contract drawn up by Farm Services Agency on CCC Form 1200. Contract approved through the FSA county committee.**

6. **Contract signed and implemented. Conservation practices installed and funds dispersed.**

7. **Follow-up. Progress of conservation plan will be reviewed yearly.**

See article on page 1 about planning.

A ranking criteria was developed that takes into consideration the environmental benefits to be gained from the plan in conjunction with the environmental sensitivity of the land in question. All applications in a given CPA will be ranked against the same criteria, although criteria may vary among the different CPAs.

Contracts are for 5 to 10 years. The maximum cost-share and/or Incentive payments for one contract is $50,000 for the life of the contract and a maximum of $10,000 per year (with certain exceptions).
What is the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)?

EQIP is a new, voluntary USDA conservation program for farmers and ranchers who face serious threats to soil, water, and related natural resource concerns. It gives equal initial consideration for treatment, but higher priority is given to areas where State or local governments offer financial or technical assistance, or areas where agricultural improvements will help producers in complying with Federal or State environmental laws, such as the Clean Water Act. Nationally, 75 percent of program funds will be targeted to natural resource concerns relating to livestock production. If I am not in a priority area, can I still qualify for EQIP?

EQIP can address additional significant statewide concerns that may occur outside designated priority areas. In the first year of the program, at least 35 percent of the funds will be used in designated priority areas and up to 55 percent can be used for other significant statewide natural resource concerns. Additional emphasis is given to areas where State or local governments offer financial or technical assistance and where agricultural improvements can benefit water quality and other environmental objectives. How do I apply for the program?

Producers may obtain contract applications at any USDA Service Center. The applications will be accepted throughout the year. The ranking and selecting of producers will occur periodically during designated periods. Do I need a conservation plan under EQIP?

Yes. EQIP is designed to be carried out according to a conservation plan. Conservation plans are site-specific for each farm or ranch and can be developed by producers with help from N R C S or other sources. Producers may obtain conservation plans through the primary natural resource concerns. All plans submitted to N R C S technical standards adopted for local conditions and are approved by the conservation district. Producers are not obligated, but are encouraged, to develop comprehensive management plans. Do I need to enter into a long-term contract to get assistance from EQIP?

Yes. EQIP offers 5 to 10-year contracts that provide cost-sharing and incentive payments for conservation practices carried out for the site-specific plan. Are there limits to individual payments?

Yes. All cost-sharing and incentive payments are limited to $10,000 per person per year and $50,000 over the length of the contract. How is EQIP funded?

Funding comes from the Federal Government's Commodity Credit Corporation. EQIP's authorized budget is $350 million per year but no more than $500 million per year through the year 2002. When is the sign-up period for EQIP?

There will be a continuous sign-up through Sept. 30, 1997. Applications will be approved for assistance on the 15th and 30th of each month. Would an application that was not selected for funding be available for consideration during the next selection?

Yes, applications will remain on the list until they are approved or until the application period is complete. Why would the county committee have for disapproving an application?

The county committee would disapprove an EQIP application if the applicant did not meet the "producer" definition, did not provide evidence of control of the land for the contract period, or if there is an existing EQC on the planning unit. Will producer applications continue to be approved for funding every 15th or 30th of the month even if the allocation to this CQA has been exhausted?

No. A register will continue to be kept as applications are received and approved. When funds become available, then applications will be reviewed. What is the duration of an EQIP contract?

Contracts do not exceed 10 years. Can a farm with three partners have three contracts?

Yes. If a farm operated by a partnership is eligible for one EQIP payment limitation. An individual member of the partnership or corporation would be eligible for a separate payment limitation only if he or she had a separate farming interest. Is a producer eligible to apply for assistance through a Statewide Priority Resource Concern (SPRC) and a Conservation Priority Area (CPA)?

Yes, provided (1) the conservation plan addresses the resource concerns of the CPA and SPRC, as appropriate, and (2) the producer does not receive double cost-share or incentive payments for an individual practice installation, e.g., the producer could receive cost-share assistance from the CPA for grassed waterway #1 and from the SPRC for grassed waterway #2, but the producer could not receive assistance from both the CPA and the SPRC for grassed waterway #1. Can a producer be approved for assistance for more than one CPA?

Yes, provided the applications are for different planning units. Are local units of government, such as Road Commissions and Drain Commissions, eligible for EQIP assistance?

No. State, county, or city or other local government units are ineligible "persons" for EQIP purposes. Who determines the "person" and/or "land" eligibility?

The Farm Service Agency determines "person" eligibility and N R C S determines "land" eligibility. Can cost payments be approved for EQIP?

No, if the other funds are federal and, then only if (1) the cost share does not exceed 100% of the producer's total installation cost, and (2) the "doubling" is authorized by the other program. If the other funds are state or local, can a producer receive cost share funds for an Agricultural Commodity Containment Facility through the Michigan Great Lakes Conservation District?

No. If your local USDA Service Center listed in the telephone directory.
Livestock producers — Special info for you!

EQIP seen as an opportunity to improve the farmstead’s environmental management

By Bob Neumann, MSU Outreach Coordinator

Rather than working under a law or being part of a regulation, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides growers an opportunity to voluntarily work, perhaps with others, on improving the well-being of the farmstead’s natural resources.

"I think this is a tremendous opportunity for a farm family to begin, or renew their own ideas on farmstead conservation management and to be part of what will likely be a community effort to improve overall environmental quality," says Larry Oles, Michigan State University Extension interim associate director. "The new bill allows for a more flexible approach to problemsolving, including targeting site-specific practices that are best for a grower’s particular situation." Schweihtas says, "I do think this new program offers an opportunity to recognize and solve some of the environmental problems in agriculture very different from those I was used to when I was in Michigan."}

The ecological importance of wetlands is increasingly apparent as wetlands become scarce. Wetlands provide wildlife habitat, recharge groundwater supplies, filter impurities from surface waters, and serve a variety of other valuable functions. With EQIP, wetland can be created, restored or improved.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): A Tool for Conservation Planning

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides incentives and flexibility to address a wide variety of environmental problems. It is extremely critical that this program succeed and that we demonstrate that a program of incentives and flexibility that address a wide variety of environmental problems can work.

If we don’t demonstrate that such a program will work, I do think the road ahead is not one we want to go down."
Locally led conservation is back!!

by Martha La Forest, Special Projects Coordinator, Michigan Association of Conservation Districts

When Conservation Districts were created during the dust bowl days of the 1930s, their main purpose was to set priorities and carry out conservation programs based on local conditions and needs. However, the 1989 and 1990 Farm Bills, the 1997 Clean Water Act amendments, and the 1990 Coastal Zone Act significantly changed the way conservation needs were addressed. These and other programs were driven largely by national priorities, not by local needs.

The 1990 Farm Bill signaled a shift back to the original method of locally led conservation. Elected officials have reaffirmed that local leadership and grassroots decision-making are the keys to successfully managing our natural resources. Congress has emphasized the need for close working relationships among Conservation Districts, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Farm Service Agency and other government agencies. To facilitate this, Conservation Districts have been asked to establish Local Work Groups comprised of community leaders who provide input on local natural resource concerns.

The St. Joseph County Conservation District has discovered that establishing a diverse Local Work Group provides an opportunity to strengthen existing partnerships and establish new ones. "The more people you involve, the better your program is going to be," explains Roger Stahly-Wang, Administrator of the St. Joseph County Conservation District. "We have leaders from the Parks and Recreation Dept., Health Dept., County Commission, Drain Commission, numerous Sportsmen and Conservation Clubs, not to mention the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, Farm Bureau, and the Michigan Audubon Society sitting around the table discussing natural resource issues in the county."

What the St. Joseph County Local Work Group found is that natural resources are inter-related. Problems with one resource can impact multiple resources. After many hours of deliberating, the Group came to consensus on their top five natural resource concerns:

- **Fragmentation of Forest Land**
  - Forest land is increasingly being converted to agricultural and development uses. It is anticipated that woodland loss will continue as development pressure increases and the agricultural economy improves. Fragmentation is occurring as woodlands are being split from one owner to many via housing developments.
- **Loss of Topsoil Due to Wind Erosion**
  - Productive topsoil is blown from plowed and unprotected fields during periods of high winds. This is evident from the soil found in ditches, complaints from non-agricultural residents, and accidents caused by blowing topsoil.
- **Protecting Groundwater Quality**
  - Contamination of ground and surface water by non-point pollutants is occurring county-wide. It is particularly evident during July through August when agricultural, residential, and recreational activities are at their peak. Groundwater contamination is also occurring from other sources such as non-point pollutants such as areas that store fertilizers, chemicals, and fuels.
- **Lack of Land-Use Planning**
  - Land-use planning falls to place a commitment to natural resources as development occurs in areas other than planned residential communities. This is especially evident around lakes, rivers and streams.
- **Development and Poor Management Practices**
  - Destroying wildlife habitat. Agriculture and development throughout the county have gradually taken over areas where wildlife once lived, such as fencerows and wooded areas.

The St. Joseph County Local Work Group will look toward several state and federal programs that offer solutions to solve these and other natural resource problems. They include the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a program to retire environmentally sensitive cropland; Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), a program to restore cropland to wetland conditions; Groundwater Stewardship Program, a program to protect groundwater; 319 Water Quality Program, a program to plan and implement non-point pollution controls on a watershed basis; Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), a program to provide cost-share funds for best management practices to protect all natural resources; Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), a program to provide cost-share for the development of wildlife habitat; and several other federal and local programs.

The EQIP program is USDA's largest conservation program designed to conserve and improve land while it remains in production. To qualify for EQIP consideration, producers must have a site-specific conservation plan developed in cooperation with local NRCS staff. The plan must protect the soil, water, or related natural resources in a way that meets the purpose of the program. The plan becomes part of an EQIP contract. The contract specifies the cost-sharing or incentive payments the producer will receive in return for applying the needed conservation practices. A key advantage to the conservation plan is that it is designed for the individual farm by local people whose producers know and trust.

Producers have various reasons to be reluctant to apply certain conservation practices, even when there may be financial benefits in the near or long term from adopting the practices. Typically, producers do not feel comfortable when it comes to contracts with the government. There is a hidden fear the contract will be transformed into additional rules or regulations on their farm. Program participation in EQIP is voluntary. EQIP is another tool for producers to use on their farm to protect natural resources. By participating in EQIP, producers will be able to show the neighbors positive measures being adopted on the farm to protect the environment for future generations. Michigan Farm Bureau supports the efforts of EQIP. This program will help farmers protect the most important natural resources - soil and water.
The rest of the story — other farm bill conservation programs

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): A Tool for Conservation Planning

There are other farm bill conservation programs out there that may assist producers with conservation efforts. The following is a summary of the other farm bill conservation programs with reference to what is happening with these in Michigan.

Conservation Reserve Program
The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) reduces soil erosion, protects the nation’s ability to produce food and fiber, reduces sedimentation in streams and lakes, improves water quality, establishes wildlife habitat, and enhances forest and wetland resources. It encourages farmers to convert highly erodible cropland or other environmentally sensitive acreage to vegetative cover, such as native grasses, wildlife plantings, trees, filterstrips, or riparian buffers. Participants receive an annual rental payment for the term of the multi-year contract. Cost-sharing is provided to establish the vegetative cover practices.

In Michigan —
There is a continuous sign-up available for riparian area protection with cost-share available for eligible practices. Sign-up period is the previous general sign-up period ending March 31, 1997, enrolled 42,039 acres into CRP.

Emergency Conservation Program
The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) provides financial assistance to farmers and ranchers for the restoration of farmland on which no disaster assistance is available for removing debris and sediment from streams and lakes. The program is designed to benefit the environment while meeting future demands for wood products. Eligible participants are tree planting, timber stand improvement, site preparation for natural reforestation, and other related activities. ECP is available in counties designated by a Forest Service survey of eligible private timber acreage.

In Michigan —
During fiscal year 1997, $54,000 has been allocated for landowners to establish or improve forested areas on their land.

Small Watershed Program (PL-566)
The Small Watershed Program works through local government sponsors and helps participants solve land and water use problems on a watershed basis. Projects include watershed protection, flood prevention, erosion and sediment control, water supply, water quality, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, wetlands creation and restoration, and public recreation in watersheds of 256,000 acres or fewer. Both technical and financial assistance are available.

In Michigan —
In 1997, 45 contracts for WRP were entered into by landowners for a total of $3.5 million to establish, restore, or improve 4,000 acres of wetlands. Sign-up is continuous for WRP.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program
The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program provides financial incentives to develop habitat for fish and wildlife on private lands. Participants agree to implement a wildlife habitat development plan and USDA agrees to provide cost-share assistance for the implementation of wildlife habitat development practices. USDA and program participants enter into a cost-share agreement for wildlife habitat development. This agreement generally lasts a minimum of five years from the date that the contract is signed.

In Michigan —
The final rules for the WHIP program are expected to be posted mid-July in the Federal Register. Shortly thereafter a 30-day sign-up period will begin.

Check out The Michigan Natural Resources Conservation Service Home Page at mi.nrcs.usda.gov.