MICHIGAN FARM NEWS **MICHIGAN'S ONLY STATEWIDE FARM NEWSPAPER MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU**



MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU

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Financial woes force Ada Beef to close its doors

iting an inability to pay producers in a timely manner, Ada Beef announced Friday, Aug. 22 would be the last day the large, West Michigan slaughterhouse would process market beef at least until early October, after the plant goes through a retooling process and opens under new management

According to Orie Vanderboon, one of the company's founders, the 50-year-old company had been struggling for some time to make ends meet, and its attempts to add profitability in other ventures did not live up to expectations, forcing the company to lay off its approximately 130-member workforce. Those workers have been told they can reapply for their jobs under the new management, but the hiring process and wage levels were unclear until the restructuring is complete.

"Ada Beef is temporarily closed and in the process of restructuring," Vanderboon explains. "They will open soon with a new partner-negotiated on the behalf of Ada Beef. All producers will be paid for livestock and we intend to open it back up around October 1.

"You've got to pay for all the livestock in 48 hours," Vanderboon cited as the final blow for his company. He adds that he alerted officials six weeks ago that Ada Beef couldn't meet that standard anymore and voluntarily began to cycle down on the number of animals processed from 350 per day to less than 200 before eventually closing. "They looked at our financial statement for the last quarter and they didn't close us down, but if we wouldn't have done it, they would have.'

"Their losses were severe," explains Tom Reed, president and CEO of Michigan Livestock Exchange (MLE). "Small plants of that size are not competitive in this system anymore and MLE basically has been their bank for the last couple of years, and they were not pulling themselves out of it at a time when they should.'

Many of the decisions about the direction Ada Beef will take when it opens again will depend on a new, larger partner brought in on the processor's behalf. Wisconsin-based Packerland Packing has been bandied about as a potential partner, but sources have vet to confirm their involvement.

"The company that is planning on coming in has two slaughterhouses, just like Ada, that are up and running," explains Reed. "They're running as efficient satellites of a larger unit and that kind of a model works. But independent, private-owned, small companies like that are just like anything else - it's not real management problems, it's efficiency problems.

"For the last several months their largest kill was the black Angus model that we were building,"

Michigan's 1997 cherry crop "phenomenal"



Once harvest is complete, Michigan's tart cherry production will reach more than 180 million pounds, equating to more than 75 percent of the nation's total tart cherry production. Under the recently implemented Federal Marketing Order, handlers are expected to more effectively manage the marketing of the cherry crop, with prices already established.

Conrail acquisition to open new markets for Michigan grain

arly this summer, railroad giants CSX and Norfolk Southern agreed on a plan to integrate the rail lines formerly utilized by Conrail in Michigan, thus opening up larger markets in the nation's south and east and increasing the amount of competition for grain-handling railcars in the state.

"Agricultural customers will reap tremendous benefits from single-line rail service," explained Tom Owens, assistant vice president for agriculture marketing for CSX Transportation (CSXT). "By eliminating delays at major interchanges and creating new, direct routes, farmers will expand their market reach and have the ability to grow their businesses."

At a cost of \$10 billion, CSXT and Norfolk Southern both stand to gain because of the improved access to markets throughout the east and southern coast of the U.S.

"The largest change will be that Conrail lines that go east to west across the lower portion of Michigan are now going to be in the hands of the Norfolk Southern," adds Owen. "There are no Conrail lines that will be coming to CSXT postacquisition. So much of the excitement's going to

service the southeastern U.S. livestock market," explains Bob Boehm, manager of MFB's field crops division. "With a large majority of Michigan's corn and soybean crop exported out of the state, transportation is a major cost factor and expanded competition and improved rail service are very positive developments for Michigan producers and should lead to improved basis for Michigan-grown commodities.

"I think it's going to create competition," adds Michigan Agri-Business Association President Jim Byrum. "I think that's a win. Norfolk Southern is the one that'll be real interesting, because CSX handles probably 80 to 85 percent or more of outbound corn from Michigan currently.

"We will pick up five new elevators, including facilities at Albion, Battle Creek, Chelsea, Mason and White Pigeon," Martin adds. "We needed to expand our points of origin because of our rapidly expanding poultry market, and getting into Michigan has been tough. We didn't have the lines to get into those elevators, and with the expansion, now it spreads our risk be-

COVER STORY "Phenomenal" 1997 cherry crop

s harvest finishes up in Michigan's northwest, tart cherry growers are ecstatic about the level of quality of their crop compared to past years, which were fraught with oversupply and quality concerns. For the first time in many years they are confident the pricing of the crop will remain strong through harvest completion thanks to the work handlers operating under a new federal marketing order (FMO).

"There's no question about it," explains Northwest County Farm Bureau member Don Gregory, "This is the best quality crop we've seen in quite a few years.

"The quality of this tart cherry crop is phenomenal," adds Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association Manager Randy Harmson. "It has been many years since we have seen such a uniformly excellent crop."

Through mid-August, the northwest region of the state has accounted for over 104 million of the estimated 180 million pounds of tart cherries expected to be picked. Michigan's west central region had approximately 60 million pounds and the southwest rounded out the remaining portion of the crop.



be over on the Norfolk Southern end."

"Michigan should become a much bigger player for shipping grain and open up previously untapped markets," adds Ed Martin, who handles agricultural operations for Norfolk Southern. "It's a plus for Norfolk Southern because we're expanding our poultry market and we are often asked where we are going to get the grain, and Conrail just didn't have the market."

"Our state is considered on the fringe of the corn soybean belt, but is ideally suited to

yond Indiana where we have the bulk of our lines.

"As far as our relationship to Norfolk Southern, the sourcing (of grain) competition would increase," states Owens. "But recognize we've been competing in Michigan against Conrail all these years anyway, so it's just a different face, but it's the same game. The lower part of Michigan that parallels our Grand Rapids-to-Lansing line might see Norfolk Southern bidding more

Continued on page 4

"There are always areas where the crop is less abundant," Harmson adds. "Southern Michigan had troublesome areas this year due to frost and poor pollination."

With such an excellent crop this year, it's a good transition year for the newly created Tart Cherry Federal Marketing Order, which passed by a vote of the cherry growers and processors last fall.

According to Harmson, the new order is financed by cherry handlers and authorizes volume, Continued on page 7

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Sell products and services in the Michigan Farm News classifieds—Page 14





From the President

Ol' McDonald had a backache

he farm is one of the most heavily regulated workplaces in the United States. Farmers must comply with a long list of federal and state statutes affecting virtually every farm workplace activity. If farmers employ migrant and seasonal workers — as many do — the list grows longer. The federal laws and regulations that affect the farm workplace include the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the National Labor Relations Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Fair Housing Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and a host of others. If the Department of Labor has its way, you can add one more — Ergonomics Protection Standards.

In 1995 the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) proposed sweeping new rules and regulations affecting workplace injuries. These new regulations are tentatively entitled the "Ergonomics Protection Standard." The Ergonomics Protection Standard (EPS) is so broad in its scope that it potentially regulates every farm workplace activity, not to mention many other businesses.

What is ergonomics and what is OSHA trying to do? Simply put, ergonomics is the study of equipment and design in order to reduce operator fatigue and discomfort. An ergonomic injury or hazard is any activity that creates fatigue and discomfort such as lifting, bending, stretching or repetitive motions such as typing at a keyboard. Using the same muscles over and over again is thought to create ergonomic injuries, like Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. The proposed ergonomic standards attempt to reduce these workplace ergonomic hazards by regulating any activity that creates a "workrelated musculoskeletal disorder."

Repetitive motion injuries sometimes occur, but a scientific consensus on how best to correct ergonomic injuries is lacking. Market forces already provide incentives for employers to take actions to prevent ergonomic injuries. For example, when injuries occur on the job, productivity falls, absenteeism rises, and worker's compensation and health insurance claims rise. These results all provide ample incentive for employers to address these injuries voluntarily.

Many companies have already taken action to prevent ergonomic injuries. In fact, there is a growing market for ergonomically designed tools, desks, chairs, computer keyboards and other equipment. Tractor and farm equipment makers are also designing operator-friendly cabs and seats while placing controls in positions that prevent ergonomic injuries.

The OSHA proposal throws a blanket over all that and says the only answer to this problem lies within Washington, D.C. Congressional action needs to be taken to block this new set of command-and-control, one-size-fits-all regulation from taking effect.

Sincerely, ack Laurie

Jack Laurie, President Michigan Farm Bureau

ORGANIZATIONAL BRIEFS

Miracle of Life exhibits prove to be a huge success at Michigan's state fairs



Over 100 county Farm Bureau members from Hiawathaland, Menominee, Copper Country,

USDA to use DEIP to improve markets

The Agriculture Department recently announced its intention to aggressively utilize the Dairy Export Incentive Program, (DEIP). The program will be used to target overseas markets, with the best potential for U.S. dairy products, so that producers have equal access to world markets.

In the first month of the current DEIP year (July 1997-June 1998), USDA awarded bonuses for the sale of over 18,000 metric tons of milk powder, butterfat and cheese. The amount has surpassed the total for the first six months of the previous year.

USDA anticipates exporting the full quantity of 137,446 metric tons of U.S. dairy products under DEIP this year as permitted by GATT. DEIP sales have already reached 15 percent of our GATT limits. USDA projects DEIP export volume for milk powder to reach our GATT limits by spring 1998 and butterfat and cheese sales by the end of the program year.

Glickman sees co-ops as necessity for small farms

griculture Secretary Dan Glickman said recently more should be done to help small family farms establish cooperatives that will help farmers become and remain more competitive, apparently countering President Clinton's striking of a provision in the balanced budget law that would have offered special tax consideration to assets sold to cooperatives.

"I am convinced that cooperatives will be critical to the economic security of family-sized farmers and an important way to provide them economic opportunities," Glickman said. Representatives of farmer-owned cooperatives called Clinton's veto of the provision disappointing, "unfair and unjustified."

Clinton defended his move, saying the stricken provision was poorly written and "would have allowed a very limited number of agribusinesses to avoid paying capital gains taxes, possibly forever," on assets sold to cooperatives, which "could have benefited not only traditional farm co-ops, but giant corporations, which do not need and should not trigger the benefits."

Clinton vowed to work with Congress to rewrite the provision to benefit cooperatives.

DuPont buying 20 percent of Pioneer Hi-Bred

s part of an agreement that DuPont and Pioneer Hi-Bred International will form a research alliance and a separate joint venture company, DuPont will spend about \$1.7 billion to own about 20 percent of Pioneer's stock and have two seats on Pioneer's 15-member board of directors. Pioneer intends to use the proceeds to buy back its own stock, according to Reuters news service.

A company statement says farmers will benefit from this alliance by being able to grow new, higher-value crops for specific uses. Also, livestock producers will use grain from the crops to improve efficiency and product quality. And consumers will benefit from healthier, more nutritious food and food ingredients. Consumers also will benefit from the long-term prospects of using more products made from renewable resources.

The alliance will create one of the world's largest private agricultural research and development collaborations. The two companies collectively will invest more than \$400 million in agricultural research next year. A portion of those budgets will support the joint venture directly.

The equally owned joint venture company, Optimum Quality Grains, will bring the improved products to customers. The joint venture includes DuPont Agricultural Products' quality grains business and Pioneer's nutrition industry markets business; both companies are based in Des Moines, Iowa.

William G. Bickert receives Henry Giese Structures and Environment Award

t its Annual International Meeting held in Minneapolis, ASAE presented its 1997 Henry Giese Structures and Environment Award to William G. Bickert, a professor in the agricultural engineering department of Michigan State University, for outstanding innovations and contributions in the functional and managerial approach to the structural design of dairy housing.

ASAE, the society for engineering in agriculture, food and biological systems, presents the award annually to honor an individual who has demonstrated outstanding and meritorious achievement in agricultural structures and environment. Established in 1988 by the family of Henry Giese, the award commemorates Giese's lifelong accomplishments in farm building design, research and teaching.

Bickert's principal accomplishments include teaching and leading research projects concerning automated milking systems. These research developments include an automatic milking machine detacher and other parlor mechanization, the concept of the polygon parlor, extensive computer simulation of parlor operation, and numerous time and motion studies in milking parlor installations. Through his Extension and research work, Bickert has developed improved livestock facilities and introduced concepts and designs related to transition housing for dairy calves, full wall ventilation for barns and improved freestalls and developed systems for managing manure and equipment for separating sand from sand-laden manure.

A nationally know authority on dairy housing, Bickert's services are requested by a wide range of audiences in the United States and abroad. He has authored or co-authored two books, two chapters, 24 peer-reviewed articles, 29 bulletins and 118 articles, papers and conference proceedings.

\$4.8 million paid to MMPA members

ichigan Milk Producers Association (MMPA) made cash payment to its members this week of nearly \$4.8 million in equity earnings. These cash payments are in addition to the \$1.9 million in equity paid to members earlier this year. Combined, MMPA has paid \$6.7 million in addition to the monthly milk checks to its dairy farmer members in the first seven months of 1997. "Our well-managed plants and efficient marketing program allow us to continue to revolve back several million dollars each year while still maintaining the best competitive pay price in the market," says Walt Wosje, MMPA general manager. MMPA members received substantially more in pay price and equity payments in 1996 than other milk cooperatives in the state. The difference was about \$2,500 for every million pounds of milk shipped. "As the major milk supplier to the Michigan fluid market, we work to maintain the over-order premiums, returning as much each month to our member-owners as possible. These are difficult times for dairy farmers as the milk price continues to make erratic swings. The farm milk price has decreased 20 percent from its level of last fall while most input costs for dairymen have not declined. The payment of MMPA equity is intended to provide some needed cash during this stressful period," stated Wosje.

The return of these equity funds illustrates the consistent earnings of a cooperative that has the financial ability to revolve member equity on an annual basis. These are important considerations when assessing the value of a cooperative like MMPA in today's market environment



Mac-Luce-Schoolcraft and Iron Range volunteered at the second annual Miracle of Life exhibit at the recent Upper Peninsula State Fair held Aug. 12-17. Thousands of fairgoers witnessed the birth of dairy calves, lambs, piglets and hatching chicks in an effort to educate the public about animal agriculture and the health aspects of the birthing process. The Michigan State Fair will also host the fifth annual version of the Miracle of Life exhibit with volunteers from all over Michigan available to answer questions and explain the steps they take on their own operations to care for their livestock.

"The birth of animals is a common part of most farm operations, but for non-farmers, it can be a unique and awe-inspiring event to witness," MFB President Jack Laurie states.

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Editorial: Dennis Rudat, Editor and Business Manager; Thomas Nugent, Associate Editor. Design and Production: Dan Stiles. Contributor: Sue Stuever Battel. Advertising Sales Representative: Joshua Merchant.

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"Our financial goals are three-fold. First, we want to maintain as high a pay price each month as possible. Second, we work to pay back the equity investments to our members and third we need to maintain a strong bottom line to continue efficient operations," Wosje explains.

In 1996 these goals were met. MMPA achieved the highest dollar payment on average; over \$7 million was paid to dairy farmers in additional equity cash payments and net savings of \$6.3 million was realized at the end of the fiscal year.

MMPA Manager Wosje stated, "One of the areas that is watched very closely is the overall cost of operations. The total general and administrative expense for MMPA in 1996 was less than what it was nine years ago." MMPA has operated without an equity capital retain, relying on the Association's plant operations, marketing fluid milk and manufactured products to provide operating capital for the cooperative.

Michigan Milk Producers Association is owned and controlled by over 3,200 dairy farmer members in Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan.



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

NATIONAL

Senate and House votes on ag appropriations and tax package

- 1. Senate Ag funding bill July 23, 1997, the Senate voted, 53-47, to table (kill) the Durbin (D-Ill.) amendment that would eliminate funding for tobacco crop insurance.
- MFB supported a "yea" (Y) vote.

Capitol

Corner

- 2. The Senate voted 59-40, to table (kill) the Bryan (D-Nev.) amendment that would reduce funding for subsidized overseas market promotion programs from \$90 million to \$70 million. MFB supported a "yea" (Y) vote.
- 3. House Ag funding bill July 24, 1997, the House voted, 209-216, to reject an amendment to prohibit the use of funds to pay salaries of personnel who provide tobacco crop insurance or non-insured crop disaster assistance for tobacco. MFB favored a "nay" (N) vote.
- 4. The House rejected, 175-253, an amendment to prohibit the use of funds to pay salaries of Agriculture Department personnel who issue non-recourse loans to sugar beet or sugarcane processors. MFB favored a "nay" (N) vote.
- 5. The House rejected 185-242, an amendment to
- prohibit the use of funds to pay salaries and ex-

penses of Agriculture Department personnel who maintain a quota price for peanuts in excess of \$550 per ton, effectively establishing the maximum market for price for peanuts at that level. MFB supported a "nay" (N) vote.

- 6. The House rejected, 150-277, an amendment to prohibit the use of funds to pay salaries and expenses of Agriculture Department personnel who administer the market access program. This would have limited funding for the program that provides grants to businesses and associations to promote exports of agricultural products. MFB supported a "nay" (N) vote.
- 7. Senate, House Tax package July 31, 1997, the Senate voted 92-8, and the House voted, 389-43, to pass H.R. 2014, the tax package portion of the 1998 fiscal budget reconciliation conference report. The package provides a net tax cut of \$95.3 billion over five years. It lowers the top capital gains tax rate from 28 percent to 20 percent and raises the federal estate tax exemption gradually from \$600,000 to \$1 million. MFB supported a "yea" (Y) vote. Ø

| Michigan | Vote | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
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| Levin (D) | | n | Y | | | | | Y |
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| 2 Hoekstra (R) | | | | y | y | у | у | Y |
| 3 Ehlers (R) | | | | у | N | y | y | Y |
| 4 Camp (R) | | | | N | N | N | N | Y |
| 5 Barcia (D) | | | | N | N | N | N | Y |
| 6 Upton (R) | | | | y | y | y | N | Y |
| 7 Smith (R) | | | | N | N | N | N | Y |
| 8 Stabenow (D) | | | | у | N | N | N | Y |
| 9 Kildee (D) | | Contraction of the second | and the second | y | N | N | N | Y |
| 10 Bonior (D) | | | | N | N | N | N | Y |
| 11 Knollenberg (R) | | | | N | N | y | y | Y |
| 12 Levin (D) | | | | y | N | y | N | Y |
| 13 Rivers (D) | | | | y | N | y | y | Y |
| 14 Conyers (D) | | | | У | y | y | y . | n |
| 15 Kilpatrick (D) | | | | N | N | N | N | n |
| 16 Dingell (D) | | | | ? | N | N | N | Y |

STATE

Passengers in back of pickup trucks

Representative Deb Cherry (D-Burton) intro-duced H.B. 4255 dealing with passengers in the back of pickups early in August.

The bill was substituted and reported out of the House Transportation Committee on Monday, August 11. However, it did not include the Farm Bureau-requested amendment to allow a farmer the use of trucks for the transport of employees in the course of farming operations. The amendment failed on a five-to-six vote.

Farm Bureau will continue working with legislators to attempt the amendment on the floor of the

STATE

Transportation funding (correction)

The Aug. 15, 1997 issue of the Michigan Farm This amendment was not adopted by the Legisla-

H.B. 4255

Policy change could help both species, landowners

proposed policy changes to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) that involve farmers could benefit both species and landowners, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF). In comments to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the farm group said the government's proposed "safe harbor" and "no surprises" policies would create the type of "win-win" scenario for species and landowners that Farm Bureau has long advocated.

"Farm Bureau believes that endangered species protection can be more effectively achieved by removing disincentives and recognizing the efforts of private landowners and public land users who provide food and shelter for listed species, rather than by imposing land use restrictions and penalties," said Richard Newpher, executive director of AFBF's Washington, D.C., office. "Safe harbor agreements can help remove this disincentive.

Under the safe harbor plan, the landowner would be responsible only for the protection of a predetermined baseline number of species or size of habitat. The landowner would not be restricted or penalized under the ESA for any additional numbers of the species that might take up residence on the property. Any increase in species number or habitat resulting from the safe harbor agreement is an asset to the species, and the landowner retains some flexibility to use the land in the most productive manner, Newpher said.

Farm Bureau praised the government's plan to implement the safe harbor policy through landowner agreements instead of exclusively through habitat conservation plans (HCPs). Landowner agreements provide more flexibility and are less costly than HCPs, Newpher said. It has long been

acknowledged that HCPs have not generally met the needs of private landowners, he added.

The "no surprises" policy provides regulatory certainty for landowners by protecting them from additional regulation under the ESA when they enter into an HCP, Newpher said.

"People who agree to take certain actions to protect listed species need to know that their commitments will be honored and that no new obligations will be placed on them," he said. "This is especially true for farmers and ranchers, who may require a long lead time before committing to certain actions."

Farm Bureau also expressed general support for the government's proposed candidate conservation agreements, which would allow farmers to enter into agreements that protect species threatened with extinction. The organization voiced concern, however, that the government may not be able to deliver on its proposed assurances to landowners.

"If landowners are going to voluntarily sacrifice some use or activity on their land, it is only natural that they would expect some assurances in return," Newpher said. "The assurances set forth in the proposal are tenuous at best."

Farm Bureau believes permanent reforms are needed to make the Endangered Species Act work effectively and will continue to press for those legislative changes, Newpher said. But until that happens, he said, the organization welcomes the government's attempt to allow some flexibility in enforcing the law.

"This is a positive move toward changing the thrust of the Endangered Species Act from a negative enforcement mechanism into a positive and proactive law that benefits both species and landowners," Newpher said.

Financial woes force Ada Beef to close its doors

Continued from page 1

Reed adds. "They were sending them to specialty stores already, and this will just be focusing on that subject even more. They may still kill some cows there, because there's a local trade that really needs that plant. I haven't made that judgment and, of course, the new partner will make that judgment."

We were in the middle of an Angus program," Vanderboon adds. "That's really where you've got to be. If we were going to go head to head, on efficiency we'd lose out, because of our plant. We do a lot of stuff with muscle that they do with conveyors, and they're in a little lower labor rate area."

"The plant needed to be renovated, and securing a long-term agreement with a buyer for their products with a bigger company will give them the ability to compete," adds MFB Livestock Department Manager Kevin Kirk. "It's the whole transition process to economies of scale we are dealing with."

From my perspective," Reed adds, "this is really a good-news issue for the Michigan farmers, not a bad-news issue, because we absolutely need that plant in Michigan, and the chances of having it operate long-term without a bigger partner was slim to none, and now we have an opportunity for that plant to thrive."



Serving Michigan farm families is our only business

ince 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:

| Station | City | Frequency | Morning Report | Noon Report |
|---------|---------------|-----------|----------------|----------------|
| WABJ | Adrian | 1490 | 5:45 am | 11:05-12:00 pm |
| WATZ | Alpena | 1450 | 5:30 am | 11:30 am |
| WTKA | Ann Arbor | 1050 | 6:05 am | 12:00-1:00 pm |
| WLEW | Bad Axe | 1340 | 6:30 am | 12:50 pm |
| WKJF | Cadillac | 1370 | 5:45 am | 11:10 am |
| WKYO | Caro | 1360 | 6:15 am | 12:10-1:00 pm |
| WTVB | Coldwater | 1590 | 5:45 am | 12:00-1:00 pm |
| WDOW | Dowagiac | 1440 | 6:05 am | 12:15 pm |
| WGHN AM | Grand Haven | 1370 | 5:45 am | 12:15 pm |
| WGHN FM | Grand Haven | 92.1 | 5:45 am | 12:15 pm |
| WPLB | Greenville | 1380 | 6:15 am | 11:50 am |
| WBCH | Hastings | 1220 | 6:15 am | 12:30 pm |
| WCSR | Hillsdale | 1340 | 6:45 am | 12:45 pm |
| WHTC | Holland | 1450 | THE PART OF | 12:15 pm |
| WION | Ionia | 1430 | 6:45 am | 12:30-1:00 pm |
| WKZO | Kalamazoo | 590 | 5:00-6:00 am | 12:00-1:00 pm |
| WPLB FM | Lakeview | 106.3 | 6:15 am | 12:15 pm |
| WOAP | Owosso | 1080 | 7:15 am | 12:40 pm |
| WHAK | Rogers City | 960 | | 12:15 pm |
| WMLM | St. Louis | 1520 | 6:05 am | 12:20 pm |
| WSGW | Saginaw | 790 | 5:55 am | 11:30-12:30 pm |
| WMIC | Sandusky | 660 | 6:15 am | 12:45 pm |
| WKJC FM | Tawas City | 104.7 | LAN I SHARE I | 12:40 pm |
| WLKM | Three Rivers | 1510 | 5:45 am | 12:15 pm |
| WTCM | Traverse City | 580 | 5:45 am | 11:10 am |

News incorrectly reported that county road commissions can no longer require a funding match from townships for state highway dollars. ture and, therefore, was not part of the final package.

House when the bill is considered after they return

Apparently there are no statistics available

indicating any accidents, injuries or fatals related to

cent accidents had any connection with agriculture.

MFB position: Supports an amendment to

Action needed: Contact members of the

Michigan House of Representatives and urge their

MFB contact: Ron Nelson, ext. 2043 J

support for the Farm Bureau amendment.

farm employment or employees. None of the re-

from summer recess in September.

MFB contact: Tim Goodrich, ext. 2048 Ø

Michigan farm numbers decrease

The estimated number of farms in Michigan as of June 1 was 52,000, down by 1,000 from 1996, according to the Federal/State Agricultural Statistics Service. The medium farm category was estimated to be 16,000, down 6 percent or 1,000 farms. The other two categories of farms remained the same at 28,000 and 8,000 for small and large farms, respectively. The land in farms was estimated to be 10.5 million acres, down from last year by 1 percent or 100,000 acres. The medium farm category fell to 2.9 million acres or 6 percent, while the large farm category increased 2 percent to 6.2 million acres. The small category remained unchanged from the previous year at 1.4 million acres. The average size farm in Michigan was 202 acres per farm. By categories, the average farm sizes are 50 acres for the small (unchanged from last year), 181 for the medium (down 1 percent), and 775

for the large farms (up 2 percent).

Nationally, the number of farms was estimated 2.06 million farms, a less than 1 percent decrease from 1996. Also decreasing by less than 1 percent was the total land in farms at 968 million acres. The average farm size was unchanged from 1996 to 470 acres.

Estimates for the number of farms and land in farms refer to June 1. A farm is defined as "any establishment from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold or would normally be sold during the year." The farm categories are defined by economic sale classes as: small, \$1,000-\$9,999; medium, \$10,000-\$99,999; and large, \$100,000 and up. Land in farms includes: crop and livestock acreage, wasteland, woodland, pasture, land in summer fallow, idle cropland, land enrolled in the conservation reserve program, and other set-aside or commodity acreage programs.

Conrail acquisition to open new markets for Michigan grain

Continued from page 1

aggressively for that grain, given the larger demand base that Norfolk Southern brings to the equation. There, I think, is the key to the benefit to the Michigan shipper."

Owens adds that efficiency can now be gained because the competition is coming from only one other railroad, instead of both Conrail and Norfolk Southern. "Grain typically did not want to move between those lines," he added. "By having only two lines in the east, by definition, you have improved the efficiency, the reach, significantly."

"Both Norfolk Southern and CSXT have very well-developed feed and processing industries," Owens explains. "That was not so on Conrail. So we're very upbeat that the demand that a Michigan shipper, the reach that a Michigan shipper now has via a single-line haul is significantly increased. Many of my customers focus on the concept of liquidity, how many different markets can I get to, to try and sell 100,000 bushels of grain. We now give them access to an export market, a very vibrant feed industry, and a strong forward-position processing industry."

According to Owen, the poultry and hog industry in the southeast currently represents 100,000 carloads of grain annually, with the processing industry approximately half of that. Railcar shortages

"Car supply is always a problem," states Byrum. "Especially for facilities that are not located on what we would call a Class One rail operator. There's very few major grain merchandisers that are located on either CSX or on Conrail currently, so it's going to be interesting to see if we have a little competition on providing cars."

According to Byrum, short-line rails that hook up to the major connections sought by CSXT and Norfolk Southern will continue to serve the bulk of Michigan's rural areas, and maintaining a consistent supply during harvest complicates delivery issues of the crop.

"We quickly acknowledge we do not have all of the cars to meet the combined demand on top of the existing CSXT demand today," Owens remarks about the Conrail demand coupled with the existing CSXT demand. "In quarter four

when harvest first spikes, historically we've never had enough cars to meet that spike. So we're not saying anything that's new; it's just a matter of the degree of which we're unable to meet that demand."

"I work very closely with the shortlines, both on the operational and commercial end," he adds. "On our part, we are encouraging customers to be more efficient by actually writing contracts that pay them for turning a grain train around inside of 24 hours. We'll leave power with the units, and it's a natural incentive for the successful loading of that train. So in essence, that manufacturer's capacity right there is making more total cars available on the network."

According to Owen, CSXT also provides a car guarantee program to short-line customers. "We've had a 99.7 percent success ratio in placing cars at that time," Owens explains.

CSXT and Norfolk Southern's operating plan will not result in any rail line abandonments in Michigan.



Elevators throughout Michigan will depend now on their short line rail network and only two major interstate carriers, Norfolk Southern and CSX Transportation, because their aquisition of Conrail.

New test detects harmful E. coli bacteria

griculture Secretary Dan Glickman has announced the development of a new rapid test for the potentially deadly food-borne pathogen *E. coli* 0157:H7 and other disease-causing strains of the bacterium in meat and other food products.

The new test detects the *E. coli* of greatest concern — the pathogenic 0157 serotype that can be fatal. The test has the potential to be more effective than other rapid tests currently on the market.

"This new test may be used by meat processors to detect *E. coli* in food before it gets to the grocery store and the kitchen table," Glickman said. "The test is another way we are trying to improve the safety of the food we feed our families."

USDA's Agricultural Research Service found the test gives a state-of-the-art reading on whether *E. coli* 0157:H7 and related strains are present in food samples. Based on laboratory and preliminary testing of inoculated meat samples, this new test could be an improvement over tests now used in the food industry.

After overnight incubation, this test can detect a single bacterium in a small — one gram — sample of meat. The test is simple to perform and may be more accurate in detecting specific harmful bacteria than existing tests. This new test could help the food industry reduce testing costs and could ultimately benefit consumers by increasing food safety.

In 1992, *E. coli* 0157:H7 caused the deaths of several children in the Pacific Northwest. In this outbreak, the *E. coli* was ultimately traced to undercooked, contaminated hamburger. This highly infectious strain of *E. coli* has also been isolated in fruits and vegetables, fruit juice, sausage, dairy products, and even water. The 0157:H7 strain produces toxins that cause bloody diarrhea and kidney failure.

USDA scientists at Clay Center, Neb., developed the material used in the test that will now be marketed by private industry. This rapid test may potentially be used to test food animals and for diagnosis of *E coli* 0157:H7 and related infections in humans. Availability of simple, rapid tests with improved specificity will facilitate additional testing and further reduction of pathogens in the food supply.

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MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

August 30, 1997

Business 1997 Michigan land values and Strategies

by Steve Hansen, Ralph Hepp and Lynn Harvey, Department of Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University

1997 farmland lease rates

significant portion of Michigan farmland is controlled by leases. Table 1 provides information on the characteristics of the leasing arrangements in Michigan reported by the 1997 MSU land value survey respondents. In the southern lower peninsula 44 percent of crop acres are controlled by leases; while only 17 percent of the crop land in the upper and northern lower peninsula is leased. Of the leased crop land in the southern lower peninsula, 74 percent is in the form of a cash lease and 26 percent is shared

1997 Michigan land

verage farmland values from the 1997

MSU land value survey are reported in

Average

\$1300

\$917

\$1,758

\$1,414

Table 1. In the southern lower penin-

sula the average value of higher quality C-SB-H

farmland was \$1,300 per acre while lower quality

C-SB-H farmland averaged \$917 per acre. In the

values

Land Type

Corn-Soybean-Hay

(above average land)

Corn-Soybean-Hay

(below average land)

Sugar Beet

Irrigated

| farml | and | lease rates | |
|-------|-----|-------------|--|
| | | × · · · · · | |

leased. Not enough responses were received in the upper and northern lower peninsula to report information on share and cash leases.

For the land that is share leased in the southern lower peninsula several output-share arrangements were used. The most common output-share split is 1/ 3 landlord:2/3 tenant. Sixty percent of the share leases use this 1/3:2/3 split. The other common share arrangements are a 1/4:3/4 split and a 1/2:1/2 split. The 1/4:3/4 split comprises 18 percent of the share leases while the 1/2:1/2 split accounts for 16 percent of the share leases. The remaining 6 percent of the share leases use some other output split.

A potentially important determinant of the share split is the amount of inputs supplied by the landlord. Typically in a share lease the landowner will supply the land and the tenant the machinery and labor. The responsibility for the remaining inputs is

| | Southern Lower Peninsula | Upper and Northern Lower Peninsula |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Crop Acres Leased | 44 percent | 17 percent |
| Leased Land Under Cash Lease | 74 | n/a |
| Landlord/Tenant Output Share | The state of the state of the | 1 |
| 1/4 - 3/4 | 18 | n/a |
| 1/3 - 2/3 | 60 | n/a |
| 1/2 - 1/2 | 16 | n/a |

Table 1. AGRICULTURE-USE VALUE PER ACRE

Coefficient of

Variation

0.32

0.35

0.29

0.47

Southern Lower

Peninsula

often negotiated between landlord and tenant and may impact the resulting output share split. In the 1/4:3/4 and 1/3:2/3 share leases, the tenant supplied fertilizer, seed, and pesticide 90 percent and 82 percent of the time, respectively. However, in the 1/2:1/2 share lease the tenant supplied fertilizer, seed, and pesticide only

26 percent of the time. In the 1/2:1/2 share lease the landlord and tenant typically share the costs of fertilizer, seed, and pesticides. Other factors influencing the share arrangement include things like the quality of the farm land. Other things equal, the higher the quality of the farmland, the higher the output share the landowner can demand.

Table 2 reports cash rent information for the southern lower peninsula. There was insufficient information to report cash rents for the upper and northern lower peninsula. High quality (Corn-Soybean-Hay) land rented for an average of \$71 per acre while lower quality (C-SB-H) land rented for \$48 per acre in the southern lower peninsula. Sugar beet land rented for an average of \$110 per acre and irrigated land commanded the highest average cash rent at \$122 per acre.

Table 2 also shows the "value-to-rent" multipliers for each type of land. Value-to-rent ratios were calculated by dividing the average land value reported by each respondent by the corresponding cash rent value reported by the same respondent. Highand low-quality land had average value-to-rent ratios of 19 and 21 respectively in the southern lower peninsula. Sugar beet land had a value-to-rent ratio of 16 and irrigated land had the lowest value-to-rent

| Table 2. AVERAGE CA | SH RENT AND VALUE MULTIPLIERS |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Southern Lower |

| and the second sec | Southern Lower Peninsula | | |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------|--|
| Land Type | Cash Rent | Value/Rent Ratio | |
| Corn-Soybean-Hay (above average land) | \$71 | 19 | |
| Corn-Soybean-Hay (below average land) | 48 | 21 | |
| Sugar Beet | 110 | 16 | |
| Irrigated | 122 | 12 | |

ratio at 12.

Value-to-rent ratios are a direct function of the future cash flows the land is expected to generate. Higher expected future cash flows are "capitalized" into the value of the land today, increasing its value relative to the current year's cash flow. In other words, higher expected future cash flows translate into higher value-to-rent ratios. The relatively high value-to-rent ratios for C-SB-H lands thus suggest four possible situations: 1) the market actually anticipates that the cash flows for C-SB-H production will grow at a faster rate than sugar beet and irrigated land; 2) the C-SB-H land may be switched to alternative production with higher expected cash flows, e.g., sugar beets, in the future; 3) non farm uses of the land in the future may provide higher cash flows than those expected from C-SB-H production; or 4) the market views the future cash flows from C-SB-H production to be less risky than the cash flows from sugar beet and irrigated land and is therefore willing to pay a higher price.

| Table 4. NON-AGRIC | ULTURE-USE VALUE OF | UNDEVELOPED LAND | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Type of Development | Southern Lower Peninsula | Upper and Northern Lower Peninsula | |
| Residential | \$4,568 | \$1,045 | |
| Commercial/Industrial | \$10,897 | \$3,638 | |
| Recreational | \$2,096 | \$750 | |

is \$4,568 per acre in the southern lower peninsula and \$1,045 per acre in the upper and northern lower peninsula. The value of farmland converted to commercial or in-

dustrial development averaged \$10,897 in the southern lower peninsula and \$3,638 in the upper and northern lower peninsula. Farmland converted to recreational uses was valued at an average of \$2,096 and \$750 in the southern lower peninsula and upper and northern lower peninsula, respectively.

Conclusions

Farmland values in Michigan continued to show a strong upward trend based on the results of the 1997 land value survey. In the southern lower peninsula, C-SB-H land values showed gains of 8.1 percent for lower quality land and 8.4 percent for higher quality land. Sugar beet land values rose 5.3 percent while irrigated land values saw a strong gain of 10 percent. Rental rates in the southern lower peninsula averaged \$48 for per acre for lower quality C-SB-H land and \$71 per acre for higher

| upper and northern lower peninsula C-SB-H | duri |
|--|-------|
| farmland averaged \$593 and \$583 per acre for | insu |
| higher and lower quality land, respectively. There | sula |
| appears to be little distinction between high and | lar c |
| low quality land in the upper and northern lower | 7.6 t |
| peninsula. Sugar beet land averaged \$1758 per | 7.6 j |
| acre and irrigated land | aver |

acre an averaged \$1,414 per acre. Nearly all of the sugar beet and irrigate land is located in the southern lower penins

Table 1 also show the coefficient of vari

means the smaller the CV, the more representative the average value is of land prices reported by respondents. The higher quality C-SB-H farmland in the upper and northern lower peninsula and irrigated farmland show the largest CV values at 0.4 and above. Sugar beet land and lower quality C-SB-H land in the upper and northern lower peninsula show the lowest CV

Upper and Northern

Coefficient of

Variation

0.40

0.23

n/a

n/a

Lower Peninsula

Average

\$593

\$583

n/a

n/a

10 r

levels both under 0.30; while C-SB-H land in the southern lower peninsula shows CV levels between 0.3 and 0.35

The change in the value of farmland during the last 12 months is reported in table 2. High-and-low quality C-SB-H land increased in value by an average of 8.4 percent and 8.1 percent, respectively,

ing the last year in the southern lower penula. In the upper and northern lower peninhigher quality C-SB-H land showed a simichange, increases in value by an average of percent. Sugar beet land rose in value by an rage of 5.3 percent during the last 12

| Land Type | and the second se | hern Lower ninsula | Upper and Northern Lower Peninsula | |
|--|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Non Internetion (| Last 12 Months | Expected Next 12 Months | Last 12 Months | Expected Next 12 Months |
| Corn-Soybean-Hay (above average land) | +8.4% | +5.6% | +7.6% | +8.5% |
| Corn-Soybean-Hay (below average land) | +8.1 | +5.3 | n/a | n/a |
| Sugar Beet | +5.3 | +4.5 | n/a | n/a |
| Irrigated | +10.0 | +4.2 | n/a | n/a |

expected to rise by 5.3 percent. Sugar beet and increases of 4.5 percent and 4.2 percent, respectively, during the upcoming year.

Table 3 shows the change in the supply of land on the market during the last 12 months. Higher and lower quality C-SB-H land in the southern lower peninsula experienced small increases in the amount of land on the market of 0.7 percent and 1.2 percent, respectively. Sugar beet land on the market also increased by around 0.7 percent last year. Irrigated land on the market declined by 1.4 percent and higher quality C-SB-H land on the market in the upper and northern lower peninsula declined by 6.4 percent.

Non-agriculture-use value of farmland

In recent years, the pressure of nonagriculture influence on farmland values appears to have increased in some area These factors typicall include pressures to develop farmland for residential, commer-

| | 100 | Land Type | e | |
|------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Year | C-SB-H Below Average | C-SB-H Above Average | Sugar Beet | Irrigated |
| 1991 | 3.0% | 5.0% | 9.0% | A |
| 1992 | 1.6 | 2.5 | 3.0 | 3.4% |
| 1993 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 3.6 |
| 1994 | 4.1 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 5.4 |
| 1995 | 3.3 | 4.3 | 6.2 | 2.8 |
| 1996 | 6.8 | 8.1 | 8.4 | 7.3 |
| 1997 | 8.1 | 8.4 | 5.3 | 10.0 |

er peninsula during the year. Lower quality C-SB-H land in the southern lower peninsula is irrigated land are expected to show average

tion (CV) which is cal culated by dividing the standard deviation by the average value. The CV provides a "stan-

dardized" measure of

variability and can be thought of as the amount of variability in proportion to the average land value. The smaller the CV the closer the responses tend to be the average land value. This Note: n/a indicates fewer than 10 responses were received.

months, while irrigated land showed the strongest gains, increasing by 10 percent.

Table 2 also shows the expected change in farmland values during the next year. Values are expected to show strong gains during the upcoming year but the

| Table 3. CHANGE IN | LAND SUPPLY ON MARK | ET IN LAST 12 MONTHS | increases are generally |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Land Type | Southern Lower Peninsula | Upper and Northern Lower Peninsula | expected to be below those experienced last |
| Corn-Soybean-Hay | Solution and a state of the | | year. High-quality C- |
| (above average land) | +0.7% | -6.4% | SB-H land is expected |
| Corn-Soybean-Hay | TO DEFINITION TO AND THE OWNER | A COMPANY AND A COMPANY | to increase by 5.6 per- |
| (below average land) | +1.2 | n/a | cent in the southern |
| Sugar Beet | +0.7 | n/a | lower peninsula and by |
| Irrigated | -1.4 | n/a | 8.5 percent in the up- |
| The surprise of the | Note: n/a indicates fewer | than 10 responses were received. | per and northern low- |

| cial, or recreational |
|---|
| use. In many areas it is |
| difficult to completely |
| remove the option |
| and the second se |

value of future devel-

opment from the agriculture-use value of farmland. The farmland values reported in table 1 are the respondents' best estimate of the value of farmland in a particular area but the values may also reflect the value of the future development. In an effort to gain a better understanding of the impacts of these non-agriculture development factors on farmland values, we asked for information on the development value of farmland.

Table 4 is a summary of the development value of farmland in the state. These values are, in many cases, significantly above the agriculture-use value of the land and, consequently, tend to exert upward pressure on the value of surrounding farmland. The average value of farmland converted to residential development

quality C-SB-H land. Sugar beet land rented for \$110 per acre while irrigated land commanded the highest rent, averaging \$122 per acre.

Land values in Michigan have experienced strong growth rates over the last four year. Table 5 shows the percentage change in land values for the 1991-1997 period in the southern lower peninsula. Average farmland values have shown increases each year during the period. In general, the last several years have produced relatively strong gains. Low quality C-SB-H land values increased at a simple average rate of 4.0 percent during the period while higher quality C-SB-H land experienced a simple average growth rate of 5.0 percent. Sugar beet and irrigated land values increased at simple average rates of 5.5 percent and 5.4 percent, respectively.



Market Outlook

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



CORN

• n Aug. 12, the USDA released the first objective survey of 1997 U.S. corn production, based on Aug. 1 conditions. The Aug. *Crop Production Report*, as shown in Table 1 below, projects a 9.276-billion bushel-crop. This estimate was below most expectations and the projected average yield of 125.3 bushels per acre is 3-4 bushels below trend. In general, west of the Mississippi was near trend and east of the river we are below trend with the exception of Wisconsin which is having an above average year. Michigan's yield estimate was 110 bushels per acre, which is 7-8 bushels below trend but, a great improvement over last year's 94.

The U.S. corn crop showed some deterioration the first 10 days of Aug. before widespread rains the third week. The next report will be released Sept. 12, based on Sept. 1 conditions. The feeling at this time is there will be little change in the estimate. The rains should help Michigan if we get enough heat units to finish up the crop. On Aug. 10, the percent silking was slightly above the five-year average; however, on Aug. 17, the percent in dough stage, 5 percent, was just above last year's 3 percent, but was just below the five-year average of 8 percent.

While a 9.3-billion-bushel corn crop is fairly big, it was over 400 million bushels lower than the estimate being used in the supply/demand balance sheet. This really tightens up the projected supply

| Seasonal Commodity Price | frends |
|--|--------|
| Corn | |
| Soybeans (explosive) Wheat | |
| Hogs Cattle | |
| Index: ++ = stable prices: † = higher prices: ↓ = prices: TP = topping: BT = bottoming: 7 = unsur | lower |

situation. On the use side, the biggest factor is feed. Beef production is expected to drop in the last half of the 1997-98 marketing year, but the latest *Cattle-On-Feed Report* shows there will be heavy feeding this fall. Hog production is expected to be up about 5 percent this fall and 7-8 percent over the last three quarters. Broiler production is expected to be up 4-6 percent as well. This means a sizable increase in year-to-year feed use as shown below. The sorghum crop is down and there doesn't seem to be widespread heavy wheat feeding this fall.

Industrial use of corn is expected to continue its rebound after the shock of 1995-96 and is expected to be at record levels. As usual, the wild card is exports. World production is down and the world economy is still good; this should call for an increase in exports. However, wheat production is up and is a feed grain in many parts of the world. At this point, new crop export sales are running slow and seem to be scaring the market.

As shown in Table 1, total use is projected to be strong at 9.38 billion bushels, just below the record 1994 use of 9.41 billion. Projected use being larger than projected production means smaller year-to-year ending stocks. This should call for an average price at or above last year's \$2.70. This would mean Michigan cash prices this fall in the \$2.50-2.60 range and December futures in the \$2.75-2.85 range, after adjusting for seasonality. As of this writing, December futures were trading in the \$2.60-2.65 range.

While the above analysis doesn't mean prices will go to that level, it would indicate we may have seen the low and that the odds are a little better prices will go up verus down. Consider holding off on further forward pricing to see if prices climb back to what projected fundamentals would suggest. We will get into the "should we store" question over the next several issues.

WHEAT

he August *Crop Report* increased the U.S. wheat production estimate by 100 million bushels as the "frozen Kansas wheat crop" came in at record levels. After several years of "wondering" if we would ever get new highs for the U.S. wheat yield it finally appears it will happen in 1997, if the spring wheat yields come in as expected. As shown below in Table 2, the U.S. average wheat yield is expected to be 39.9 bushels per acre. Michigan decided to get in on the act as well, establishing a new record at 61 bushels per acre, versus the previous record of 60.

This higher production estimate will keep the pressure on prices. On the use side, food use is expected to climb marginally, but feed use is expected to drop from last year's strong level. To sound like a broken record, exports is the wild card. While they are expected to grow marginally, due to our major competitor having smaller crops, larger crops in most of the importing countries will limit their needs.

At this point, futures market spreads are saying they will pay 4-5 cents per month storage. While this may cover the opportunity cost of on-farm storage, it will not cover commercial storage plus lost interest. If you want to stay in the market, consider a basis contract or a call option versus commercial storage. For those who are and CAN store on-farm, it is a close call. I am slightly bullish, but the rally may come after the soybean and corn harvests have begun and is not a sure thing.

SOYBEANS

he August *Crop Production Report* also showed a huge U.S. soybean crop coming. Huge acreage, as previously reported, along with a projected yield of 39.3 bushels per acre, the second highest on record, adds up to a lot of soybeans. Michigan's projected yield of 40 bushels per acre would equal the previous high set in 1995, and dwarf last year's disastrous 28.5. And when this is multiplied by the record acreage, we will have a new record production level of 75.6 million bushels, compared to the 1995 record of 59.6 million.

The crop conditions since the report have been about like corn. However, the rains in the middle of Aug. may help soys even more, especially the double-crop soybeans. It is unlikely the U.S. estimate will drop in the next report.

While the huge production number tempers prices, it appears strong demand will keep them from falling in the gutter, as long as the crop doesn't grow too much by harvest. The increase in projected livestock units is expected to keep increasing crush. Exports are expected to continue to grow as demand for soybean products grows, and due to the South American crop being about used up; they exported most of their beans early to take advantage of high prices.

Even with the strong demand, ending stocks are expected to grow to adequate or higher levels. At this point, the futures, with November near \$6.10, are about what fundamentals would suggest. Consider waiting for a rally from \$6.10 to add to any forward pricing; some of you may want to get some downside protection. However, don't wait for the rally of all rallies to price soybeans. I'm talking 15-25 cents depending on how many you have already priced and what your crop looks like.

CATTLE

Cattle-on-feed in the traditional seven-states was up 19 percent on Aug. 1 compared to a year earlier. For the U.S. as a whole, over 1,000 head onfeed in feed lots was up 14 percent. This is several percent higher than expected. Placements were up 18 percent and 14 percent in the seven-state and U.S., respectively; the average guess was placement would equal last year. On the plus side, marketings in July were stronger than expected in the seven-state report at up 9 percent versus the 5 percent guessed.

This news will hit the fall markets the hardest as the increase in placements was in the heavier weight breakdowns. The 700 to 799 pound range was up 13 percent and 800+-pound group was up 43 percent. The lighter two classes were up 5 percent and down 7 percent.

The report indicates we are probably current and also indicates we need to keep current. Demand has been good for beef this summer but will run into more competition as we move into the fall. At this point, I don't see any great forward pricing opportunities, but if futures move back toward their highs, consider it.

HOGS

Exports have been a disappointment as Japan hasn't seemed to make up for a lot of Taiwan's shortfall in the U.S. market. Japan's exports are expected to pick up. The problem is, so is U.S. production as we head into the fall. Live weights have increased three pounds relative to last year and numbers are expected to increase.

Watch for rallies to price portions of the next year's production — especially if futures rally back to their summer highs. It is unclear how the market will react to the 6 to 8 percent increase in pork production that is expected in 1998.

Wheat bran's possible role in fighting colon cancer explored

edical researchers already know raw wheat bran helps laboratory animals battle colon cancer. Could processed wheat bran — the kind humans eat — have the same helpful effect?

Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists in Albany, Calif., and colleagues from Kellogg Co., Battle Creek, Mich., have teamed up to find out.

Bran is the thin outer layer of the wheat kernel. Processed bran is used in breakfast cereals, whole-wheat breads and other products.

Kellogg Co., the world's largest maker of breakfast cereals and other grain-based convenience foods, has a cooperative research and development



COMMODITY PRICE TRENDS

Table 1 — Corn

| (Million acres) | 1995-1996 | Estimated 1996-1997 | Projected 1997-1998 |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Acres set-aside/diverted | 6.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Acres planted | 71.2 | 79.5 | 80.2 |
| Acres harvested | 65.0 | 73.1 | 74 |
| Bu./harvested acre | 113.5 | 127.1 | 129.0 |
| Stocks (million bushels) | La North | the set | Elfiz |
| Beginning stocks | 1,558 | 426 | 941 |
| Production | 7,374 | 9,293 | 9,276 |
| Imports | 16 | 12 | 10 |
| Total supply | 8,948 | 9,731 | 10,227 |
| Use: | | | 12 1 19 |
| Feed and residual | 4,696 | 5,300 | 5,550 |
| Food/seed & Ind. uses | 1,598 | 1,690 | 1,780 |
| Total domestic | 6,294 | 6990 | 7,330 |
| Exports | 2,228 | 1,800 | 2,050 |
| Total use | 8,522 | 8,790 | 9,380 |
| Ending stocks | 426 | 941 | 847 |
| Ending stocks, % of use | 5.0 | 10.7 | 9.0 |
| Regular loan rate | \$1.89 | \$1.89 | \$1.89 |
| U.S. season average | 1-15-0 | 1. 200 | - week |
| Farm price, \$/bu. | \$3.24 | \$2.70 | \$2.70 |

| Table | 2- | - Wh | eat |
|-------|----|------|-----|
| | | | |

| (Million acres) 19 | 95-1996 | Estimated 1995-1997 | Projected 1997-1998 |
|----------------------------|---------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Acres set-aside & diverted | 5.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Acres planted | 69.1 | 75.6 | 70.8 |
| Acres harvested | 60.9 | 62.9 | 63.5 |
| Bu/harvested acre | 35.8 | 36.3 | 39.9 |
| Stocks (million bushels) | 100 | - ALTER | 2 |
| Beginning stocks | 507 | 376 | 444 |
| Production | 2,182 | 2,282 | 2,531 |
| Imports | 68 | 92 | 95 |
| Total supply | 2,757 | 2,750 | 3,070 |
| Use: | 1 | PARTY. | |
| Food | 883 | 892 | 900 |
| Seed | 104 | 103 | 100 |
| Feed | 153 | 310 | 275 |
| Total domestic | 1,140 | 1,305 | 1,275 |
| Exports | 1,241 | 1001 | 1,100 |
| Total use | 2,381 | 2,306 | 2,375 |
| Ending stocks | 376 | 444 | 695 |
| Ending stocks, % of use | 15.8 | 19.3 | 29.3 |
| Regular loan rate | \$2.58 | \$2.58 | \$2.58 |
| U.S. season average | - an | to all | Section 1 |
| Farm price, \$/bu. | \$4.55 | \$4.35 | \$3.35 |

| Table 3 — Soybean | Ta | ble | 23 | - | So | yb | ea | 1 |
|-------------------|----|-----|----|---|----|----|----|---|
|-------------------|----|-----|----|---|----|----|----|---|

15

| (Million acres) | 1995-1996 | Estimated 1996-1997 | Projected 1997-1998 |
|--------------------------|-----------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Acres planted | 62.6 | 64.2 | 70.9 |
| Acres harvested | 61.6 | 63.4 | 69.8 |
| Bu./harvested acre | 35.3 | 37.6 | 39.3 |
| Stocks (million bushels) | | alar and | 22/20 |
| Beginning stocks | 335 | 183 | 125 |
| Production | 2,177 | 2,383 | 2,744 |
| Imports | 4 | 10 | 5 |
| Total supply Use: | 2,516 | 2,576 | 2,874 |
| Crushings | 1,370 | 1,425 | 1,485 |
| Exports | 851 | 880 | 945 |
| Seed, feed & residuals | 112 | 146 | 139 |
| Total use | 2.333 | 2,451 | 2,569 |
| Ending stocks | 183 | 125 | 305 |
| Ending stocks, % of use | 7.8 | 5.1 | 11.9 |
| Regular loan rate | \$4.92 | \$4.97 | \$5.26 |
| U.S. season average | - | INW | 100 |
| Farm price, \$/bu. | \$6.72 | \$7.38 | \$6.00 |

agreement, or CRADA, with ARS for the investigation. The study is underway at ARS' Western Regional Research Center in Albany. ARS chemist Wallace H. Yokoyama, with the center's Cereal Product Utilization Research Unit, leads the experiment.

Scientists have known for more than a decade that laboratory animals fed raw wheat bran have fewer cells known as aberrant colonic crypt cells. Aberrant colonic crypt cells are thought to be precancerous. No one knows exactly how the raw bran reduces formation of these cells.

ARS investigators are experimenting with samples of bran processed at their laboratory and at Kellogg Co. They will determine whether lab animals fed the processed wheat bran in place of raw bran have a significantly lower number of aberrant colonic crypt cells. They will also find out if differences in the way wheat bran is processed affect cell turnover — the rate at which the body replaces old colon cells with new. The findings may help them uncover new clues about how wheat bran reduces formation of the aberrant colonic crypt cells.

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

August 30, 1997

Michigan's 1997 cherry crop "phenomenal"

Continued from page 1

grade, size, and maturity regulations, plus mandatory inspections and market research and promotion.

"Tart cherries have always been one of the most erratic crops from an annual production standpoint," explained Ken Nye, MFB's Commodity and Environmental Division director. "The crop can easily swing from as much as 350 million pounds one year to 150 million the next and that is the big reason why the USDA approved the FMO."

"This widely fluctuating crop size resulted in an excess of cherries some years and a severe shortage in others," added Nye. "Building a consistent market became difficult as end users shied away from developing new tart cherry products based on erratic supply. The new marketing order will help balance out the annual supply and this year's excellent quality will also have a long-term positive impact on market growth."

"The main objective we're looking for from the federal marketing order is to help us put some stability back into this industry," adds Gregory, who was appointed chairman of the new Federal Marketing Order board of directors. "By stabilizing the supply we'll also be able to stabilize the price to a point that growers will be able to survive. It's not going to happen overnight. It took us a long time to get into this, and it's going to take a while to get out of it."

"The key thing is that most of us growers are

tired of subsidizing our tart cherry growing enterprises," he added. "Somebody that just grew tart cherries since 1991 would not be surviving today, they've had to subsidize it – whether it's growing other crops or, in many cases, particularly here in northern Michigan, with jobs off the farm. There have been a lot of people that have gone out." **CherrCo Inc. formed to establish price**

"Because the Federal Marketing Order cannot establish pricing, tart cherry growers across the U.S. formed a federated marketing cooperative called CherrCo, Inc., "Harmson explained. "The mission of CherrCo, Inc., is to market tart cherry products for member cooperatives domestically and in the export market."

According to Harmson, CherrCo, Inc., has a membership of 24 grower cooperatives throughout the U.S., making it the largest marketer of tart cherry products in the country, it represents more than 80 percent of the frozen and water-packed canned tart cherry production. It has also announced base pricing for the 1997 pack frozen tart cherry products at 49 cents for 5+1 pack and 51 cents for IQF pack, which are subject to various quality, commitment, volume and carrying-cost

adjustments. "If things continue to go as they are, in terms of the harvest and the pack, we should be able to raise those prices soon," added Harmson. "For the first time in a long time, we will see prices rise instead of the usual downturns that we have experienced in the past because of oversupply."

"We will have an oversupply situation for the next few years until some more orchards come out of the ground," cautioned Gregory, who farms more than 1,300 acres, half of which are in tart cherries. "The first marketing order worked very well when we got to the point where the supply was close to the demand. In some years you had a big crop and in some years you had a smaller crop, so you used the marketing order to pull cherries off the market and store them in the big crop year and put them back in the small crop year."

"One of the things that the Federal Marketing Order has allowed is that we have moved a significant amount of fruit offshore," Gregory added. "If we can move product at prices that are competitive with the European crop prices, then we're able to move a significant amount of fruit into Europe."

"Europe has been a fairly good export market," Harmson added. "Serbia used to be a large supplier of tart cherries, but because of the war, production and marketing has been impaired and they now produce significantly less than they used to."

According to Harmson, Europeans are discovering and beginning to take a liking to the IQF cherry. "It has more flexibility, there's no sugar in it, and it's fresh frozen. Since it's fresh-frozen it appeals to health-conscious Europeans."



The formation of the Tart Cherry Federal Marketing Order will assist processors in managing the supply of cherries.

Harmson also adds that Japan and the United Kingdom are continually expanding markets and the use of Plevalean, a cherry-enriched hamburger, will continue to provide market expansion opportunities for tart cherries.

SARE program announces availability of \$1.3 million for sustainable agriculture projects

he USDA's North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCRSARE) program is requesting applications from

researchers, educators, nonprofit organizations and others for competitive grants addressing environmental, economic and social agricultural improvements, including innovative marketing strategies.

The region has two separate applications available: Special Call for Proposals on Innovative Marketing Strategies, and Annual Call for Preproposals.

Approximately \$1.3 million will be available for funding projects in fiscal year 1998, with \$300,000 of that total earmarked for the special innovative marketing call.

"The NCR SARE program has always supported efforts that increase activity and awareness for marketing issues," said Dave Swaim, NCR SARE Administrative Council chair. "We are now making a targeted regional effort to encourage community connections necessary for sustainable local food systems."

Innovative marketing priority areas are: improving producers, marketing relationships with local and regional consumers and businesses; addressing farmer/rancher barriers to developing and managing these relationships; assisting with the development of community markets and producer-owned cooperatives; involving farmers/ranchers in institutional policy development in marketing; examining consumer preferences of local and regional food; and developing outreach to train business owners and managers on linking to local producers of sustainable agriculture products.

The special marketing call was the culmina-

Land-use planning and farmland preservation tour

ore than 100 county and township officials attended a July 31 landuse planning and farmland preservation tour in Calhoun County.

The Calhoun County MSU Extension staff and county Farm Bureau have sponsored four educational sessions over the past year for county and township officials to discuss issues related to landuse planning. As talk of what to do over the summer began, they decided it was time to show people what farmers, (especially livestock farmers),



Promotion and Education Committee Chair Mike Heisler, Bruce Barton, Wayne Cornell and Calhoun County Farm Bureau President Nancy Dietz tour a 2,475-head finishing unit during the land-use planning tour at Barton Farms.

are doing to be good neighbors, good stewards of the environment, and what they contribute to the rural economy. Calhoun County is home to Barton Farms, Inc., owned and operated by Mike and Bruce Barton, a 40,000-per-year market hog operation that contracts with 12 other farmers for off-site finishing. Their plans to expand hog facilities has put them in close touch with township officials, and they have learned the importance of working with local governments.

Highlights of the tour included opening remarks from Dan Wyant, director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture; Arlen Leholm, MSU extension director; and Scott Everett, associate legislative counsel, from Michigan Farm Bureau. Participants were able to visit Barton's feed mill area, which mixes 100 tons of feed a day; a windbreak area; a research site of hog carcass composting, which will impact future legislation in the

of the agement; and a presentation on the economic impact

of not only their business, but of livestock agriculture in general in southwest Michigan. They then boarded school buses to be on site

while hog manure was being injected (with no odor) and visited a contract finishing facility to highlight how facilities are located in the middle of large land tracts for best neighborhood relations where odors and manure are handled on-site.

The tour showed that a large hog operation can follow best management practices; work with township officials; and satisfy the ever-expanding rural population by an open-door policy of showing and teaching non-farm people about their operation.

The Calhoun County Extension team of Kathy Foerster, Roger Betz, Stan Moore, Brian Hines and Natalie Rector partnered with the county Farm Bureau bles" that collected ideas from producers across the region on obstacles to marketing sustainable products.

"The marketing call is just one special piece of the research and education grant puzzle this year," said Steve Waller, NCR SARE regional coordinator. "We are still calling for our annual preproposals."

Preproposal priority areas for 1998 are: emerging issues, integrating and diversification of farming systems, sustainable livestock systems, networking, and environmentally sound management practices.

"These two separate calls are terrific opportunities for creative teams to significantly contribute to enduring agricultural system sin the north central region," Swaim said.

Applications are available now for both calls. Contact the NCR SARE office at (402) 472-7081, fax (402) 472-0280, or sare001@unlvm. unl.edu. The calls are also available at http:// www.ces.ncsu.edu/ncrsare. Preproposals are due Sept. 12, 1997. Innovative marketing proposals are due Jan. 23, 1998.

Applicants must reside in the north central region: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

The SARE program began with the 1985 farm bill and was first funded by Congress in 1988. Competitive grants go to producers, scientists, educators, and public and private institutions and organizations exploring sustainable agriculture. The north central region, managed by a diverse administrative council and directed by regional coordinators, is one of four regions

state on this practice; a talk on manure nutrient man-

for a very worthwhile event.

tion of a series of NCR SARE-sponsored "roundta-

in the SARE program.

Growers find soybean cyst nematode threat has spread, not declined

The biggest threat to Michigan's soybean growers is the soybean cyst nematode (SCN) because it can reduce yields by 80 percent, depending on the soybean variety planted and growing conditions.

Fred Warner, Michigan State University nematologist, says the SCN first was discovered in Gratiot County in 1987 and has since spread to 17 counties; five more counties are suspect.

"Those 17 counties represent about 70 percent of Michigan's soybean production and growers should give serious consideration to doing everything they can to reduce the effect of the SCN," Warner says. "Growers whose fields do not have the SCN should make every effort to prevent field contamination because once SCN is in the field, it is unlikely it ever will be eradicated and that will mean a corresponding change in yield goals."

The SCN is a microscopic worm-like parasite that burrows into the soybean plant roots and steals nutrients. Soybean plants infected with the SCN tend to be stunted, with yellow leaves and poorly developed root systems.

SCN infestation effects are generally more evident when the plants are under stress from dry weather, low soil fertility and/or soil compaction.

Michigan growers recognized the SCN threat in the early 1990s, but recent growing conditions may have masked SCN damage and grower concern about the parasite seemed to ebb.

However, summer conditions in some areas of the state, such as Saginaw County, are revealing the nematode's damaging effects.

"It's not that the (SCN) population declined, crashed or went away," Warner says. "It's very important to remember that once fields are infested with SCN, they remain infested indefinitely and the grower is going to have to learn to cope to grow soybeans profitably."

Warner says the SCN is spread primarily by tillage and planting equipment and other farm machinery that tracks dirt from field to field. To some extent, migratory birds can contribute to the spread of the parasite when they feed in fields infested with SCN.

Growers first need to find out if they have SCNinfested fields. That's done by removing a pint to a quart of soil from fields in which soybeans will be planted next year.

The sample should be taken in early fall from the plant root zone (down to 10 inches deep), placed in a plastic bag to preserve soil moisture and sent to MSU for analysis. All samples must be accompanied by a nematode sample information form. The form, and MSU Extension bulletin E-2200, Soybean Cyst Nematode, which explains the sampling procedure, are available from the county MSU Extension office.

The Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee is continuing to pay for SCN tests.

The only way growers can cope with SCN is by expanding crop rotations to keep soybeans, dry edible beans and snap beans out of SCN-infested fields. Some of the rotations could run longer than nine years, depending on the severity of the SCN infestation, Warner says.





t the recent Kellogg Biological Station Field Day, four agricultural groups, the Michigan Agricultural Stewardship Association (MASA), Michigan State University Extension (MSUE), the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA), and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) joined together to develop training programs aimed at encouraging Michigan farmers to develop sustainable agricultural practices on their farms.

"This provides an educational opportunity where a farmer-based organization, MASA, has gone into a partnership with MSUE, MDA, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's NRCS," explained George Bird, Michigan State University's coordinator of the professional development program for Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)."This partnership is to develop training opportunities in the practices, systems and philosophy of sustainable agriculture."

During the course of the next 12 months, the four groups will jointly sponsor educational programs on such topics as cover crops, rotational grazing, composting, local value-added opportunities, regenerative nature of soil quality, on-farm research, rotational grazing and management-intensive grazing, according to Bird.

"They're a little different from some that we've done in agriculture over the past 20 years," he added. "But I think they're some things that are important for the future."

"There will be farmers who will be doing

training," explains Bird. "There will be farmers that will be trained and there will be Extension agents that will train and will be trained. It's everybody a teacher, everybody a learner – a true shared leadership philosophy."

According to Bird, there are no other agreements of this type in the country pairing up a farmer-based organization and agencies of

government.

"This is the third year of this agreement in Michigan," Bird explained. "I find a lot of interest in this agreement in every state that I go to, but I haven't yet found another state that's pulled it off."

For more information on the training programs, you can contact your local Extension office or Bird at (517) 353-3890.



Jane Hardisty, NRCS State Conservationist, Arlen Leholm, MSU Extension Director, Russ LaRowe, MASA Executive Director, and Keith Creagh, MDA Assistant Director sign the agreement which allows for the partnership of the four organizations.

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American Farmland Trust accepting nominations for its second annual Steward of the Land Award

\$10,000 award to celebrate excellence in land stewardship

merican Farmland Trust (AFT), a national farmland conservation group, is now welcoming nominations for its second annual Steward of the Land Award. The \$10,000 award recognizes outstanding efforts by an individual farmer or farm family in land stewardship, agricultural conservation policy or the use of environmentally and economically sustainable farming practices.

The award honors the memory of AFT's late founding board member, Peggy McGrath Rockefeller. Throughout her life, Rockefeller dedicated herself to conserving the nation's agricultural resources. AFT's board of directors established the Steward of the Land Award to salute farmers who exhibit the same deep-seeded commitment to farmland conservation and protection as Rockefeller.

The award includes a \$10,000 cash stipend, special memento inscribed with the award recipient's name, and a plaque on permanent display at American Farmland Trust's national office in Washington, D.C. AFT's board of directors will review the nominees and select the winner.

The award will be presented early next year at a special dinner or luncheon of AFT's board of directors. Travel expenses for two family members to the ceremony will be borne by AFT.

Nominations must be received at AFT's national office by 5 p.m. on Dec. 1. For an award brochure and nomination form, individuals should contact Shannon Weller, Award Coordinator, American Farmland Trust, 1920 N St., nw, Suite 400, Washington, D.C., 20036; phone (202) 659-5170, ext. 3034; fax (202) 659-8339.

MDA director appointed to MASDA Board

ichigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) director Dan Wyant has been elected secretary-treasurer of the board of the Midwestern Association of State Departments of Agriculture (MASDA). The election was held at the association's annual meeting July 16, in Columbus, Ohio, and takes effect immediately.

MASDA is one of four regional associations of the National Association of State Departments of Agricul-

ture (NASDA), housed in Washington, D.C. NASDA supports and promotes the American agriculture industr through the development, implementation and commu nication of public policy and programs. MASDA members include Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minne-



sota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

"It is a great privilege to serve with agriculture industry leaders from throughout the Midwest, to help communicate the importance of our state's and region's agriculture industry to the economy of the United States," said Wyant. "I look forward to strengthening these working relationships, to help expand the marketing opportunities for Michigan agriculture products." As a result of Wyant's appointment to the MASDA board, Michigan will also have the honor of hosting the 1999 MASDA annual meeting. For more information, contact Dale Sherwin, MDA Director of Agriculture Policy & Special Projects at (517) 335-3403.

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Grassley reports ethanol progress

S en. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa) says he has commitments from President Clinton, Vice President Gore, House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) and Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) to work to extend the present ethanol tax program when Congress takes up key highway legislation in September.

In a letter to President Clinton, Grassley, a leading ethanol supporter, said he wanted to avoid a repeat of "mistakes made with the reconciliation bill." Grassley referred to last-minute negotiations by White House representatives with congressional negotiators when finishing touches were put on the budget-balancing and tax bill that was signed into law by President Clinton.



Michigan resident teaches Ukrainians farm management

arren Schauer, from Escanaba, Mich., returned recently from a volunteer trip to Ukraine where he taught Ukrainian farmers how to record and forecast crop/livestock enterprises. Schauer worked with the Sumy Oblast Private Farmers Association in North-Eastern Ukraine, about 200 km from the capital city of Kiev.

Relying on his more than 17 years of experience in farm management, Schauer volunteered through The Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA) Agribusiness Volunteer Program. Schauer helped farmers determine what crops will yield more profits, how to work within a budget, and how this affects over-all production costs.

Schauer described basic principles of accounting, and how to determine when is the best time to sell crops/livestock. Schauer also focused on how to choose the following year's crops based on costs. In addition, Schauer discussed the responsibilities a farmer takes when receiving credit, as well as what bankers and creditors expect from a farmer when giving credit, and how to reduce money loss by making good investments and decisions.

On his way back to Escanaba, Schauer stopped in Washington, D.C., to visit the offices of Sen. Spencer Abraham (Mich.) and Rep. Bart Stupak (Mich.) to provide briefings on his assignment.

Schauer currently works for Michigan State University as a district farm management agent. Schauer has extensive experience as a farm management specialist, working internationally in the Caribbean, the South Pacific, China and the former Soviet Union. Since 1993, more than 300 CNFA volunteers have participated in project assignments across Russia and Ukraine – ranging from farmers' association-building to cheese processing. CNFA volunteers bring years of hands-on experience to their courterparts in Russia and other former Soviet countries, easing the transition to a market economy and resulting in creative and effective U.S. foreign assistance. CNFA's Volunteer Program operates with the support of the Farmer-to-Farmer Program of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

CNFA is a non-profit organization dedicated to stimulating international economic growth and development. CNFA works with companies, entrepreneurs, farm groups, business alliances and other groups to create lasting and effective opportunities in international markets.

USDA's new research findings put fire blight disease under wraps

The bacterium that causes fire blight in apples, a major problem affecting Michigan's apple and other fruit growers annually, doesn't linger in a tree's older vascular system in numbers sufficient to cause disease, scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service say.

To make this discovery, scientists at the agency's Appalachian Fruit Research Laboratory in Kearneysville, W. Va., built two aseptic, wholetree arborspheres—a kind of plastic growth chamber—over four severely blighted, 12-yearold Rome Beauty apple trees.

First, the scientists heavily pruned the trees in the fall to remove any cankers or damaged bark that might house bacteria. Later, they applied dormant insecticidal oil to kill any insect eggs, and used a copper compound on two trees to eliminate any surface bacteria.

Then, in April, they created the arborspheres, each with an untreated and a coppertreated tree. Made with clear plastic-and-pipe frames, the structures were equipped with air supply systems and filters to block outside bacteria from entering.

After three months in the arborspheres, no bacteria were detected on petri dishes left in the structures for four days. Surrounding trees not protected by a sterile atmosphere were heavily infected with fire blight.

Results from this research should significantly help growers. Extremely heavy pruning causes an overabundance of new, tender shoots that are more susceptible to fire blight infection. Therefore, when trees are dormant, growers should remove only the blighted shoots and large cankers. Proper pruning should also ensure adequate light penetration into the tree canopy to maintain good tree growth.

More information is available on the world wide web at http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/pr/ fireblight0697.htm, or call the Appalachian Fruit Research Laboratory at (304) 725-3551.

Grain handling equipment safety

t doesn't occur often, but once in a while a Michigan youth drowns in wheat that is being unloaded form a combine, gravity wagon or truck. "Under no circumstances should children be allowed to ride on, or even play near, a load of grain at any time," says Howard Doss, Michigan State University Extension agricultural safety leader.

"When grain flows from a large gravity wagon, it can pull a person down like quicksand. An adult may become helpless in a few seconds and completely covered in 10 or 20 seconds and then suffocate," Doss says. "Children will be overcome sooner. Most victims of grain wagon drowning are 16 years old or younger." He says the best rule is to allow no riders on any farm equipment. Before unloading grain, the operator should make sure that no one will be in the immediate area as the grain is being handled. He also advises combine operators to look inside empty grain

(ACIM) building (MIA)

wagons or trucks before auguring grain from the combine just to make sure a curious child had not crawled inside.

"People not required for the operation should not be allowed in the area, especially children," Doss says. "If children are working in the area, make sure the task is appropriate for their age, and they're properly supervised – do not allow children to work alone." When grain trucks are being unloaded, keep children away from the grain box while it is being raised and lowered because they could become trapped in the grain or crushed by the grain box as it is being lowered. Make sure that auger grain intakes are properly guarded. Augers are considered one of the more hazardous types of farm equipment.

"The nature of the injuries most often involves the loss of a foot or hand when operators attempt to remove debris or unplug the auger

And the second of the second of the

flighting entrance," Doss says. "If a grain plug occurs, turn off all power and use a rod or stick to remove the plug. Never use your hand or foot to push material into or out of a plugged auger." If a problem develops in the combine grain tank, disengage the auger and turn the engine off before working on the problem with a stick, rod or small shovel.

"Never use your hands or feet to remove trash or to push the last bit of grain into the unloading auger," Doss says. "You can get caught in the auger and pulled in before you can react. Stop the engine, take the key out of the ignition and use a broom to clean away the grain." Doss says the best rule is to not permit anyone around grain handling equipment unless they have a specific task and know how to handle it, know what needs to be done if a problem develops, and are capable of solving it.



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Russian students call Michigan home for summer

hree students from a major agricultural university have been spending their summer break living and working on southern Michigan farms. You could say they're from out of state. Way out of state.

In fact, their college, Voronezh Agricultural University, is located about 250 miles south of Moscow in Voronezh, Russia, one of the country's largest cities.

The young men are guests of three Michigan Farm Bureau state board members and their families.



Tom Guthrie Jr., Sergei Korabline and Tom Sr.

Sergei Korabline is 20 years old and is staying with Tom and Nancy Guthrie and family on their farm near Delton.

Sergei has finished his third of five years at Voronezh Agricultural University, where he's studying agriculture mechanics. After college, he's off to the army. His mother teaches mathematics at the school, and his father, at age 45, is a retired military officer.

It's easy to tell that Sergei didn't have much trouble becoming part of the Guthrie family. "It's pretty much like having my little brother Joe around," said Tom Guthrie Jr., Tom and Nancy's eldest son. "He's been teaching me Russian."

Tom Sr. said the experience has been valuable. "It just confirmed for me that people in Russia aren't any different from people in the USA," he said.

Dimitriy Popov is the guest of Jan and Nellie Lou Vosburg, of Climax. He recently celebrated his 20th birthday in the States. Like Sergei, Dimitriy is also studying agriculture mechanics. He'll begin his third year when he returns to Russia.

Jan has kept Dimitriy busy working on the

farm, especially in the shop. Jan said that although they don't share the same native language, communicating with his international guest doesn't necessarily require words.

"He's very adept at figuring out mechanical things," Jan said, recalling how young Dimitriy was the one who figured out how to remove an uncooperative combine part. "He's very quick. We don't have to use a lot of words. We use a lot of hand signals, though."

Nellie Lou said Dimitriy has made his way into their family easily. Their young grandson even includes him in his bedtime prayers. "I don't even visualize him as a Russian sitting here," Nellie Lou said.

Vasiliy Shipilov has been living with Jim and Patty Miller on their fruit and vegetable farm near Coloma, where they also operate a farm market.

Vasiliy is a 23-year-old working toward his master's degree at Voronezh Agricultural University. He has finished two years of his three-year program. There, he also teaches geography, biology, chemistry and ecology. He did his undergrad work at Voronezh State University. Vasiliy is married and his wife works in government.

Jim and Patty don't have children so they're not used to sharing their home with others, let



Jan and Nellie Lou Vosburg and Dimitriy Popov

alone inviting a foreign visitor to live with them for several weeks. But Patty said it has been a wonderful experience. "He's really become a part of our family in a very short period of time," she said.

"I've learned a lot about Russia - an insight you cannot have unless you've had this experience to have someone live with you," Jim related. "You get your conception of another country from documentaries and CNN," he said, "and that probably isn't very accurate."

Vasiliy visited a 700-cow dairy farm in Michigan and called it small. But when you consider many Russian farms are in transition from when they were collective farms, that is small.

There are three large farms in the Voronezh area; all are government-controlled. One has 8,000 head of beef cattle. The largest is about 4,000 or 5,000 acres, according to Vasiliy.

"In Russia, very often people do not have land," Vasiliy said. Those who do can pass it on to their children but cannot sell it. Many, including Vasiliy's father, lease their land to others under a sharecropping agreement. "Now Russian people have farms, but not big," he said of the private operations. **Political change**

Sergei was only 12 years old when the Berlin Wall came down and was just a teenager when the Soviet Union broke apart. Though he said he's too young to really compare communism to the current system of government, he does know what affects his family.

"Now it's better than earlier," Sergei said, "but my grandfather and grandmother, they don't think so."

Under communism, everyone was taken care of, Sergei said. People of retirement age became pensioners and the government gave them steady pay.

Now, people are left to fend for themselves in a democratic government that's on its way to a free market. "I think it's not good, not stable," Sergei said of the state of transition.

"Many young people have ... skepticism," Vasiliy said, after thumbing through his Russian-English dictionary for the right word. "I not have skepticism."

But the political transition in Russia from communism to capitalism hasn't been a smooth ride. "When it was Gorbachev the first time, many people think one year and it all right. Now, one year, two years, and not all right.



Jim and Patty Miller with Vasiliy Shipilov

"For example, if people have nice job, they have nice life, nice car," Vasiliy said. If they don't have a good job, people have trouble paying the bills, something they weren't used to under communism.

Once a highly skilled labor force, Russians are finding themselves taking whatever jobs they can find. "Now people work in very cheap jobs and not specialized," Vasiliy said.

Despite the political state of change in Russia today, Sergei, Dimitriy and Vasiliy all love their homeland and wouldn't want to live anywhere else.

"Sometimes we think that all Russians don't like Russia and want to come here," Patty Miller said. After watching a movie at an IMAX theater in Chicago, Vasiliy asked her, "Why all Americans think Russians want to leave Russia?"

Patty may have put it best when she related what she appreciated most about having her Russian visitor. "I think sometimes we dwell on how we're so different, but really as human beings, we are all similar."

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1997 MSU wheat performance trial results

Rick Ward, Lee Siler, S.P. Hazen, R. Bafus, L. Fitzpatrick, and R. Gopalachar Department of Crop and Soil Sciences Michigan State University

heat variety performance trials are conducted by Michigan State Univ ersity (MSU) each year at several locations throughout Michigan's winter wheat production area. Entries to the trials include MSU experimental lines, promising lines from neighboring states, and commercial varieties from other universities and private seed companies. The primary objective of this testing program is to provide the agronomic data needed to determine which lines to release as commercial varieties. A second objective is to show Michigan wheat growers which varieties perform best in Michigan. This year's results are summarized in the accompanying tables.

Although wheat producers are always interested in how varieties perform in a given year and location, performance in a single year and location should never be used in selecting a variety to plant. It is best to select a variety on the basis of data from at least three years of testing. Varieties selected with such comparisons are more likely to perform well under a wide range of conditions.

Multi-Year Performance Summary

Each line in the table has data for a single variety. The table is arranged so that the varieties appear in order of '97 average yield with the highest yielding variety first and the lowest yielding variety last. Not all varieties have been tested in all years so the table has several blank cells. To the right of the '97 yield column are multi-year yield averages. Only data for varieties included in the relevant year's tests are included here. See the section titled 'Experimental' for details on how the trials were conducted and more detail on what the data in each column's data represent.

At the bottom of each table are the means, L.S.D.s, and C.V.s for the 1997 data columns. The L.S.D. (least significant difference) is the statistical measure of how big a difference needs to be to be considered real. If the difference between two means is greater than or equal to the L.S.D., then the varieties are probably really different for that trait. Otherwise, there is insufficient evidence to claim that the varieties are actually different. The C.V. (coefficient of variation) is indicative of the trial's precision for a given trait. Lower C.V. values indicate more precise trials.

In any given year or at any given site, several varieties will usually fall into the group of 'highest yielding' varieties. The composition of that group and the identity of the absolute "winner" can and do change from location to location and year to year. This means that the single best variety cannot be determined in advance for a specific site. What you can do is identify a group of varieties whose past performance and agronomic characteristics indicate that they are most likely to be winners in the upcoming season. It is a good idea to plant two or more varieties. That increases the chance of having the best adapted variety for the particular conditions that are likely to prevail during the ensuing season. Selecting two varieties can reduce losses from diseases and insects that occur when a given variety's pest resistance is

| 199 | 7 5 | tate Wheat Variety Trial Multi-Year Performance Summary — All county sit | es included |
|--------------------------|----------------------|--|-----------------------|
| NAME | grain | yeld test weight height lodge Bower date model's gandle strad good midder her had sopt flag hat gin. M wers hered such floor yeld protein advater softwars in-head sport | SUBMITTED BY: |
| | color | 51 \$1 17 15 17 14 17 15 17 14 17 17 15 17 15 17 17 15 17 17 15 16 17 17 15 16 17 17 15 16 17 17 16 17 17 16 16 17 17 16 16 17 16 | the local sectors |
| Pioneer(R) variety 2552 | R | 840 641 706 710 591 585 59 59 566 325 07 09 1650 1662 136 15 18 06 08 09 16 35 25 awned 82 41 701 102 57.7 546 18 15 | Pioneer Hi-bred Int. |
| Hopewell | R | 815 668 566 569 375 345 07 07 1655 1667 128 1.1 1.4 3.4 2.9 3.1 3.2 4.0 5.0 awnless 8.0 6.3 68.9 9.6 57.1 567 1.4 1.4 | Ohio Foundation Seed |
| Pioneer(R) variety 25R26 | R | 80.1 55.9 35.9 - 20 - 165.0 - 12.1 15 - 5.4 - 25 - 4.5 13 awred 6.9 3.7 0.0 0.0 0.0 13 | Pioneer Hi-bred Int. |
| Freedom | R | 797 635 681 686 562 563 567 567 393 366 37 29 1650 1664 131 41 36 51 41 46 38 35 26 awnless 77 37 687 97 57.1 505 20 17 | ML Crop Imp. Assoc. |
| Glory | R | 795 608 57A 567 373 346 37 24 1635 1653 125 43 32 55 48 37 31 40 22 awnles 76 5A 688 93 589 535 38 30 | Ohio Foundation Seed |
| Pioneer(R) variety 2568 | R | 794 642 574 572 359 334 20 17 1640 1654 125 13 15 71 63 46 43 65 26 awned 82 66 685 99 582 595 1.1 15 | Honeer Hi-bred Int. |
| TW 93211 | W | 794 575 419 - 47 - 1620 - 135 81 - 39 - 45 - 50 08 avries 79 59 00 00 00 83 | Harrington Seeds Inc. |
| Wakefield | R | 792 612 686 707 578 575 578 579 392 365 54 32 1640 1662 132 57 37 50 29 28 25 45 26 awnless 76 63 704 10.1 561 549 12 21 | MI. Crop Imp. Assoc. |
| Caledonia | W | 787 565 373 - 32 - 1660 - 125 32 - 51 - 45 - 40 28 annies 76 55 00 00 00 86 | GenesisAq-Harrington |
| Genesis 95 - 1 | R | 785 599 557 554 393 362 39 26 1640 1659 121 15 13 55 49 45 42 50 36 awned 78 59 710 98 560 607 15 18 | Genesis Ag Ltd. |
| MSU Line D4045 | W | 778 575 413 - 36 - 1650 - 132 34 - 44 - 27 - 35 21 awnless 77 50 00 00 00 7A | windo rig tite. |
| Emily | R | 777 600 392 - 34 - 1640 - 150 50 - 66 - 51 - 40 24 avries 76 63 00 00 00 24 | Harrington Seeds Inc. |
| GR 962 | R | 777 55.1 55.6 54.9 36.2 32.9 1.1 13 1635 165.1 11.8 12 15 6.0 4.8 55 52 3.0 8.5 awnless 7.7 6.0 67.5 10.4 57.8 57.6 12 15 | AGRA Inc. |
| MSU Line D2103 | W | 775 615 655 - 560 554 555 - 421 405 39 31 1665 1682 129 66 42 54 44 47 43 40 20 avmiesta 64 669 10.1 573 568 83 68 | ANNO IN. |
| Ramrod | | 769 629 660 667 556 552 556 558 406 387 1.7 22 1690 1689 126 22 1.6 52 45 53 47 55 29 awnless 72 33 686 103 573 545 7.9 7.0 | GHG |
| NC RW151 | 1.5 | | 2011 |
| ACRon | | 769 595 595 | The Andersons |
| 1000 | 122 | 768 523 569 561 430 412 39 28 1660 1672 127 78 54 57 45 45 43 35 25 awnless 83 68 696 92 559 550 80 69 | MI. Crop Imp. Assoc. |
| LIS Brook | | 765 617 597 594 404 385 36 28 1645 1649 154 40 32 57 47 56 57 40 22 awries 80 76 704 103 569 486 20 35 | Stewart Seed Inc. |
| Brandy Tomo (8304 | 1.0.0 | 765 618 592 593 407 369 44 31 1645 1653 147 46 41 65 51 47 49 30 23 awnless 73 57 708 102 563 464 35 34 | Lakeside States Inc. |
| Terra SR204 | | 764 603 593 593 385 365 34 24 1635 1650 148 55 37 62 49 43 45 45 23 awriles 75 59 702 108 567 463 30 39 | Terra |
| Pioneer(R) variety 2540 | | 764 634 575 575 374 338 04 07 1680 1679 127 24 19 45 42 17 20 35 10 awned 80 36 684 105 563 540 16 24 | Pioneer Hi-bred Int. |
| Pioneer(R) variety 25W33 | - | 762 556 363 - 30 - 1660 - 119 11 - 23 - 37 - 55 21 awned 82 57 00 00 00 64 | Pioneer Hi-bred Int. |
| TW 94104 | W | 762 578 413 - 37 - 1675 - 132 87 - 56 - 52 - 40 21 awnless 73 66 00 00 00 80 | Harrington Seeds Inc. |
| Stine 480 | R | 760 628 561 565 402 37.6 40 27 1650 1655 127 1.8 1.6 8.4 6.8 43 42 55 2.8 awnless 80 6.4 699 100 567 49.8 1.9 2.8 | Stine Seed Co. |
| 558 W | R | 760 576 392 - 3.1 - 1660 - 13.4 44 - 73 - 66 - 45 2.1 awnles 72 53 0.0 0.0 0.0 2.9 | Countrymark Co-op |
| Pioneer(R) variety 25R57 | R | 759 565 373 - 30 - 1645 - 124 7.1 - 3.1 - 4.6 - 40 3.0 awnles 0.7 7.1 0.0 0.0 0.0 1.5 | Pioneer Hi-bred Int. |
| Wendon | R | 756 60.1 652 67.8 556 55.4 55.6 55.5 43.0 40.2 4.6 3.7 164.5 1653 125 1.3 1.0 7.9 6.3 2.3 3.5 3.5 2.3 awnless 7.8 6.0 70.7 9.7 56.9 57.9 2.1 3.4 | Lakeside States Inc. |
| 569 w | R | 753 569 408 - 47 - 1650 - 131 24 - 56 - 31 - 45 39 awnless 74 57 00 00 00 41 | Countrymark Co-op |
| 77 W | R | 749 534 372 - 39 - 1650 - 11.5 75 - 80 - 52 - 35 3.4 awnless 7.7 70 0.0 0.0 0.0 1.8 | Countrymark Co-op |
| Foster | R | 743 625 573 57.1 37.1 342 19 18 1660 1660 130 57 38 70 56 46 37 50 34 awnless 77 44 718 110 541 549 14 16 | Agripro Seeds Inc. |
| Cardinal | R | 747 618 647 656 570 567 573 574 409 379 47 32 1650 1663 131 32 29 80 63 60 53 50 35 awnless 72 47 708 101 559 543 60 58 | MI. Crop Imp. Assoc. |
| Bavaria | W | 745 585 641 667 575 570 573 573 434 409 24 21 1675 1681 131 26 18 69 56 48 46 30 31 awnles 80 56 703 101 560 514 60 60 | Greater MI Seed |
| VC Marilee | W | 744 552 407 - 50 - 1675 - 13.1 72 - 73 - 45 - 35 23 awnles &1 42 00 00 00 80 | The Andersons |
| WC Harold | R | 744 574 395 - 47 - 1645 - 133 65 - 53 - 60 - 50 32 anniess 7.1 60 0.0 0.0 0.0 3.8 | The Andersons |
| Honeer(R) variety 2737W | | 743 598 647 645 553 553 553 558 581 355 20 17 1650 1664 120 13 14 7.1 5.7 23 35 25 23 awnless 84 74 704 9.7 561 581 80 72 | Pioneer Hi-bred Int. |
| VC Karena | W | 743 572 423 - 36 - 1680 - 135 85 - 32 - 37 - 40 42 awnless 77 64 00 00 00 74 | The Andersons |
| owell | | 742 601 643 660 551 549 55 549 438 409 43 30 1645 1651 123 14 14 72 53 40 46 30 13 awnless 87 75 710 92 566 601 85 79 | MI. Crop Imp. Assoc. |
| MSU Line D4081 | 1.00 | 742 565 441 - 47 - 1650 - 127 30 - 47 - 33 - 40 44 awnles 66 59 00 00 00 79 | |
| Navigator | 121111 | 739 543 622 - 550 548 559 - 344 315 25 18 1640 1662 118 71 59 36 27 57 46 50 40 awnles 77 34 686 87 600 612 11 11 | Wilson Tri State Seed |
| B III | | 738 612 646 - 587 584 59.1 - 463 425 40 40 1650 1664 140 21 15 90 75 48 48 40 12 avries 69 53 71.1 95 572 53.6 41 44 | Stewart Seeds Inc. |
| MSU Line D3913 | in the second second | 737 592 559 554 422 40.4 4.4 32 1675 1683 127 42 4.8 6.1 5.0 4.5 4.7 4.0 2.9 awnless 7.0 5.7 70.8 10.0 559 54.4 8.6 7.8 | SIEWall Setto BR. |
| 5 1359 | | | No feed by |
| VSU Line D4125 | | 731 565 371 - 37 - 1640 - 124 29 - 45 - 50 - 45 43 awrles 78 60 00 00 00 10 731 568 733 - 53 - 1640 - 120 18 - 55 - 55 - 25 24 awrles 73 53 00 00 00 00 10 | Pro-Seed, Inc. |
| ASU Line D2150 | | 731 558 423 - 53 - 1640 - 129 18 - 55 - 55 - 35 34 avriles 77 52 00 00 00 46 | |
| ISU LINE 02150 SR 942 | - | 731 61.1 65.1 - 570 57A 57A - 419 40A 38 26 1635 1659 127 76 45 53 44 47 4A 35 42 awnles 78 57 700 100 556 536 76 67 | 100 Los |
| | | 729 517 609 - 553 543 555 - 335 302 23 17 1650 1667 118 60 55 31 32 53 46 40 47 awnles 76 37 682 92 596 608 1.1 14 | AGRA Inc. |
| ASU Line D3234 | | 729 61.1 58.1 58.1 43.4 40.7 52 43 1675 167.8 157 42 28 30 22 32 38 30 10 awned 68 39 683 10.7 58.8 499 63 52 | AND THE A |
| ISU Line D3991 | M | 729 561 419 - 47 - 1685 - 153 85 - 57 - 41 - 40 23 awnles 70 43 00 00 00 55 - | |
| 5927 | | 721 598 629 641 591 593 577 581 402 370 47 32 1630 1645 145 51 43 84 63 48 49 55 32 awnless 78 57 705 104 568 486 22 26 | Rupp Seeds, Inc. |
| helsea | | 718 57.7 628 609 568 562 566 569 434 402 57 39 1680 1705 131 28 19 69 54 39 38 30 35 awmed 77 51 709 96 545 543 78 67 | MI. Crop Imp. Assoc. |
| ASU Line D2295 | - | 71.5 58.8 629 - 58.4 58.1 58.3 - 39.6 37.4 3.0 3.0 169.5 169.4 13.5 8.5 6.8 3.8 3.2 3.8 3.9 4.0 1.0 awmed 7.6 4.6 68.9 10.4 57.7 52.8 8.2 7.3 | HELSEN LEDBEN |
| larus | | 715 57.8 612 629 57.1 573 57.4 572 420 39.8 40 27 1640 1660 127 8.4 5.4 4.7 3.9 4.7 4.5 40 5.0 awnles 7.9 5.7 69.9 10.1 55.8 54.4 7.1 6.1 | MI. Crop Imp. Assoc. |
| ackard Brand | | 715 566 510 511 37.7 34.9 4.7 32 1650 1667 115 7.8 6.4 7.8 6.2 4.9 4.0 35 3.6 avriles 7.8 63 69.3 9.7 56.7 58.5 2.0 1.7 | Coomer Seeds, Inc. |
| ISU Line D2088 | | 715 57.1 560 55.3 43.4 41.4 4.4 3.6 67.5 168.5 12.8 7.5 6.3 4.7 3.8 4.0 4.5 4.5 1.0 awmed 8.0 5.8 69.3 9.8 57.5 50.6 8.8 7.9 | CO cours succession |
| asey | R | 712 580 55.6 55.6 39.9 380 50 32 1655 1668 122 7.1 4.6 30 3.4 6.8 5.4 40 2.5 awrites 8.4 7.4 70.1 9.4 57.7 57.3 4.2 4.4 | Lakeside States Inc. |
| liana | W | 712 58.1 56.0 54.9 40.6 39.8 43 27 165.0 166.9 129 75 6.9 4.0 3.7 3.9 3.8 25 1.8 awnless 8.1 5.7 69.8 9.0 56.5 55.0 8.3 6.7 | Harrington Seeds Inc. |
| yrus Brand | R | 712 543 549 544 332 313 26 18 1655 1668 119 67 57 37 34 51 43 45 60 awnles 72 43 683 89 605 620 13 20 | Coomer Seeds, Inc. |
| Nosolut | R | | Lakeside States Inc. |
| EX 971 | R | 710 559 367 - 20 - 1635 - 125 23 - 40 - 38 - 60 47 avries 82 63 00 00 00 10 | Coomer Seeds, Inc. |
| Elkhart | R | 71.0 59.3 58.4 59.1 39.2 36.0 5.6 3.5 165.0 165.4 12.8 5.4 5.2 5.5 4.8 4.4 3.9 5.0 3.0 awned 7.5 6.0 70.4 11.6 57.2 51.5 1.2 1.5 | Agripro Seeds Inc. |
| MSU Line D1176 | W | 709 565 573 568 445 410 45 35 1680 1690 133 35 24 34 26 43 43 45 18 awned 70 44 695 109 565 540 7.1 52 | And Alexandrews |
| TW 91203 | W | 708 556 43.1 - 33 - 168.0 - 13.1 53 - 62 - 38 - 15 32 avries 13 48 0.0 0.0 0.0 7.7 | Harrington Seeds Inc. |
| 92405R | | 705 569 44.4 - 4.3 - 1665 - 126 7.4 - 75 - 4.6 - 30 1.2 awnles 6.1 3.7 0.0 0.0 0.0 8.3 | Lakeside States Inc. |
| MSU Line D3176 | | 495 569 560 554 380 373 37 32 1675 1691 129 64 39 45 41 37 34 45 20 awned 80 70 710 98 537 552 22 36 | LUNCHUE JUDICS HR. |
| SW403 | | 488 528 590 - 558 561 567 - 399 360 49 30 1625 1640 122 34 24 84 65 37 39 55 60 avmies 78 75 694 102 559 560 20 18 | Stewart Seed Inc. |
| MSU Line D3414 | | 672 582 41.1 - 36 - 1625 - 134 19 - 88 - 58 - 45 43 annies 14 73 00 00 00 31 | JUNNARI JOEG HK. |
| CONTRACTOR DE LA | | | Territolation |
| Terra SR211 (Exp 211) | A | 67.0 51.0 55.9 56.2 36.3 33.1 6.4 3.7 164.0 165.0 12.3 2.5 2.8 5.5 4.2 2.7 3.1 5.0 7.2 annies 8.4 6.8 69.0 10.1 57.8 58.3 2.0 1.8 | Terra Industries |



overcome by a change in the pest population. Single Site Yield Performance Summary

Columns in this table represent yield (bushels/acre) at each of the eight sites. The last column is the average of all sites. Each row in the Table represents a single variety in the test.

Experimental

The 1997 State Wheat Variety Trial was harvested at eight county sites: Lenawee, Ionia, Saginaw, Kalamazoo, Huron, Tuscola, Sanilac, and Ingham. Plots were 11 feet long and had seven rows at 6" row spacing. Individual sites were implemented as three replication alpha lattices (15 blocks of 5 plots each). Seeding rates were standardized to 1.8 million seeds per acre. Planting dates were all within normal ranges. Fall fertility varied with cooperator practice. Spring nitrogen was applied as urea (80 lbs/acre) at greenup. No fungicides were applied. All plots at a site are harvested on a single day. Yield was calculated using the entire area of the plot including the wheel tracks between plots. Yield, test weight, and

| Patterson R | 669 | - | - | - | 563 | - | - | - | 39.6 | - 5 | 13 | - 1 | B.O | - 12 | 1 21 | - | 8.7 | - | 40 | + | 59 9 | 9.0 | awniess 8.4 | 7.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.2 | | MIL Grop Imp. Assoc. |
|---------------|------|------|------|---|------|------|------|---|--------|-------|------|--------|----------|-------|-------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|--|
| 94334R R | 66.7 | - | - | - | 58.5 | - | - | - | 44 | - 1 | 5 | - 16 | 9.0 - | - 14 | 8.5 | - | 8,4 | | 33 | - | 15 | 12 | awniess 7.0 | 4.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 63 | | Lakeside States Inc. |
| Terra SR205 R | 65.4 | 54.0 | 61.0 | - | 532 | 53.9 | 54.9 | - | 37.5 3 | 12 4 | 18 3 | 12 1 | 65.0 165 | 7 11. | 2 20 | 20 | 8.6 | 7.2 | 6.4 | 5.7 | 45 ! | 5.7 | awniess 8.4 | 67 | 69.4 | 9.0 | 573 | 528 | 2.0 | 3.1 | Terra Industries |
| Clemens R | 64.7 | 54.8 | 59.0 | - | 56.6 | 57.0 | 575 | - | 39.7 X | i.6 5 | i0 3 | 2.4 18 | 6.0 167 | 2 12 | 7 6.6 | 6.0 | 7.8 | 6.8 | 5.0 | 44 | 45 | 2.9 | awniess 7.6 | 5.0 | 70.0 | 10.6 | 57.A | 56.3 | 1.7 | 25 | Agripro Seeds Inc. |
| NC John W | 64.1 | - | - | 1 | 54.0 | - | - | - | 41.8 - | - 5 | 14 | - 16 | 75 - | - 12 | 0 7.4 | - | 3.0 | | 3.7 | - | 45 3 | 3.4 | awniess 8.0 | 6.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 82 | | The Andersons |
| Rupp X5-289 R | 52.9 | 5 | - | 1 | 55.7 | - | - | - | 38.9 | - 1 | 9 | - 1 | 125 - | 12 | 2 1.6 | - | 8.6 | - | 3.4 | - | 35 1 | 5.6 | awniess 7.9 | 63 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.4 | | Rupp Seeds, Inc. |
| Pontiac R | 61.1 | 20 | 555 | - | 56.8 | 57.9 | 58.2 | - | 35.5 3 | 15 6 | i1 3 | 19 11 | 62.0 162 | 7 12 | 5.1 | 5.4 | 92 | 7.7 | 5.0 | 52 | 6.9 | 4.7 | awnless 8.2 | 7.4 | 68.8 | 10.8 | 58.2 | 50.9 | 4.9 | 33 | Agripro Seeds Inc. |
| average | 73.8 | , II | М. | | 56.7 | | | | 39.3 | 3 | LØ . | 1 | 5.4 | 13. | 45 | 1.5 | 5.8 | | 44 | | 49 | 21 | 7.7 | 5.7 | | - | | | 43 | | Incare of the second |
| İst | 5.1 | | | | 1.0 | | | | 1.9 | ł | 16 | 1 | LO | 0.7 | 1.9 | 6 | 23 | | 21 | | 3.1 | 1.6 | 0.4 | 1.7 | | 1 | | | 1.4 | | and the second second |
| α | 7.0 | | | - | 1.8 | - | | 1 | 28 | 2 | 5.5 | 1 | 15 | 5.2 | 213 | her | 23.4 | | 28.2 | 2 | 332 | 9.4 | 6.8 | 17.5 | | | | R | 16.5 | | All and a second se |

moisture data were acquired electronically on the plot combine at the time of harvest. Yield comparisons are only valid within a column. All scores are based on a 0-9 scale, where 0 is the best possible score. "Septoria leaf blotch" scores are for foliar symptoms only and probably reflect both *S. nordorum* and *S. tritici* infections. Sprouting score data are based on greenhouse evaluation of five heads from all three replications at both the Ingham and Ionia county sites. Heads were picked immediately before those sites were harvested. After two days of drying, the heads were subjected to continuous misting for five days. Data for 50 percent pollen shed indicates the number of days past Jan. 1 before that variety reached the point where half of its heads where flowering. Plant height was measured at the tip of average heads in a plot.

MSU makes no endorsement of any wheat variety or brand. Cooperator support is gratefully acknowledged.

| SITE SUMMARY INFORMATION | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------------------|--|--|--|--|
| COUNTY | COOPERATOR | NEAREST TOWN | | | | |
| Saginaw | S. Reinbold | Frankenmuth | | | | |
| Lenawee | P. Vergote | Blissfield | | | | |
| Ingham | MSU | Mason | | | | |
| Ionia | MSU | Clarksville | | | | |
| Sanilac | A. Stoutenburg | Sandusky | | | | |
| Kalamazoo | MSU | Delton | | | | |
| Tuscola | R. Ackerman | Reese | | | | |
| Huron | Huron County | Extension Bad Axe | | | | |





Caution: multi-year data are more informative than single-year averages. Single-site/single-year data should not be used to make variety choice decisions.

Have the right extinguisher in the right place

ike a good insurance policy, fire extinguishers are one of those things everyone should have and hope they never need to use. But if the time should come, having the right extinguishers within easy reach and knowing how to use them can prevent a major loss.

Choose the right one

Choosing the right fire extinguisher is simple, thanks to the refinement of dry chemical multi-purpose extinguishers. These low-cost extinguishers are widely available and are effective on "A," "B" and "C" fires (see sidebar), which comprise most of the fires you're likely to face in your household, in farm shops and on equipment. These extinguishers are filled with a fine dry powder that smothers flames and deprives them of oxygen.

CO, extinguishers are suited for Class B and C fires. They extinguish them by displacing the oxygen with carbon dioxide. Although these CO, extinguishers are highly effective for flammable liquid and electrical fires, the dry chemical ABC extinguishers are a better choice for general service.

Pressurized water extinguishers are limited to Class A fires, since they merely spray water. Although limited in use, these extinguishers are a good choice where fire hazards are primarily paper, wood, straw and similar combustibles.

Keep them handy Take advantage of the low cost and convenient size of dry chemical extinguishers by having several of them available where you're most likely to reach

ting torch equipment, and use a "fire spotter," someone who watches for spark fire hazards.

In your vehicles - Carrying a 5- or 10-pound extinguisher should give you ample protection against the engine-related fires you might experience. You can also rely on these extinguishers as backup extinguishers for your home, shop or equipment. Make sure they're accessible. Specific regulations may apply for vehicles used for commercial purposes.

On your tractors - Hawken suggests keeping a 10-pound extinguisher in a place where the operator can reach it, such as near the cab door.

On combines and cotton pickers - Hawken says Case recommends carrying two 10-pound dry chemical extinguishers. One should be accessible near the cab, where the operator can reach it from the cab, and the other should be reachable from the ground.

On hay and forage equipment - Class A water-type extinguishers are recommended. The Class ABC dry chemical extinguisher you carry in the tractor or your pickup can handle any grease- or hydraulic fluid-related fire on the hay or forage machine; use the water-type extinguisher to suppress any fire that might have spread into baled hay or straw. Soaking these materials will minimize chances of rekindling.

If the time comes

Should you actually need to use an extinguisher, Hawken says to think of "PASS" - Pull the pin; Aim at the base of the fire; Squeeze the handle; and Sweep across the base of the flames.

You don't have to be right on top of the fire; dry chemical extinguishers are most effective at a distance of 6 feet or so, but have a range from 5 to nearly 20 feet. However, you do need to reach the source of the fire. The small 2-1/2-pound extinguishers will exhaust themselves in 10 to 12 seconds, which is ample time to knock out a small fire, assuming you get a good shot at the base of the flames. Larger extinguishers will give you more time. Consider giving a blast just long enough to knock down the flames; then stop to assess the situation. Use the extinguisher again as needed, and be aware of the possibility of rekindle.

by hydraulic fluid, oil or fuel." Keeping equipment free of dust and plant debris, repairing any loose hydraulic, oil or fuel fittings and replacing cracked or worn fuel or hydraulic hoses, especially around the engine compartments, will greatly reduce the risks of equipment-related fires, he adds.

Be realistic about what you are facing. The type and size of extinguishers discussed in this article are very effective for small, contained fires. Larger fires, especially structural fires, demand that your first priorities be evacuating everyone in the area and contacting the fire department before attempting your own fire-fighting efforts.

Follow the fire extinguisher manufacturer's instructions for maintenance, care and periodic servicing. *Formal regulations regarding fire extinguisher types and placements may apply if you employ above a certain number of people to work inside farm buildings. Check

Nematodes: A serious threat to Michigan corn growers

or several years Robert Keeler, a dairy and corn producer in Stanton, was having problems with his corn crop. Almost half of his 300 acres of continuous corn ground were yielding only 75 to 80 bushels. Keeler thought he was doing everything right by rotating his corn with alfalfa hay and oats on a four- to five-year basis. But something was still going wrong.

Keeler consulted Lee Bailey, a farm products dealer in Vestaburg, who has been trying to help area corn growers figure out why their corn hasn't produced high yields. Like Keeler, many of Bailey's customers attributed lower yields to anything but pests. Some growers blamed the problem on deficiencies in soil or nitrogen. Others believed their pH was off. Still others attributed the problem to sandy spots throughout their corn fields.

Mystery solved

What is the cause of this mysterious problem affecting the crops of many Michigan corn producers? Bailey has diagnosed the problem as nematodes, an unsuspected menace which only recently has been identified as a serious threat to corn in Montcalm County and elsewhere in the state. Bailey estimates that heavy populations of these pests are expanding their range and threatening substantial yield losses in Michigan's light, sandy loams.

Nematode identification difficult

Nematode pressure is sometimes tough to identify. Bailey believes the problem is compounded by growers who aren't accustomed to using soil insecticides on corn. Steve Poindexter, an Extension crops agent for Saginaw County, points out that "this is the nematode capital of Michigan for soybean nematodes, but almost no materials have been used here for nematode control in corn. Blaming corn rootworms and nematodes comes last," he says.

Looking for damage indicators

He notes that tell-tale signs of nematode damage in corn include a lack of uniform growth. "You can walk down a row and see good plants next to weak, shorter plants instead of finding even growth straight across the field," he said. "Affected plants may be off-color too."

Problem present throughout state

Fred Warner, a nematode diagnostician at Michigan State University, said, "We know that nematodes cause yield losses in corn. And I estimate we could recover at least one species of parasitic nematode in virtually every corn field in the state."

"So if you grow this crop on sandy sites," he warned, "there's a good chance nematodes will cause reduced yields that may range from five to 20 bushels, depending on the species involved and its population levels." He added that most yield losses from nematodes are subtle, which is why many growers either are not aware of them or assume that some other factor is responsible for their losses.

Warner stressed the importance of looking at the history of each location. If yields have fallen off and no reason for this is evident, he suggests that samples should be taken to determine the cause through lab tests. He explains further that 1,000 lesion nematodes and 250 lance nematodes, respectively, per gram of root tissue and 100 cubic centimeters of soil sample would represent heavy pressure.

"This would indicate it's time to start treating three or four strips down the length of a field to see if this results in a positive growth response," he said.

them when you need them.

Bob Hawken is a Case Corp. safety engineer who specializes in fire prevention issues. He's also the assistant fire chief in Thornton, Ill., has been a fire training officer and is a certified fire and explosion investigator. He offers these suggestions for placements of dry chemical extinguishers around the home and farm.

In the house - Hawken suggests keeping 2-1/2- or 5-pound extinguishers, one in the kitchen, one in the basement and another in the garage. These locations are frequent sites for fires to start. The kitchen also makes a good "central" location for keeping an extinguisher for use throughout the house.

In the shop - Hawken recommends having at least one 10-pound extinguisher. Two would be better. Place one near the door, so you can reach it from inside or out. Keep the second extinguisher near the center of the shop, near another door, if possible. For larger shops and sheds, Hawken says a rule of thumb is to have a fire extinguisher no more than 75 feet away from wherever you might be.* Always have a fire extinguisher at hand when using welding or cut-

Although it's easy to become panicked when confronting a fire, you need to stay calm enough to assess what you are doing. Don't put yourself at risk by running or jumping, especially on or off equipment, in an attempt to save a few seconds. If equipment is involved, Hawken says to turn off the ignition, put the throttle at the lowest setting and shut off the engine's fuel supply.

"Often," he says, "a mistake people make when fighting equipment fires is to leave the engine running. There's a chance the fire will continue to be fed

with local authorities for more information. 🟉

TYPES OF FIRES

1 0

Fires are ranked according to the type of material that's burning:

- Class A: Wood, paper, straw, cardboard and similar combustibles. Extinguished by water or multi-purpose dry chemical extinguishers.
- Class B: Liquids, including grease from cooking and fuels. Extinguished by multi-purpose dry chemical or CO2. Do not use water.
- Class C: Electrical equipment. Extinguished by multi-purpose dry chemical extinguishers. Do not use water. The source of the electric current must be eliminated to prevent regeneration. Class D: Flammable metals such as magnesium. Uncommon in most home and farm situations. Extinguished by specialized dry powders.

"If a grower is wavering over whether to use a product for soil insect control in his corn, he will benefit from putting Counter CR on because the material is known to have activity against nematodes as well. And if soybeans to be followed by corn are infested with lesion nematodes, treatment is especially important," said Dr. Warner.

Counter CR systemic insecticide-nematicide provides season-long control of nematodes and other corn pests. This granular soil insecticide has moderate water solubility; enabling it to continue to work under weather extremes, providing its consistency in all growing conditions.

Lee Bailey recalled that he used to recommend Furadan or Dyfonate for soil insect control but suggested Counter CR to Robert Keeler, who treated 175 acres of his corn with it in 1996.

Keeler said, "I guess I've had nematodes for a long time but didn't realize it." Now that the problem has been diagnosed and he has started using Counter CR, he claims he is looking for about 120 bushels - an increase of almost 60 percent over what he was getting before he realized the extent of his losses.

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

August 30, 1997

Michigan Farm News Classified

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Weather Outlook

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



A series of upper air disturbances and associated surface frontal systems brought muchneeded rainfall to nearly all of the state in early August, helping ease moisture stress for most summer crops. The focus of weather concerns this season will likely shift from the lack of moisture to the lack of heat and warm temperatures. Mean temperatures for the previous 30 days generally ranged from 1-4°F below normal, continuing a cooler than normal trend during much of the season thus far. By mid-August, seasonal base 50°F growing degree day accumulations also have fallen from one to more than two weeks behind normal.

The message in new NOAA Climate Prediction Center long lead outlooks is one of continuity, with strong El Nino conditions continuing in the equatorial Pacific. The outlook for September calls for persistence of the present pattern, with odds favoring cooler and possibly wetter than normal weather, especially across southwestern sections of the state. Looking further ahead, the outlooks for the late summer and early fall months also call for increased chances for cooler and wetter than normal weather, gradually giving way to milder and drier than normal conditions by early winter and continuing through early next year. Given the current seasonal deficits in growing degree day accumulations and prospects for more cool weather, some full season crops may have trouble reaching maturity this season. Even though the historical skill of long lead weather outlooks during the transitional fall season is low, growers should consider this possibility and their own management response options now, as well as the potential difficulties and complications caused by cool, wet conditions at harvest.

| | A | erature Gri | | the second | (*) Pracin | itation |
|------------------|--------------|---------------------|------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| 6/16/97-7/15/97 | Obs. mean | Dev. from normal | | Normal Acc. | Actual (inch) | Normal (inch) |
| Houghton | 65.9 | 0.9 | 1241 | 1361 | 2.33 | 3.53 |
| Marquette | 63.4 | -0.5 | 1206 | 1361 | 2.32 | 3.53 |
| Sault Ste. Marie | 64.2 | -0.3 | 1137 | 1166 | 1.63 | 3.46 |
| Lake City | 65.0 | -2.6 | 1305 | 1531 | 4.23 | 2.88 |
| Pellston | 65.4 | -0.2 | 1297 | 1531 | 2.42 | 2.33 |
| Alpena | 66.1 | -0.7 | 1336 | 1482 | 3.92 | 3.19 |
| Houghton Lake | 66.1 | -1.0 | 1364 | 1482 | 3.95 | 3.19 |
| Muskegon | 69.2 | -1.0 | 1546 | 1701 | 3.61 | 2.94 |
| Vestaburg | 67.3 | -3.8 | 1541 | 1774 | 2.50 | 3.15 |
| Bad Axe | 67.3 | -2.6 | 1455 | 1785 | 4.56 | 2.87 |
| Saginaw | 69.8 | -1.4 | 1738 | 1785 | 3.96 | 2.87 |
| Grand Rapids | 70.5 | -0.3 | 1704 | 1968 | 2.09 | 3.06 |
| South Bend | 72.4 | 1.0 | 1862 | 1968 | 3.04 | 3.06 |
| Coldwater | 70.7 | -1.3 | 1720 | 1933 | 1.41 | 3.21 |
| Lansing | 68.9 | -1.3 | 1583 | 1933 | 4.17 | 3.21 |
| Detroit | 71.8 | 0.1 | 1826 | 1935 | 2.83 | 2.90 |
| Flint | 69.2 | -0.9 | 1605 | 1935 | 3.26 | 2.90 |
| Toledo | 71.5 | -1.3 | 1829 | 1935 | 2.08 | 2.90 |

Michigan

* Growing degree day accumulations are calculated with the 86/50 *corn* method and are summed beginning April 1, 1997.





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