

# MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

April 30, 1991



## Agriculture at WMU? — Open for Discussion

There's been an agricultural program at Western Michigan University (WMU) since the institution was founded in 1903 - a long and distinguished tradition. But during the 80s, ag enrollment, like enrollment all over the nation, dropped rather drastically, creating problems in terms of adequate class size.

According to WMU Associate Professor Max Benne, that's when university administration started a push to eliminate agriculture at WMU to cut costs. In 1990, enrollments to the ag majors were closed, prohibiting any new ag majors at WMU, although some general ag classes are still offered.

Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Susan Hannah, who represents the provost's office on curricular affairs, says those decisions were based on declining enrollment and declining funds from Lansing as well.

"At one time, there was a department of agriculture with 100 majors or more, but over a period of years, it has gotten smaller and smaller," says Hannah, claiming the problem didn't develop overnight. "The program became so small that, in its current form, it's no longer viable."

According to Benne, however, there are those who hope that agriculture can be revived as a general program at WMU and as parts of other majors to help address the small class size issue.

"We think we're past the peak crisis of ag class sizes, and we'd like to keep an agricultural presence here, not only to benefit students who want an agricultural degree, but because we feel it would be beneficial for this institution to help citizens in general learn more about agriculture," says Benne.

Benne pointed to WMU's annual bumper crop of new teachers as prime candidates who could make agriculture part of their program at WMU, suggesting that they would be able to take that basic knowledge

and understanding of agriculture and apply those principles in their classrooms.

A number of committee meetings and hearings to discuss the current predicament and future of the ag program included an undergraduate's study council hearing on April 16 at the request of the provost, Nancy Barret.

The council's recommendation to the provost, regarding the future of agriculture at WMU, is a mixed bag and inconclusive at this time, says Benne. "The council was very impressed with the need for agriculture and impressed with the people who spoke on our behalf. They definitely had their eyes opened to the possibilities," he said.

The recommendation reads: "We recommend that the Undergraduate Studies Council encourage the initiative to develop a new program and decline to act on the request to drop the agricultural majors, because this action would be meaningless since this decision has already been made by the administration."

"We think we can lower the number of ag classes and have a core curriculum of required courses, giving students a pretty broad opportunity, in conjunction with an advisor to pick out courses throughout the whole university for that major," says Benne.

The new major would be called Rural and Agricultural Resources, a major that Benne

### MFB Policy Passed by Voting Delegates to the 1990 State Annual "Agriculture Instruction at Western Michigan University"

Western Michigan University has a rich tradition in agriculture and has been built on a proud history of rural education since 1903. There is an immediate danger that all agricultural instruction at Western Michigan University will be eliminated.

"We urge the Board of Trustees and the administration of Western Michigan University to continue to offer general courses that will allow students to learn about agriculture and the foundation of our food and fiber system.

"We urge the teacher education curriculum include the opportunity for future teachers to learn how agriculture fits into their classrooms. Students and educators should be trained in agriscience and natural resources education.

"Michigan Farm Bureau offers its cooperation in developing curriculum for teachers that include examples from the agriculture industry to teach basic concepts in science, math, economics, social studies and other subjects."

Those wishing to comment or support the efforts to maintain an ag program at WMU should direct their comments to: Western Michigan University, c/o Nancy Barret, Provost, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5067.

feels would be very marketable in today's environment. It's hoped this new major will help WMU's number of ag majors rebound from the current low of 30, a considerable drop from the one time high of 100. In the past, those students chose either a general ag major or a major in agribusiness but very few returned to the farm.

A majority of those past graduates went into agricultural business areas including loan officers, chemical and seed sales representatives, and elevator management, as well as agency work in ASCS, SCS, and Farmers Home Administration

See "WMU," continued on page 8



Robert Brown graduated from WMU's ag program in 1990 and is now the agri-science teacher at Hopkins High School.

## Pesticide Certification Somewhat Less Than Expected

Some Michigan farmers may be in for a rude awakening this spring planting season, if the number of certified private applicators is any indication. According to Kathy Fedder, MDA pesticide certification manager, the increase in private applicator certifications was less than expected.

Fedder said there has been quite an increase in the number of people in the certification process due to: people anticipating Regulation 636 going into effect; the reclassification of pesticides from general use to restricted use; and atrazine reclassification.

"We have had an increase in certification, without a doubt, but we did expect a little more of an increase," said Fedder. "We have data that shows there are about 30,000 corn farmers out there, for example, but we've only got a total, all together, of 13,855 private applicators at this time."

Of the 13,855 certified applicators, 7,266 were certified within the last year and an additional 3,259 certificates are pending. There are currently 5,348 commercial certified applicators, 2,535 within the last 12 months and another 2,060 commercial certificates pending, according to the latest figures available.

"We have concerns that there may be a lot of private applicators out there who may be using or intend to use a restricted use pesticide, specifically atrazine, who are not certified," said Fedder. "We're also concerned that people may look to illegal type options such as having someone else purchase restricted use pesticides for them."

Fedder said the Pesticide and Plant Management Division of MDA worked closely with chemical dealers and county Extension offices in an attempt to reach everyone through "out-county exams" during December through May. Just how successful those efforts were will not be known until the spring season is in full gear.

"In counties where there appears to be a need, if there are 25-35 people minimum in a particular area needing an exam, we'll set up an exam and administer it there so all those people don't have to come through our regional office," says Fedder.

**Regulation 636**  
In a related matter, Fedder explained that Regulation 636 is a rule that's being written under authority of the 1988 amendment to Act 171, the Pesticide Control Act, and could be of interest to farmers. Fedder es-

timates Regulation 636 will likely become law July 1 of this year with a 90 day compliance period to follow.

"The amendment to the act is that anyone who applies pesticides as a scheduled and required work assignment, on the property of another in the course of their employment, will have to be a certified applicator or a registered technician," said Fedder. "Regulation 636 sets up the registered technician portion of the program." Fedder was quick to point out that there is an exclusion for farmers and hired labor, but under Regulation 636 there is some protection from civil liability, if label directions are followed in accordance with the law.

"At this time, a farmer will not be required to have his or her employees be certified or registered," said Fedder. "Of course, anyone purchasing and applying restricted use pesticides still has to be certified and still has to follow the label directions."

Under Regulation 636, the expiration date for certification and registration would change to December 31, as opposed to the birthdate of the individual. Fedder says the change was in response to requests by the farm community and dealers.

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## 2 In Brief...

### Exceptions to New Minimum Wage Are Few

Most employers must now meet the new minimum wage under the Fair Labor Standards Act, which rose to \$4.25 on April 1, 1991.

Five major agricultural exemptions exist for small operations, minors working with their parents, family members of the employer, workers hired on a piece-rate basis who worked less than 13 weeks in agricultural pursuits the previous year, and workers principally engaged in range production of livestock.

Additionally, the minimum wage law does not apply to:

Executive, administrative or professional jobs; workers employed casually for domestic service, babysitting or elder care; irrigators; workers processing maple sap into sugar or syrup; workers who haul fruit or vegetables from the field to the processor or first point of sale within the same state or who transport workers between the farm and any other point within the same state for work in harvesting of fruit and vegetables; workers engaged in forestry if fewer than eight are employed; workers who fish or process seafood; and employees of a country elevator that employs less than five workers.

### Hills Sees "Tough Fight" for Fast-Track Extension

U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills concedes that convincing Congress to renew the Bush administration's bid for more fast-track trade authority "is shaping up to be a pretty tough fight."

"We are handicapped, because we have no agreement to show and no benefits to market," Hills said of the seemingly uphill battle to overcome opposition. "Only in Washington is so much time spent trying to strike down agreements that don't yet exist."

In remarks to the European Council of the American Chambers of Commerce, Hills renewed her call for extension of the fast track, a congressional rule that allows her to negotiate trade pacts that cannot be amended by lawmakers. Without the authority, Hills contends, the U.S. cannot negotiate the proposed U.S.-Canada-Mexico pact or complete the Uruguay Round global trade talks under the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade.

Hills' task is made more difficult by the fact that U.S. business supporters have only started to become active in defending the plan. Opposition groups, meanwhile, have been crisscrossing Capitol Hill in lobbying efforts since early March.

Congress is expected to vote on Bush's fast track bid by the end of May. But the extension faces tough opposition, primarily from organized labor and environmental proponents worried about the impact of freer trade with Mexico. Opposition is strongest in the House, where many believe the bid would lose if a vote were taken today.

### Husbands and Wives Qualify Separately Says USDA

Husbands and wives involved in farming now qualify separately under USDA payment rules, allowing them to each collect up to \$50,000 in annual subsidies on the same farm, says USDA.

USDA said the new payment rules, a result of the 1990 farm bill, are valid if neither person is collecting payments, directly or indirectly, on another farm. Under the previous rule, a husband and wife were considered as one unit when it came to government payments. However, many farmers complained because the same sort of limitations didn't apply to other partnerships, such as a father and son.

USDA also announced a new inheritance provision which allows producers who inherit land subject to a Conservation Reserve Program contract, to earn payment without regard to any amount received under prior CRP contracts. A producer who had reached the \$50,000 payment limit on land enrolled in the CRP could collect up to another \$50,000 in payments on CRP inherited land.

For the first time, wool and program producers will fall under payment limitation rules. In 1991, payments will be limited to program producers who are "actively engaged in farming" and capped at \$200,000 per person.

### New Four Food Groups Full of Beans

The American Farm Bureau is condemning a proposal by an animal rights-oriented physicians group based in Washington, D.C. to omit meat and dairy products from the four basic food groups.

The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM) recently announced it would replace the traditional four food groups--meat, dairy products, grains, and fruits and vegetables--with four new food groups--vegetables, fruits, grains, and legumes.

The American Dietetic Association shares confidence in current government nutrition guidelines. "A diet with moderate quantities of lean meat, poultry, fish, and low-fat dairy products, is more likely to meet total nutrient needs than one without these foods," said ADA President Mary Abbott Hess.

AFBF's Kleckner pointed out that the USDA and the Department of Health and Human Services continually issue revised dietary guidelines based on nutrition research, while the PCRM's recommendation is based on a study of the Chinese diet which was never published in a peer-reviewed journal. "Rather than science, we believe the driving force behind this plan is the sponsoring group's reported commitment to promote strict vegetarian diets," Kleckner said.

### Renewed Push For Capital Gains Tax Cut

President George Bush is still stumping hard for lower capital gains taxes, telling members of the American Business Conference, a group of chief executives of fast-growing firms, "A capital gains tax cut isn't a sop to the rich. It rewards people who turn good ideas into goods and services that people need."

In a recent analysis of capital gains, AFBF Economist Ross Korves said, "The most positive point about a lower capital gains tax rate and indexing as investment incentives is that no tax break occurs unless the investment actually increases productivity and the value of the enterprise. Other incentives, like investment tax credits, result in tax breaks regardless of the economic payoff in efficiency of production and/or value of the firm."

Korves further pointed out that competition for capital, capital gains would allow the small entrepreneur to compete for funds with larger, more established firms.

### Anderson Re-elected to Farm Credit Board

Clinton County Farm Bureau member Jack A. Anderson has been re-elected to the board of directors of the Farm Credit Bank of St. Paul for his second three-year term. A dairy and grain farmer from St. Johns, Michigan, Anderson has also served as director and chairman of Farm Credit Services of Mid-Michigan. He is a graduate of Michigan State University and holds membership and board affiliations with the Clinton County Soil Conservation District and Clinton Health Corporation.

Farm Credit Bank of St. Paul and district associations are farmer-owned and farmer-directed financial cooperatives that provide credit and related services to more than 80,000 farmers in North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. The Seventh Farm Credit District is one of 12 that make up the Farm Credit System.

### Exploration Days 1991

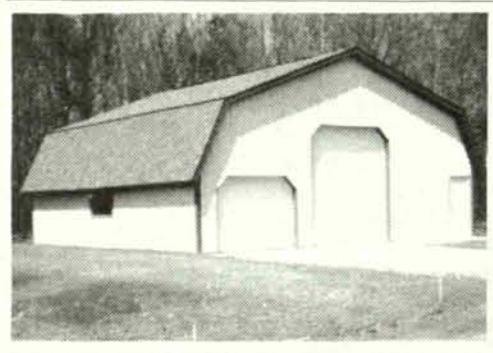
How can you take an airplane ride, learn to speak Japanese, ride the people mover in Detroit and have lunch in a foreign restaurant, all in a matter of three days? By attending the 1991 4-H Exploration Days, June 19-21, at Michigan State University. At Exploration Days, young people from all over Michigan will choose from one to 65 action-learning options from such favorite project areas as: animal science, leadership, photography, and many more.

To be one of the 3,000 Exploration Days participants or for complete program and registration information, contact your local county Extension Office.

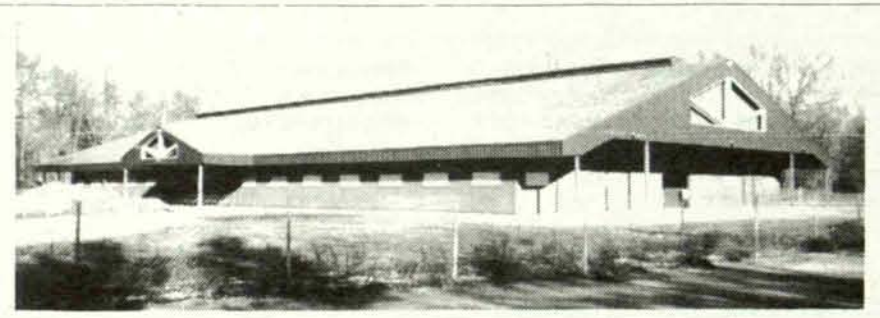
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### Commercial Driver's License

**Status:** Legislation to provide regulatory relief to custom harvesters and farm retail suppliers has been introduced in the U.S. Senate and is co-sponsored by an estimated 35 senators. A similar proposal has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives.

These bills are designed to give state governments the authority to waive federal commercial drivers license (CDL) requirements for vehicles used to transport farm supplies from the farm retailer to the farm; used in custom harvesting; and used in feedlot operations.

This agricultural waiver authority is consistent with the waiver authorization that was granted to states by the Department of Transportation (DOT) for farm vehicles. Farm fertilizer suppliers and custom harvesters face circumstances similar to farmers.

Unfortunately, DOT did not recognize the importance of vehicles used for custom harvesting, transporting farm supplies (fertilizer) from retail suppliers to, or from, a farm and vehicles used to transport livestock and feed, whether or not such vehicles are controlled or operated by the farmer.

**Farm Bureau Position:** Farm Bureau supports the bills and recommends they be enacted into law as soon as possible.

**Farm Bureau Contact:** Al Almy, extension 2040.

### Tax Issues

**Status:** Farm Bureau filed a statement with the House Ways and Means Committee indicating support for capital gains reinstatement, extension and expansion of the health insurance tax deduction and budget process reform.

Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski (D-IL) of the House Ways and Means Committee has warned he will not offer any tax legislation this year that loses revenue. He says that expiring tax provisions, such as the health insurance tax deduction, will not be extended unless offsetting revenue is found to pay for the provisions.

**Farm Bureau Position:** An attempt is being made to increase the number of co-sponsors of H.R. 784, a measure that would extend the current 25 percent health insurance tax deduction and increase it to 100 percent by 1996. As of now there are 115 co-sponsors. Michigan's co-sponsors thus far include:

**Rep. Robert Davis (R - 11th District)**    **Rep. Guy Vander Jagt (R - 9th District)**  
**Rep. Robert Traxler (D - 8th District)**    **Rep. Howard Wolpe (D - 3rd District)**  
**Rep. Fred Upton (R - 4th District)**

**Farm Bureau Contact:** Al Almy, extension 2040.

### Sanitary Food Transportation Act

**Status:** AFBF has requested that the Secretary of Transportation grant a waiver to farmers and ranchers from the regulations that will be issued under the Sanitary Food Transportation Act. Under terms of the act, there could be a federal inspector at all farm gates checking to see if farmers have properly sanitized their trucks for hauling livestock.

**Farm Bureau Position:** Farm Bureau contends that regulations issued by the Department of Transportation under the act should apply only to refrigerated motor or rail carriers used to transport meat on a carcass basis, since there is very little involvement by individual farmers in transporting fresh meat or poultry to meat-packing houses, food processing centers or in the retailing of meat.

**Farm Bureau Contact:** Al Almy, extension 2040.

### Right-to-Farm Practices: Pesticide and Nutrient Utilization

**Status:** The Michigan Commission of Agriculture approved a draft proposal for Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices for Pesticide Utilization and another draft proposal for Nutrient Utilization. The MDA will hold a public hearing on the practices this summer and it is anticipated CES will hold training sessions late fall and winter so that farmers will be familiar with the practices for the 1992 growing season.

A farmer is protected from nuisance law suits when following "generally accepted agriculture and management practices." The proposals include recommended practices for on-farm fertilizer storage, containment, and application, soil conservation practices, irrigation management, pesticide use practices, equipment use and calibration, applicator safety, environmental protection, transport of pesticides, and pesticide container disposal. The proposals also make reference to laws and regulations that a person applying agricultural pesticides must adhere to.

**Farm Bureau Position:** Farm Bureau has been involved in the work group to draft the proposed practices, but has not taken a position on the draft proposal. Farm Bureau will be encouraging its members to become familiar with the proposed practices and to attend public hearings when they are announced.

**Farm Bureau Contact:** Vicki Pontz, extension 2046

From MFB's Public Affairs Division, (517) 323-7000

American Farm Bureau's Toll Free Capitol Hotline Service

1-800-245-4630

### Property Tax Limitation

**Status:** On April 18, the House and Senate passed two separate, but tie-barred, bills -- S.B. 19 and H.J.R. "H." The combination of the two bills provides for a 1992 limitation and voter approval for long-term limitations on property taxes.

S.B. 19, as revised by the House, provides that 1992 real property assessments will be frozen on residential parcels at 1991 levels to address concerns regarding annual assessment increases. However, new construction and personal property would be subject to the assessment increases.

H.J.R. "H" provides voters an opportunity to limit property assessment increases up to the rate of inflation or 5 percent whichever is less, beginning in 1993. At the time the homestead is sold, it would be reassessed at 50 percent of market value and thereafter assessment increases would again be limited to inflation or 5 percent until the next sale. The proposal would be submitted to the voters at the regular November 1992 election.

The Headlee rollback continues and would limit the assessment increases by class of property. Voters would continue to have the opportunity to override and allow an increase, if approved at a local election.

**Farm Bureau Position:** Farm Bureau supports S.B. 19 and H.J.R. "H" to the extent that it begins to address rising property assessments and higher taxes. Stabilizing assessments will result in less revenue to schools which would be replaced through state funding, which would bring schools closer to 50 percent state funded as suggested in Farm Bureau policy.

**Farm Bureau Contact:** Ron Nelson, extension 2043

**Special Note:** The loss of revenue to K-12 and local units of government has not been resolved. Estimated loss during the two-year program is approximately \$40 million. Additional debate will focus on methods of replacing the lost revenue.

### OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

**Status:** The House rejected a Senate version of legislation, (H.B. 4010) which would have established guidelines for the use of off-road vehicles (ORV) in Michigan. As passed by the House, the trail plan would have to be approved by the Legislature in order to become effective. The Senate version, however, altered that portion of the bill to give the Legislature 20 session days to reject the plan after the bill became law. The bill now goes to a conference committee to resolve the differences between the Senate and House versions.

Meanwhile, the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) unanimously approved an off-road vehicle (ORV) trail plan during their April meeting. The trail plan approved by the NRC includes 7,259 miles of federal forest roads in both peninsulas and 3,276 miles of state forest roads in the Upper Peninsula. Trails in the Lower Peninsula include 1,500 miles of trails which now exist, 400 miles of snowmobile trails, 750 miles of cross country cycle trails and 746 miles of forest and county roads, all of which will be designated to include ORV use.

The new plan also includes three "scramble" areas, under which ORVs can operate freely on any part of the designated land and are located in Roscommon, Cheboygan and Oceana counties. All other lands will be closed to ORV use unless specifically posted as open. With the accompanying legislation, a trail improvement fund will be generated by user fees to allow further development and maintenance of the trails.

**Farm Bureau Position:** Farm Bureau supports the NRC action and H.B. 4010. We are encouraging prompt action by the conference committee so that the legislation can be enacted for the upcoming ORV season.

**Farm Bureau Contact:** Vicki Pontz, extension 2046.

### Bulk Storage Rules for Pesticide and Fertilizer

**Status:** The Michigan Commission of Agriculture approved a draft set of rules for bulk pesticide and fertilizer storage during their April meeting. The rules now go to public hearing, which will likely be held this summer before harvest season begins.

The rules include storage facility registration, siting requirements for new storage facilities, primary and secondary containment requirements of fluid bulk fertilizers and pesticides, security requirements, discharge response plans, inspection and maintenance requirements and record keeping requirements.

The rules currently apply to storage of bulk fertilizer and pesticides by a person who manufactures or distributes bulk fertilizer or pesticides and does not include storage of fertilizer or pesticides by an agricultural producer for use on land owned or leased by this producer.

**Farm Bureau Position:** MFB testified to the commission in favor of the rules, specifically the exemption for on-farm storage by agricultural producers, suggesting it would be more appropriate to address on-farm storage separately from commercial storage.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is in the process of drafting rules for on-farm storage. ASCS may be providing cost sharing for secondary containment construction, and SCS water quality technicians continue to make storage facility recommendations for farmers for the protection of groundwater. MFB has initiated a meeting with MDA, DNR, EPA, ASCS, SCS, and MSU to review the activities of each organization regarding on-farm storage.

**Farm Bureau Contact:** Vicki Pontz, extension 2046

**Michigan and Major Commodity Area  
Extended Weather Outlook**

T - Temp.	4/30.....5/15	4/30.....6/30
P - Precip.	T.....P	T.....P
Michigan	A.....N	A.....B
W. Corn Belt	N.....N	N.....B
E. Corn Belt	N.....N	N.....B
Wint. Wheat Belt	N.....N	N.....N
Spr. Wheat Belt	N.....N	A.....B
Pac. NW Wheat	A.....N	N.....N
Delta	N.....N	N.....A
Southeast	N.....N	N.....A
West Texas	N.....N	N.....A
San Joaquin	A.....B	A.....N

A-Above Average, B-Below Average, N-Normal, MA-Much Above, MB-Much Below, NP-No Precip.: Source: National Weather Office

# Weather

**Michigan Weather Summary**

Wetter than normal weather covered much of Michigan early April, causing substantial fieldwork delays. Rainfall was heaviest in central and northeastern sections of the Lower Peninsula, where more than 4 inches (in excess of 300 percent of normal) fell in some spots. Near record warm temperatures persisted through April 10, when a late winter storm brought colder, seasonable temperatures and accumulating snow to the northern third of the state.

Early warm temperatures rapidly increased base 50F growing degree day accumulations, leaving most overwintering crops about one - two weeks ahead of normal.

The latest outlooks through May and through June are calling for normal to warmer than normal temperatures and near normal to below normal precipitation. This scenario will likely increase evaporation rates and help reduce extensive spring fieldwork delays caused by earlier heavy rains.

For 4/1/91 to 4/15/91	Temperature		Accum. Grow. Degree Days*	Norm. Grow. Degree Days*	Precipitation	
	Observed Mean	Dev From Normal			Actual (inch.)	Normal (inch.)
Alpena	46	+8	78	15	1.48	1.19
Bad Axe	46	+5	88	38	2.33	1.29
Escanaba	39	+2	2	3	1.48	1.05
Grand Rapids	46	+6	122	62	4.29	1.76
Imlay City	47	+5	140	54	2.18	1.41
Lansing	50	+6	122	60	2.31	1.44
Ludington	47	+6	78	35	2.46	1.42
Marquette	41	+3	44	12	2.33	1.26
Sault Ste. Marie	38	+3	19	3	1.60	.98
Standish	44	+3	81	38	4.26	1.20
Tipton	49	+5	174	54	1.70	1.68
Traverse City	47	+8	93	21	1.36	1.22
Watervliet	49	+5	136	62	2.90	1.86

\* Growing Degree Days are based on B.E. Base 50F method and are accumulated from March 1, 1991. Normals are based on Climatological district averages for the same period.

**Use Of Growing Degree Days**

Growth and development of many plants and cold blooded organisms are dependent on the amount of heat present in or around an organism. Growers use this fact to help monitor development of crops, pests, and diseases during the course of a growing season through the use of growing degree days (GDDs), a simple, temperature-derived index.

Calculation of GDDs may take one of several forms depending on the application. However, all forms have a common principle - that the biological process of interest will not begin until a temperature threshold is reached or exceeded, and is often referred to as the base temperature. Many thresholds lie between 40F and 50F.

A grower may estimate critical plant or insect growth stages by relating GDD data to basic crop threshold information, helping to improve scouting and decision making capabilities. The best estimates will be obtained by taking on-site data and developing GDD relationships for specific production systems, crops, pests and grower needs.

Jeff Andresen  
Agricultural Meteorologist, MSU

**Frost/Fruit  
Damage Reports**

**Southwest**

Freezing temperatures of 24-25 degrees common in tree fruit areas, 20-22 degrees in blueberries. Tart cherries have very few live buds in most orchards. Frost protected and best sites still have crop less than 10% of normal production potential left. Grapes mixed, damage from 0 to 100% primnians killed, difficult to estimate crop loss as yet. Early blooming apples most severely damaged (Paula Red, Mutsu, and Ida Red). Many king and some side bloom in apples depending on location.

**Grand Rapids Area**

Had 25 degrees F frost on the morning of April 10 which did damage to a few king flowers on Delicious, MacIntosh, Ida Reds and others. Tart and sweet cherries were more heavily damaged. There is a tremendous number of buds on the apples at this time. Can easily have a big crop.

**Northwest**

Experienced very warm weather from April 4 through April 8 reaching a maximum of 80 degrees F on the 8th. The night of April 9 and early April 10, temperatures were recorded in Northwest Michigan from 23-29 degrees F.

**Oceana, Mason,  
Manistee and Benzie Counties**

The low temperature for the week was on the 11th. Lows were in the 20 to 25 degree F range in the district with 22 degrees F the most frequently mentioned. It was 22 degrees F in the Beulah area. At this point, the extent of damage is unclear. However, dark sweet cherries appear to be the most severely affected. Reports indicate damage up to 70% of blossom buds. Light sweets up to 50% blossom damage. Tart cherry injury varies with site. The area east of "Old U.S. 31" experienced the greatest damage.

From CES "CAT ALERT," Fruit Edition



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## AG EXPO To Focus on Secondary and Seedbed Tillage



Michigan State University's AG EXPO, scheduled for July 16 - 18, will be focusing on secondary and seedbed til-

lage options during field demonstrations, to assist farmers in meeting future conservation compliance requirements, according to Ag Expo Chairman, Bill Bickert.

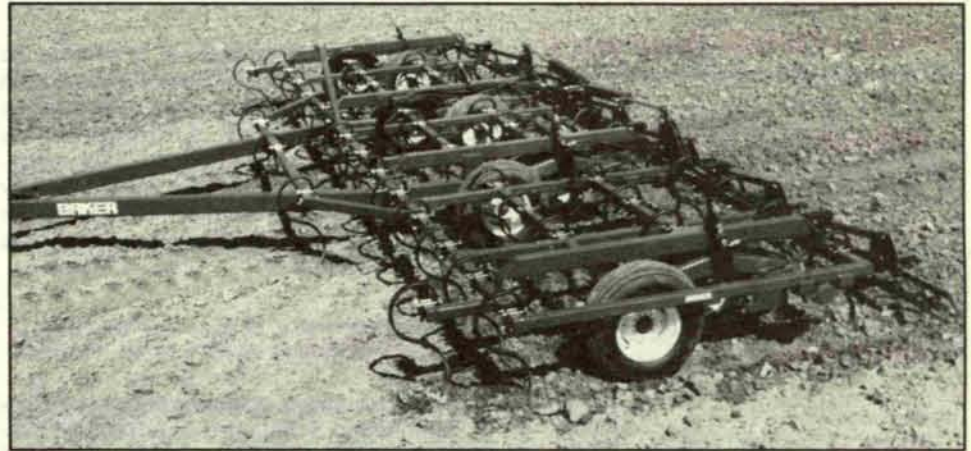
"Secondary and seedbed tillage are important field operations on 90 percent of Michigan's farms," said Bickert. "These tillage decisions affect options for and cost of weed, insect, and disease control, and the type of planters used. We know that a well-designed tillage and residue management plan will make an important contribution to the profitability and long-term sustainability of all Michigan farms."

According to MSU's Tim Harrigan, AG EXPO field demonstration chairman, the

field demonstrations should be of particular interest, since a 30 percent residue cover will be the minimum to meet SCS requirements. That 30 percent requirement will be based on actual measurements.

"Farmers will need to learn direct residue measurement and management, and then look at equipment needs to meet that requirement," says Harrigan. "Our demonstrations will assist participants in understanding those management techniques and adjustments they'll need to make. There will be four events taking place in 15 minute segments, and farmers should be in and out in one hour."

The 35-acre outdoor exhibit area should also be jam-packed with the latest farm equipment, products and services. According to Bickert, there are more exhibitors now than the total number last year. Show hours run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Tuesday, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday. For more information contact MSU AG EXPO at (517) 355-3477.



Baker Mfg. has developed a new line of high trash cultivators - the 9000 series. Using walking tandem beams on each axle assembly for superior depth control, the Baker 9000 line is available in two model styles: The 9100 model, available in 25', 28', 30', and 35' widths; and the larger 9200 model with widths of 40', 42' 6", 45' and 48' 6". Baker's 9000 models use the walking tandem axle design, allowing each wheel to independently adjust to ground conditions. Axles have an adjustable depth stop as standard equipment with positive lock settings for precise depth control. Both wings and center sections operate with single point depth control and adjust at the same rate for uniform depth control, even though wing leveling is controlled using a hydraulic slave cylinder system. For more information, contact Baker Mfg. at (405) 327-2034.

### CRP Acreage Figures Released

The USDA released a detailed state-by-state breakdown of the 564,989 new acres of farmland accepted into the conservation reserve program during the tenth signup.

Official acceptance will be announced later this summer, but the tentative acceptance of the 564,989 acres into the program boost overall enrollment in the program to about 34.5 million acres.

The tenth signup is the first under new land eligibility rules. In the past, only highly erodible land was allowed into the program. The 1990 farm bill contained provisions, however, intended to promote water quality and other environmental aims.

For more than 27,867 of the new acres tentatively accepted, USDA will purchase 15 to 30 year easements, including 19,666 acres for wildlife habitat improvements; 3,422 for filter strips; 1,952 for salt tolerant grasses to control salinity; and 1,071 for field windbreaks.

In Michigan, landowners bid a total of 58,068 acres for the CRP, with a total of 22,623 acres approved for the program. Total annual rental payments for the new acreage in Michigan is \$1,258,386, or an average of \$55.62 per acre, compared to the U.S. average of \$53.96 per acre.

The top five states in terms of acres accepted were: Montana, 51,258 acres; Iowa, 46,726; Texas, 45,010; Mississippi, 39,145; and Wisconsin with 37,715 acres.

### Kellogg Posts Record Earning and Sales

Kellogg Company earnings and sales reached record levels in the first quarter on continued strength in international ready-to-eat cereals and improvement in U.S. business, according to Knight Ridder News.

Earnings rose 69.4 percent to \$1.63 million, from \$96.3 million, a year earlier. Sales in the quarter rose 17.6 percent to \$1.42 billion from about \$1.21 billion.

William LaMonthe, Kellogg board chairman and chief executive officer, said in a statement, "Recent volume trends in the U.S. are encouraging, but we expect market conditions to remain extremely competitive. Our plans for the balance of the year call for a very aggressive marketing and new-product program as we continue to meet the private label challenge in the U.S. and the emergence of the General Mills/Nestle joint venture in Europe."

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6

## MARKETS

### Seasonal Commodity Price Trends (long term)

Wheat	↓
Corn	↓
Soybeans	↓
Hogs	↑
Cattle	↓

Index: ↑ = Higher Prices; ↓ = Lower Prices; TP = Topping; BT = Bottoming; ? = Unsure

### Wheat

No decision on export credits for wheat sales to the Soviets as yet. Timely rains have been damaging to wheat futures. USDA's supply and demand report showed wheat feeding and residual use up 50 million bushels. The ending stocks estimate fell to 896 million bushel from 957 million bushel a month ago.

### Cattle

Slightly weaker remains the trend in cash prices. Cutout values have bounced around, but are holding about steady. It will take some very positive news to push prices higher as the summer months approach. Market tone will be based on reaction to the Cattle-on-Feed Report.

### Hogs

Hog slaughter is nearing the highest weekly volume of the year. The market is approaching a turn in the price trend as it begins its seasonal decline. Clearing weather in the central U.S. will lead to a decline in marketings. Consumer demand is okay, but still not strong enough to bolster the market.

### Corn

The corn market appears to be nearing the top for old crop sales. Typically, there is an occasional seasonal planting rally which is weather related. Lack of Soviet credit has partly hurt the spring rallies. USDA's supply and demand report was viewed slightly negative as exports were cut 75 million bushels and ending stocks increased by a similar amount.

### Soybeans

Soybean market action has been very disappointing. Selling pressure from the new Brazilian crop (their harvest is now in full swing). Heavier selling pressure may be delayed until Argentina's harvest comes on in May. USDA's supply demand and world crop assessments showed a larger South American crop and an increase in the U.S. carryover by 10 million bushels to 360 million bushels.

### USDA Releases Year-End Stocks Forecast

The USDA's end-of-year stocks forecast raised the projected closing stocks inventory on corn at 1.36 billion bushels, higher than the 1.285 billion prediction in March and the 1.344 billion a year ago.

The USDA also pegged the soybean carry-over higher than a month earlier. Wheat stocks were projected lower, presumably because of heavier feeding to livestock.

### Meat Imports Will Not Trigger Quotas

The USDA says estimated meat imports in the second quarter of 1991 will not be high enough to trigger import quotas.

Meat imports are pegged at 1.28 billion pounds in 1991, about 38.5 million below the trigger level of about 1.318 billion, according to Richard Crowder, USDA undersecretary. The law allows the president to limit imports of meat, especially beef and veal, if import quantities are estimated to exceed a certain level.

### Cattle-On-Feed Figures Below Forecast

USDA's quarterly report showed fewer cattle on feed than expected, but any support for futures will be tempered by the prospect of record high second-quarter marketings and the largest on-feed inventory since 1973.

If USDA's second-quarter market projections of 6.375 million head is correct, it will result in not only the largest fed marketings figure ever for that period, but also the largest quarterly number ever, according to Chuck Levitte, senior livestock analyst with Shearson Lehman.

**USDA's on-feed figure of 108 percent of last year is 16 percent above the 10-year average, while the first-quarter placement figure is 7 percent above the average and marketings are 3 percent below the average, Levitt said.**

The sluggish marketing rate is the result of bullish attitudes among producers, light placement weights, longer finishing times and heavier marketing weights, according to analysts. The slow market rate was seen in weight breakdowns, which reflected record large supplies of steers weighing 900 to 1,099 pounds and record large supplies of heifers weighing more than 900 pounds.

One of the most surprising categories in the report was the March marketings figure, which at 96 percent of last year, was well above trade expectations and at the high end of pre-release estimates. Because steer and heifer slaughter in March fell significantly from year-ago levels, the seven state marketing figure implies slaughter for those cattle not fed in feedlots was at a near standstill.

## Dairy Market Activity

### Inventory Management Study Moved Up

Agriculture Secretary Edward Madigan is moving up the date for the conclusion of a standby inventory management study. The 15-day public comment period will be opened following the May 15 announcement of the study in the *Federal Register*. The study will be completed by June 15, so that the secretary can begin work with Congress more quickly on the current dairy situation.

### AFBF Dairy Action Identified

The AFBF Dairy Advisory Committee has set the framework for positive action. The AFBF Board of Directors has supported these recommendations and is actively seeking action. State presidents recently participated in a conference call to step up action on the recommendations and identified additional areas of concern.

The recommendations include:

- Actively support the adoption of higher standards for solids content of fluid milk patterned after those used in California.
- Actively support efforts to increase the export of dairy products through use of the Export Enhancement Program, Dairy Export Incentive Program, Public Law 480 and other appropriate means.
- Support an accelerated timetable for consideration of USDA's recommendations on inventory management proposals.
- Congressional hearings on the farm-to-retail price spread.
- Include dairy producers under the provisions of the Packers and Stockyard Act.
- Increased activity in opposition to assessments, loan origination fees and taxes on farm commodities.

### USDA Increases Dairy Export Incentive

The USDA has announced that the Canary Islands, the Republic of Korea, and Kuwait will be eligible for dairy products under the Dairy Export Incentive Program. Under that program, bonuses are now available to 73 countries for milk powder and to 61 countries for butter fat. The bonus commodities would be from CCC stocks.

The American Farm Bureau had urged USDA to make every effort to increase exports of dairy products, according to John Keeling, AFBF assistant director of national affairs.

From MFB's Commodity Activities and Research Division (517) 323-7000

## Leahy "Emergency Dairy Adjustments Bill"

Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) introduced legislation to temporarily increase fluid milk prices and increase the minimum standards for fluid milk product. Farm Bureau member-policy advocates market-oriented principles that serve agriculture on a long-term basis. Our legislative positions are examined carefully and committed to following the policies developed by our members. AFBF expressed opposition to this measure — not a popular position with many dairy producers. However, many producers were not aware of all that was included in the proposed "Emergency Dairy Adjustments" including:

### Interference with Market Forces.

Currently, price signals in the dairy sector are telling producers to cull cows and not expand production. Livestock markets can handle these cull cows without depressing prices and dairy producers can receive a reasonable return for cull cows. Establishing a price, which is considerably above the market price, based on government intervention in the market place will undoubtedly cause expanded dairy production and a reduction in cow culling.

### Reopens Farm Bill

The changes in dairy policy contained in the "Emergency Dairy Adjustments" are significant and have strong long-term implications for dairy producers. These changes made without the benefit of hearings, at least indirectly, open the 1990 farm bill. A free for all threatening the delicate compromises of the 1990 farm bill could have erupted.

### "Deficiency Payment" Program for Grade B Producers

The payment authorized for Grade B producers establishes the precedent of a deficiency program for dairy, a drastic step taken without the benefit of hearings. A payment of 50 cents per hundredweight would have been paid to Grade B producers because they aren't marketing any fluid milk. A reduced interest loan program would be established to allow eligible producers to upgrade facilities and allow participation in milk marketing orders.

### Budget Implications

Although the bill was scored as revenue neutral to revenue positive, it created some real questions regarding budget impacts. As in the past, government financial commitments were not adequately addressed, such as the costs to the Commodity Credit Corporation.

### WIC Funding

The willingness to assign funds from the expanded Class I pool to offset any reductions in participation in the Women Infant and Children (WIC) program raises serious long-term questions. Linking funding of nutrition or other government food programs directly to farm programs based on the assumption that farmers are the beneficiaries of these programs would have dire consequences.

### Trade

The mandate that 95 million tons of butter be dumped on the world market in the next two years will send absolutely the wrong signal to our trading partners. It is clearly hypocritical as we work to eliminate this type of subsidized sales by the European Community (EC) to engage in the same activity. We invite retaliation and erode a world market economy we are struggling to develop.

**FARM  
BUSINESS  
OUTLOOK**

## MAY 1991 Discussion Topic: The Policy Development Process

Policy development is the anchor of Farm Bureau beliefs. Our organization is recognized around the nation for the grass roots foundation of its philosophy and activities.

Community Action Groups are the bedrock of policy development. Over the next few months, groups of Farm Bureau members around the state will begin discussing the crucial local, state and national issues that affect their industry and way of life. The ideas they develop will be forwarded to county policy development committees, who will use the suggestions to help form proposed policies to be considered at the county annual meeting.

Local policies approved at the county annual become county Farm Bureau policy for the year. Policies on state and national issues are forwarded to the state Policy Development Committee.

The state Policy Development Committee takes the county Farm Bureau policies, along with input from commodity advisory committees and other sources, and constructs a slate of proposed policies to be discussed by delegates to the Michigan Farm Bureau annual meeting.

State policies approved by the delegates become the official policy of the Michigan Farm Bureau. National policies are sent on to the American Farm Bureau Federation Policy Development Committee.

At this level, the national policy suggestions from Michigan are considered along with policy ideas from the other state Farm Bureaus. The AFBF Policy Development

Committee develops their slate of proposed policies for presentation to delegates. Policy resolutions that are approved become the official national policy of the American Farm Bureau.

These county, state and national policies provide Farm Bureau members a powerful weapon for taking positive action on behalf of their industry and way of life. Few organizations can tackle a controversial issue like wetlands, food safety or the Farm Bill, and have the confidence of Farm Bureau members in the sound value of their actions. Farm Bureau members are secure in knowing that their policy has been thoroughly discussed and debated. Their policy represents a genuine consensus that contains the most progressive thinking on a particular issue.

Through the years, Community Action Groups have initiated action on a wide variety of important issues. In the southeast part of the state, Community Action Groups became concerned about impact of a radioactive waste disposal facility proposed for some of the most valuable farmland in the state. Their policy proposals helped spur Farm Bureau action that resulted in the cancellation of the disposal project in the area.

Policy developed by Community Action Groups also played a major role in organizational action on issues ranging from wildlife crop damage, to garbage backhaul, to the farm bill. One Michigan Community Action Group idea even had international impact. The Food For Peace program originated from a Huron County group that

was concerned about building new export markets.

This month, your own Community Action Group will have the opportunity to provide policy ideas to your county Policy Development Committee. The committee in your county has been asked to develop three questions for you to discuss at your meeting: one question each on a local, state and national issue.

Your Discussion Leader should take these questions and use them to generate ideas, concerns and suggestions that will then be sent back to the county Policy Development Committee.

Please take advantage of this opportunity to "make a difference" in agriculture and Farm Bureau. Policy development is a critical element of successfully leading your industry into a prosperous future.

### Discussion questions:

1. What is the most critical issue facing agriculture and rural communities on a:
  - National Basis?
  - State Basis?
  - Local Basis?
2. What is the most important issue facing you?
3. Send your comments to:
  - Michigan Farm Bureau
  - Community Activities Dept.
  - Box 30960
  - Lansing, MI 48909-8460.

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### National Initiative for Biotechnology Needed

The United States is a world leader in biotechnology and its leadership should benefit agriculture, help clean up the environment, produce new drugs and discover new energy sources, according to the Report on National Biotechnology Policy issued by the President's Council on Competitiveness.

The report calls for domestic policies supporting research, elimination of unnecessary regulations and private sector incentives to lead the way, according to Dr. Ann Sorenson, assistant director of AFBF's Natural Resources Division. "Biotechnology can produce faster, more precise advances in such things as nutrition, taste and appearance in food products."

### Corn May Be Lethal To Insects Someday

Pioneer Hi-Bred International, a leading seed producer and Ecogen, Inc., an agricultural biotechnology firm, have announced a licensing agreement which could one day make corn plants lethal to insects such as the European Corn Borer.

Ecogen produces an insecticidal gene which now becomes available to Pioneer for introduction into seeds to make plants harmful to bugs, but having no known harmful effects on humans, animals or plants. Officials say it will take several years before the genetically altered seed corn becomes commercially available.

### MacSharry - Madigan Talks to Stir GATT Progress

Talks between Agriculture Secretary Ed Madigan and European Community Commissioner Ray MacSharry May 2 in Washington will be aimed at stirring new action in the stalled trade negotiations of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, according to *Knight-Ridder News*. "These talks are vital if the talks are really going to get moving again," said a MacSharry aide.

### District Five Young Farmers and Schuette Meet

Michigan Department of Agriculture Director Bill Schuette and 50 young farmers from district five (Clinton, Eaton, Genesee, Ingham and Shiawassee counties) met for dinner and discussion on a number of issues during a question and answer session that followed.

Right to Farm was high on Schuette's list of priorities, and he encouraged the young farmers to take a pro-active approach. "It's your leadership in Right to Farm that really should be your focus, and is really going to be the key to growth and expansion in your industry," Schuette told the young farmers.

The where and how of MDA budget cuts was discussed also. Schuette assured the group that the "food safety aspects of MDA will be maintained." Schuette explained the department's \$31.4 million budget underwent a 9.2 percent cut in 1991 and that it would be reduced further to \$26 million for 1992, by targeting "non-regulatory" functions of MDA.

In response to questions about MDA's role in food safety, Schuette told the group he would like to see Michigan establish a scientific review panel to answer questions from an objective standpoint to replace Hollywood hype that currently dominates food safety issues.

Questions about the defunct Michigan Family Farm Development Act (MFFDA) were posed by the group as well. Schuette explained the act was crippled by the 1986 Tax Reform Act, by removing the tax exempt status for bonds to finance the program. The MFFDA was discontinued as part of the budget cutting process.



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**Mail by June 21 to:** Summerfest, Michigan Farm Bureau, P. O. Box 30960, Lansing, MI 48909. Only 2,000 tickets are available and will sold on a first come-first served basis.

# 8 Farm Equipment Road Safety Tips

**W**hen farmers take to public roadways to transport equipment, production supplies, and harvested crops, the resulting mix of slow and fast vehicles can lead to unwanted accidents.

Farm equipment is involved in about 30,000 accidents on public roads a year, according to National Safety Council estimates. About half of those accidents involve collisions with other vehicles. The rest are single-vehicle accidents — jackknives, upsets, runs off the road, and collisions with stationary objects like bridges and culverts.

The Safety Council recommends that farm vehicle operators take these steps to prevent roadway accidents:

- Be sure you can see. Clean cab windows, and keep your lights and wipers in good condition.

- Be sure you can be seen. Along with your flashing lights, clearly display the orange triangular SMV (Slow Moving Vehicle) emblem on your vehicle. Be sure the emblem is not mud-encrusted, faded, or improperly mounted.

- Make sure wagon tires are properly inflated and the hitch and load are secure. Nothing in your load should stick out enough to catch on tree branches or be struck by passing vehicles. Observe regulations concerning length, width, weight, lights, reflectors, safety chains, and warning placards for big loads or hazardous materials.

- Move wide machinery only during daylight hours when traffic is light. Before moving large or heavy loads on unfamiliar roads or driveways, check the routes for hazards — underpasses, weak bridges, low power lines, or narrow passages. Use a second vehicle with flashing lights to accompany large pieces of equipment.

- Allow only licensed drivers to transport farm machinery for any distance on a public road. Although many youngsters operate tractors in the field, they may not have the knowledge and judgment to deal safely with difficult traffic situations. Never carry extra riders. Many riders are senselessly killed or maimed in falls from farm machinery.

- Keep driveways and access lane sightlines clear. Cut away growth blocking the view and avoid planting tall crops where they might hide a view of oncoming traffic.

- If traffic is closer than a fifth of a mile, stop until it passes. It can take as much as 10 seconds to get fully onto or across a road from a dead stop, and a car moving at 55 mph would travel about 800 feet during that time.

- Drive cautiously, with your flashing lights on. Try to keep the entire vehicle in your lane or at least on your side of the center line. Pull over to let others pass if necessary. Watch for soft



### From Farm Bureau Insurance

shoulders, ditches, culverts, posts, and other roadside hazards. Obey all stop signs and slow down or stop at country road intersections lacking signs.

- When road and load conditions are normal, drive at full road speed to reduce the difference between you and traffic following you. But if the road is rough or slippery, or your vehicle is hard to handle, slow down.
- Keep the load within the tractor's ability to slow and stop, especially if the trailing wagon or implement lacks brakes. If you can't "shift on the go," then you can avoid a mid-hill shift stop or stall by shifting to a lower gear before climbing a hill. When descending a hill, shift down for better control.
- Signal for turns if possible. When turning right, don't swerve into the opposite lane. Before turning left, make sure no one is trying to pass. Avoid sudden or unexpected maneuvers. Extendable rear view mirrors will help you keep track of what's going on behind your vehicle.
- If something goes wrong with your vehicle, pull off the road as far as you can. If possible, set out reflectors and flares to alert other drivers.

### "WMU," continued from page 1

Hannah suggests the future contains a number of possibilities for a revised curriculum.

"When they (faculty) have a formal proposal for a curriculum on paper, it will be presented first to the department curriculum committee, then it goes to the college and finally to the university, and I expect that to happen this fall," she said.

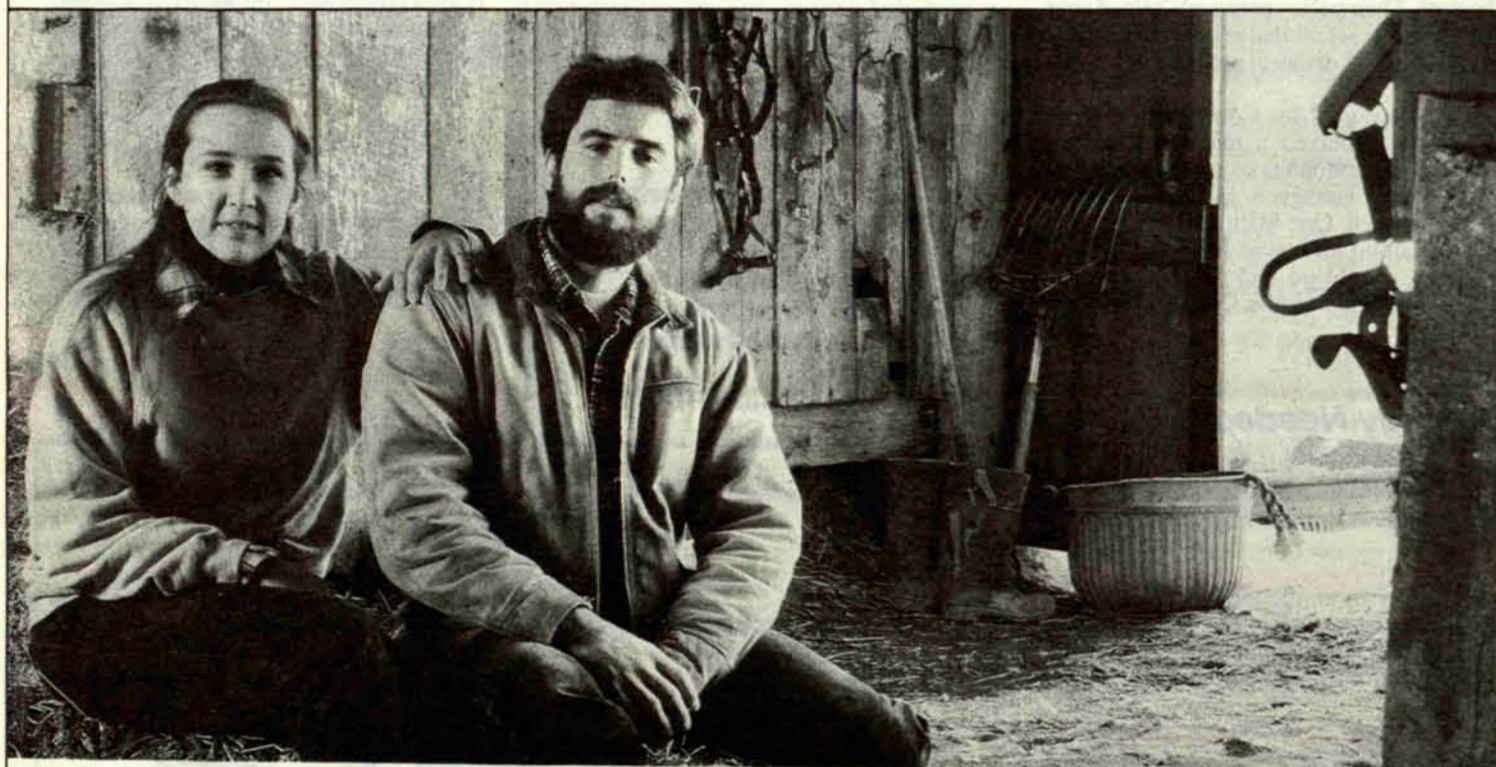
"Right now, the agriculture program is located in the college of education; however, there is no reason that it has to stay there," said Hannah. "There's opportunities for a revised program to be moved over to biology or into geography, with an environmental study thrust. It all depends on where they want to put their emphasis, and that's up to the faculty who are going to initiate this."

Benne emphasizes that if the WMU ag program is discontinued, a student's only option for an agricultural degree program within the state of Michigan is MSU, rather unusual compared to most other states, says Benne.

"Most agricultural states have ag programs at more than just one university, such as Illinois that has three universities offering ag programs in addition to their land grant university," said Benne. "I think we complement the MSU program - we're general and they're very specialized. We have many students who start here and then, if they want to specialize, they'll transfer to MSU."

"The reason we have such a good system of agriculture at the moment is because people in the past were willing to invest in agricultural education, and I don't think that has to be just at the land grant university."

"We need people who are not only specialized in agriculture, but also people who have a broad picture of society well enough that they can also be an advocate for agriculture within the larger framework of society," he said.



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