

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

MICHIGAN'S ONLY STATEWIDE FARM NEWSPAPER

MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU



MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU

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Narrow rows — How low can you go?

USDA approves early-out option on CRP contracts

Citing tight domestic and world grain supplies, USDA announced plans to allow producers to opt out early on Conservation Reserve Program contracts expiring Sept. 30. Nationwide, that could mean, potentially, another 15.3 million acres coming back into production this spring.

According to Michigan's Farm Service Agency Agricultural Program Specialist Bob Payne, 67,700 acres in Michigan are scheduled for contract expiration on Sept. 30 and would be eligible for the early-out option. "Some of those acres would not meet the eligibility requirements, so the actual acres eligible for early release would be less than 67,000 acres," he advised.

Payne said that land devoted to useful life easements, windbreaks, grass waterways, shallow water areas, filter strips, or land within an average of 100 feet of a stream or permanent water body will not be eligible for the early-out option.

Eligible land must have an erodibility index of 15 or less, and if classified as highly erodible, producers must have an approved conservation plan. If the ground is to be used for haying or pasture, producers must also have an approved haying or grazing plan.

USDA plans to announce sign-up dates and other details as soon as they become available, once the rule-making process is completed. USDA is reportedly going to also offer options on contract extensions before the early-out sign-up period. Payne predicts that it could be late February or early March before all of the details are finalized and applications accepted.

In total, over 36 million acres have been enrolled in CRP with payments of \$1.8 billion made to approximately 375,000 contracts. USDA Secretary Dan Glickman, said the early-out option will allow producers to take advantage of high market prices while also allowing the department to meet its responsibility of ensuring sufficient supplies of grain to meet market demand.

Meanwhile, traders at the Chicago Board of Trade called the announcement neutral to slightly friendly to the markets, since the market had been trading early-out rumors for over a week. USDA also estimates that producers will withdraw only 1 million to 3 million acres ahead of schedule from CRP.



Making the decision to switch to 15-inch rows was easier than finding a corn head to harvest them with for Farm Bureau member Don Morse of Saginaw County. He used a design from a three-row prototype created by Illinois farmer Marion Calmer to build the first 11-row, 15-inch corn head in the country. Morse was pleased with how well the narrow-row head worked on harvesting over 400 acres of corn last year.

Still no 1995 farm bill

Congress takes a three-week vacation without a final farm bill package or a budget deal.

Don't look for any direction from Congress in making your farm management decisions for the 1996 growing season until at least the end of February. Politics and a three-week congressional recess have prevented both the House and the Senate from finalizing a farm bill package that would assist producers in making management decisions for the 1996 growing season.

During the two days preceding the recess, events surrounding the efforts by Congress to pass a new Farm Bill changed by the hour, according to MFB Public Affairs Director Al Almy.

Almy said, that despite House Agriculture Committee approval of a free-standing farm bill on Jan. 30 that was almost identical to the Freedom-to-Farm Act (which President Clinton vetoed as part of the budget reconciliation package), efforts to waive a three-day rule failed, preventing the full House from voting on the measure.

"The three-day rule prevents a bill approved by committee to be considered on the floor before three days have passed, to allow committee members who desire to file comments in the report that accompanies the bill to the floor," Almy said. "Congressman Pat Roberts, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, then tried to get unanimous consent from the House to consider the farm bill on Feb. 1, which also failed."

The House then adjourned until Feb. 26. Almy said, there is some speculation that the House might return before then to consider the farm bill and an

increase in the debt ceiling, but only time will tell at this point.

Late Feb. 7, the Senate passed a 1995 farm bill by a vote of 64-32. The bill had bipartisan support with 44 Republicans and 20 Democrats voting for it on final passage. Farm Bureau urged passage of the bill without weakening amendments.

Following are some of the provisions included in the bill passed by the Senate:

- The bill provides for full planting flexibility for farmers but restricts production of certain fruits and vegetables.
- Farmers would have the opportunity to sign seven-year market transition contracts. During each of the seven years these farmers would receive guaranteed but declining payments not linked to market prices. Payment eligibility would be linked to whether a farmer has farmed a crop for three of the last five years.
- Mandatory acreage idling and other production controls would end immediately.
- Assigned acreage planting limits for domestic sugar growers would end and the guaranteed minimum price support would in effect be lowered 1 cent a pound.
- The current dairy program would not be changed. An amendment to delete a provision creating a Northeast Dairy Compact was approved.
- Payments would be available to farmers who agree to keep wetlands out of production.

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COVER STORY

Interest in 22- and 15-inch rows appears to be spreading. Michigan producer first to build 15-inch corn head.

Once thought of as a novel idea reserved for specialty crops such as dry bean and sugar beets, narrow rows are quickly proving their worth in more typical crops, drawing the interest of more and more Michigan crop producers. A standing-room-only crowd of 237 producers gathered recently in Frankenmuth to hear the latest on narrow rows and to get answers on how to plant and, most importantly, how to harvest them.

According to Michigan State University research trials, 22-inch rows have shown an average 7 percent yield increase in corn, an additional 2½ bags per acre in dry beans, and an additional 1.2 tons per acre in sugar beets. Equally important, sugar content and quality is improved, according to Saginaw County Field Crops Agent Steve Poindexter.

Although 22-inch rows have been in the spotlight for quite some time in the state's sugar beet and dry bean growing region, the results of narrow rows in corn, and the availability of factory-built planters capable of planting 15-inch rows, has many producers poised to make the switch to narrow rows, says Poindexter.

"In this area, 22-inch rows fit our system the best because there's sugar beets in the rotation," Poindexter explained. "However, if you're a corn and soybean producer, you may want to look at 15-inch row widths, since you aren't limited to 22-inch row widths to harvest sugar beets. I have no doubt that there's going to be a significant amount of

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News in Brief

Group alleges use of BGH increases risk of cancer

At a Washington, D.C., news conference, a group calling itself the Cancer Prevention Coalition charged that consumption of milk from cows treated with bovine growth hormone (BGH) could increase the risk of breast and colon cancer in humans. The group is chaired by long-time anti-chemical activist Samuel Epstein, professor of public health at the University of Illinois.

The allegation theorizes that BGH increases the presence of the natural protein IGF-1 (insulin-like growth factor I), which, Epstein says, increases the chance that normal breast cellular activity will transform into the development of cancer cells.

In response, the Food and Drug Administration said the allegations are based on blatantly false assumptions. Representatives of the American Medical Association and the American Cancer Society also said the charge was nonsense. Epstein's claims are not new; he was active throughout the BGH approval process and those claims were rejected back then by scientific authorities.

FDA said the coalition's findings are scientifically unfounded. All the studies cited by Epstein were not original works (published prior to 1994), the agency said, and it believes that Epstein's interpretations of the data are inaccurate. ■

Recent farm break-in "wake up call" to animal rights terrorism

The break-in at a mink ranch near Sheboygan, Wis., earlier this month, should serve as a "wake up call" to Wisconsin farmers that animal rights terrorism exists in their state, according to the Wisconsin Farm Bureau.

A group called the Animal Liberation Front has taken credit for illegally releasing 400 mink at the Sheboygan ranch. This group also took credit for previous terrorist attacks around the nation, including arson at a Michigan State University animal research laboratory, a burglary at the Rocky Mountain Fur Cooperative in Montana and a raid at Washington State University.

"Livestock farmers in Wisconsin should become more concerned about the animal rights

Fischler: No backing down on EU meat hormone ban

European Union Farm Commissioner Franz Fischler said the European Union (EU) has no intention of ending a ban on imports of hormone-treated meat or striking a deal with the U.S. The EU voted to continue its ban on imports of growth hormone-treated beef.

The European Parliament also passed a resolution calling for another conference on growth hormone use to be held in 1996. This conference — a follow-up to one held last year — will include representatives from producer, consumer, developing country and animal rights activist groups.

Fischler said, the EU should be ready to enter a trade war with the United States to defend its ban.

"We don't contemplate lifting the ban or negotiating with the Americans," Fischler said of the eight-year-old ban, noting the EU is still justifying its ban on the basis of scientific data. However, at a recent scientific conference, beef hormones were proven to be fine for human consumption.

Fischler said, European demand for beef could drop by at least 20 percent, or 1.6 million tons, if the ban on U.S. beef is lifted. He said, the EU would vigorously defend any challenge to the ban through the World Trade Organization, but conceded the fight would be tough.

"They (U.S.) appear to have the upper hand for the time being," Fischler said. "The EU will be well advised to play their cards close to their chests."

U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor has repeatedly said, that if the import ban continues, the U.S. will file a formal complaint with the World Trade Organization. ■

Bt-resistant corn patent approved

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office has given DeKalb Genetics the first U.S. patent for pest-resistant corn plants. The corn is injected with *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) insecticidal proteins, which render the plants immune to the European corn borer. DeKalb expects to market this super pest-resistant corn in 1997. ■

Michigan 1995 vegetable summary

Michigan vegetable growers produced 832,100 tons of fresh market and processing vegetables, excluding strawberries, in 1995, according to the Federal/State Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service. This represents a 7 percent decrease over last year's production of 895,280. Spring weather conditions were cool, and some crops got off to a slow start. Summer temperatures were hot and humid, causing the harvest season to end early for some crops. Some acreage was lost due to the heat and isolated heavy rains.

Fresh market production, including the dual purpose crops asparagus, cauliflower and celery, was down slightly from 1994. Asparagus production was up 31 percent, carrots rose 31 percent, and snap beans were up 16 percent from a year ago; cantaloupe, cauliflower and sweet corn also had increases of production. Several fresh market vegetables, however, had lower production: onions were down 13 percent; cabbage fell 26 percent; cucumbers were down 7 percent; celery, bell peppers and tomatoes fell by 6 percent from 1994.

Processing production decreased for all of Michigan's processing vegetables. This decrease caused the processing production for Michigan to go down 14 percent from last year. ■

Grain trader to use crop maps

Starting next month, Chicago grain traders will be able to use crop maps on their computers to see how specific crop fields are doing around the United States. The traders will be able to use "vegetation greenness maps" gleaned from a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather satellite. The maps were created by Ecosystem Testing Designs Inc. and the University of Kansas.

The new data will assist farmers and traders in determining when crops are ready for harvest. Subscribers to the system will receive four different maps on their computers, which will be updated every two weeks. Similar maps are being developed for China, South America and other areas. ■

Another use for soybeans?

The Agricultural Research Service reports that an enzyme from soybean hulls is replacing formaldehyde in adhesives, abrasives, protective coatings and similar products. The enzyme, soybean peroxidase, can be used for products ranging from medical diagnostic tests to removal of chlorine-containing pollutants. ■

Fruit production 1995

The mild winter of 1995 and above normal temperatures during most of the growing season spelled a bountiful fruit harvest in the Great Lakes State, according to the Federal/State Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service. Apple output was a state record, exceeding 29 million bushels for the first time. Peach production rebounded from the disastrous 1994 crop. Tart cherry poundage exceeded market demand, causing economic hardship for many growers. The high quality sweet cherry crop, however, brought higher prices. While large, the blueberry and Concord grape harvests were diminished by dry conditions. Fall harvest weather was very good for the second year in a row.

Apple production was a record high 1,220 million pounds, up 20 percent from a year earlier. The previous record was established by the 1,100 million pound crop of 1985. The preliminary farm-level value of the crop was \$122 million, up 40 percent from 1994. The yield estimate was 22,600 pounds per acre. Michigan ranked second among states in apple output.

Tart cherry production hit the 310 million pound level, 81 percent of the national total. Sixty

Meat inspection rules open for comment

Public comments are being accepted on the USDA's plans to overhaul meat and poultry rules and regulations. The major part of the update would require federally inspected meat and poultry plants to adopt a science-based preventive system of food safety controls. Comments on the plan are being accepted through Feb. 27.

Nearly three-fourths of existing rules are scheduled for change or elimination. Some labeling rules would become more flexible and would allow use of "low-fat" or "light turkey" on products such as hot dogs and turkey ham made with substitute ingredients that change nutritional values.

USDA also has plans for a sweeping reorganization of its meat and poultry inspection division. The Food Safety and Inspection Service plans to consolidate 50 field offices into 18 centers and reorganize its headquarters in Washington, D.C.

The shuffle would consolidate plant inspection, compliance, import inspection and egg products inspection into one structure. The bureaucracy in the plant inspection area would be trimmed and more resources allocated toward "front-line" inspection. ■

U.S. predicted to become beef exporter in 1996

The United States is poised to become a net exporter of beef this year, according to the National Cattlemen's Association. U.S. beef exports increased in volume by 460 percent between 1980 and 1995, NCA said. The value of the shipments rose by 650 percent during the same time period.

In 1995, the U.S. exported \$3.1 billion of beef and veal, NCA said. This year, approximately 1.1 million tons of beef will be exported, according to the U.S. Meat Exporters Federation — up 18 percent from 1995.

"This (1996) is the beginning of a historic tendency that will make the United States a net exporter in volume and in value," said Rick Allen, U.S. Meat Exporters president. Exports only accounted for 3 percent of U.S. beef sales in the mid-1980s; today they account for 10.5 percent of total wholesale beef sales. NCA credits the rise to the opening of world markets due to the implementation of NAFTA and GATT. ■

Beef report not as bullish as thought

News that the Jan. 1 cattle herd was much smaller than expected puzzled industry analysts until they realized that USDA revised down last year's figures.

USDA's tally of the total cattle herd came in about 1.2 million head below trade estimates, but USDA revised its Jan. 1, 1995, herd down by nearly a million head, accounting for much of the difference.

If analysts' pre-report estimates are revised down by the same amount, the result is a total beef herd about as expected, with less herd liquidation than expected.

Another bearish aspect of the report is that it shows the largest number of cattle outside of feedlots since 1987 — up 3 percent over last year. "The report is very bearish to the feeders," says Dale Henson, analyst for Dean Witter.

Henson says, the weight breakdown suggests that feeder cattle futures will be pressured Monday through the November contract. ■

Michigan producers speak at Triazine review conference



(Left to right) MFB Commodity Specialist Bob Boehm, Farm Bureau member Wayne Korson, Congressman Dick Chrysler (R-Brighton), MFB Public Affairs Director Al Almy and Farm Bureau member Daryl Peterson.

Michigan producers and Farm Bureau members Daryl Peterson, of Montcalm County, and Wayne Korson, of Mason County, travelled to Washington, D.C., to attend a National Triazine Benefits Symposium and provide testimony on the results of a MFB-sponsored *Benefit Use Report*, which

was submitted to EPA in December. The report was a collaborative effort of MFB, along with the Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association's Apple and Cherry Division, Michigan Christmas Tree Association, and Michigan State University.

The report was prepared based on a survey of apple, cherry and Christmas tree growers, regarding their use of Atrazine and Simazine. The survey showed that 57 percent of the growers expect yield losses, while 63 percent of the producers suggest that quality would also suffer with the loss of triazines. Per acre cost increases varied from just \$4 per acre to \$350 per acre with an average increase of \$42 per acre expected.

The conference was intended to provide a mid-point assessment of the triazine special review, which will likely conclude in 1997 or 1998. ■

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Capitol Corner

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

STATE ISSUE

Michigan seed law amendments would provide MCIA liability protection

SB. 713, sponsored by Sen. Dianne Byrum (D-Lansing) has passed the Senate and is currently on the House calendar for consideration. The bill has two major sections. The first section deals with a problem in field bean seed and disease control. Four diseases have created significant problems in the Michigan crop and the bill provides a mechanism for the Michigan Department of Agriculture to certify that the field bean seed is free of those diseases.

The second section of the bill deals with providing a measure of protection from liability for the Michigan Crop Improvement Association and its employees. The language provides that if the Michigan Crop Improvement Association or the employee is following the written protocol as established and approved by the Director of Agriculture, then there shall be no cause of action.

MFB position: Farm Bureau supports the bill.
MFB contact: Ron Nelson, ext. 2043

STATE ISSUE

Michigan aquaculture development act introduced

Rep. Mike Green (R-Mayville), is sponsoring legislation that would define aquaculture as an agricultural enterprise and designate the Michigan Department of Agriculture as the lead agency. The attempt is to provide aquaculture with the same rights and responsibilities as other sectors of agriculture. The legislation establishes a list of approved aquatic species that can be cultured in the state without special approval. The bill also develops process for other species to be permitted on a

case-by-case basis.

The Department of Natural Resources and Department of Environmental Quality will continue responsibilities and control for the protection of the environment, including the regulation of discharges, wetlands, fisheries and natural stocks of aquatic species in the public waters.

MFB position: Farm Bureau supports the "draft" bill.

MFB contact: Ron Nelson, ext. 2043

STATE ISSUE

Michigan grain dealers act amendments clears the House

HB. 4333, sponsored by Rep. Gary Randall (R-Alma) has passed the House and is currently resting in the Senate Agricultural Committee. The bill deals with the issue of truckers, or those individuals involved in transportation of grain, and would provide a requirement for truckers to register with MDA.

The test for financial solvency is eliminated, but the truckers would be required to sign an affidavit indicating they are primarily in the farming business

and that trucking is a secondary activity. This provision deals with the issue of individuals who occasionally haul grain but not as their primary source of income. The trucker would be required to pay cash at the time of the transaction; therefore providing a level of security to the farmer/seller.

MFB position: Farm Bureau does not oppose the bill.

MFB contact: Ron Nelson, ext. 2043

STATE ISSUE

Property rights training

HB. 5483, sponsored by Rep. Greg Kaza (R-Rochester Hills), has passed the House Conservation, Environment and Great Lakes Committee and is on its way to the House floor. The bill requires certain employees of state agencies to receive training related to the constitutional limitations on the regulation of private property. The training shall include an overview of the law related to constitutional takings, which means the taking of private property by government action such that

compensation to the owner of that property is required by either of the following:

- Amendment V or XIV of the Constitution of the United States.
- Section 23 of Article I and Section 2 of Article X of the State Constitution of 1963.

MFB position: Farm Bureau supports H.B. 5483.

MFB contact: Scott Everett, ext. 2046

NATIONAL ISSUE

Clinton administration signals flexibility on methyl bromide ban

The Clinton administration has said that it's willing to work with Congress and the agricultural community to allow agricultural uses of methyl bromide to continue beyond the year 2001. Witnesses from EPA and USDA told the House Commerce Committee Subcommittee on Health and Environment that the agencies would support legislation to address agricultural concerns or work for a special regulatory exemption for agriculture.

Methyl bromide is a fumigant that is used extensively to control insects and pests in the production, processing, storage and transportation of fruits, grains, nuts, vegetables and fibers. The economic impact to agriculture of banning methyl bromide for soil fumigation alone will exceed \$1 billion, according to USDA. A recent report by the General Accounting office concluded that no effective alternatives exist and that the ban would unfairly disadvantage U.S. products in international markets and threaten the health of U.S. crops.

Methyl bromide's contribution to ozone depletion is controversial. There is evidence to suggest that risks from manufactured methyl bromide

may be insignificant in comparison to levels which are naturally produced in the atmosphere.

Title VI of the Clean Air Act requires that production of methyl bromide and other ozone depleting substances be banned effective in 2001. Although a number of nations have agreed as signatories to the Montreal Protocol to phase out the use of methyl bromide, the United States is the only nation to enact a ban into law. Farm Bureau welcomes the administration's support for regulatory or legislative changes to protect agricultural uses of methyl bromide.

H.R. 2230 has been introduced by Rep. Dan Miller (R-Fla.), which delays the ban of methyl bromide until alternative products are developed or until other nations implement plans to eliminate its use. A background paper on methyl bromide is available from Michigan Farm Bureau by contacting the Public Affairs Division.

MFB position: Farm Bureau supports H.R. 2230.

MFB contact: Al Almy, Ext. 2040

CDL drivers required to be alcohol/drug tested

Many Michigan farmers could be affected by a piece of legislation that took effect Jan. 1 of this year, according to MFB Legislative Counsel Howard Kelly. "The Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 requires alcohol and drug testing of safety-sensitive employees in the aviation, motor carrier, railroad, and mass transit industries, which includes agriculture," Kelly explained.

The provisions apply to all operations, regardless of size, and applies to all persons who operate commercial motor vehicles, as defined in Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 383, and are required to have a Commercial Driver License (CDL), says Kelly. Those provisions include interstate and intrastate drivers of:

- Commercial motor vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 26,001 pounds or more;
- Commercial motor vehicles with a gross combination weight rating of 26,001 pounds or more including a towed vehicle with a GVWR of 10,000 pounds or more;
- Motor vehicles designed to transport 16 or more passengers including the driver; or
- Motor vehicles of any size transporting hazardous materials, which would include pesticides and fertilizers, in amounts that require placarding.

Kelly says that a narrow exemption exists for some farm drivers in Michigan. "Drivers who are eligible for and are properly operating an otherwise covered vehicle and possess an "F" endorsement on their driver's license are exempt from the drug and alcohol testing provisions," he advised. "Michigan's F endorsement for a combination of vehicles within 150 miles of the farm is not a CDL endorsement, but is an example of a state waiver of CDL requirements for drug and alcohol testing."

Likewise, farmers who are driving vehicles that do not require a CDL, are not required to be in a drug and alcohol testing program even though they may possess a CDL, says Kelly. "Farmers will not be required to give up their CDL to avoid the drug and alcohol testing program," he explained. "However, before they can drive a vehicle requiring a CDL they must be in a testing program or obtain an F endorsement to operate a vehicle."

Otherwise, employers of CDL drivers and owner/operators holding a CDL and operating a covered vehicle, including farmers, are responsible for assuring compliance with testing provisions, Kelly warned.

Drug and alcohol tests are required in the following circumstances:

(All testing programs must meet requirements of 49 CFR, Part 383.)

Pre-Employment (drug testing only) — Must be conducted before an applicant can be hired or after an offer to hire is made, but before actually performing safety-sensitive functions for the first time. Testing is also required when employees

transfer to a safety-sensitive driver position.

The following exceptions may apply:

A drug test is not required if you receive documentation proving the driver has:

- Participated in a drug testing program within the last 30 days; and
- No record of violation of drug rules within the last six months, as verified through prior employers; and
- Been drug tested within the last six months or participated in a random drug testing program during the past 12 months.

Post-Accident — Conducted after accidents on drivers whose performance could have contributed to the accident as determined by a citation for a moving traffic violation, and for all fatal accidents even if the driver is not cited for a moving traffic violation.

Reasonable Suspicion — Conducted when a trained supervisor or company official observes driver behavior or appearance that is characteristic of drug or alcohol misuse.

Random — Conducted on a random, unannounced basis, just before, during or just after performance of safety-sensitive functions.

Return to Duty and Follow-up — Conducted when an individual, who has violated the prohibited drug and alcohol conduct standards previously, returns to performing safety-sensitive duties. Follow-up tests are unannounced, and at least six tests must be conducted in the first 12 months after a driver returns to duty. Follow-up testing may be extended for up to 60 months after return to duty.

How are small farms going to comply?

There are several methods that small operations and owner/operators may use to comply, says Kelly.

- Establish a complete program for the operation.
- Contract with another motor carrier who is operating a testing program to include the drivers used by the farm operation. Contracting with another motor carrier does not release the operation from maintaining proper compliance with the standard.
- Join a consortium of other operators and employers for the establishment and implementation of testing programs.
- Fully document the participation in a current testing program of any temporary drivers hired or contracted.

For more information on the provisions or on establishing a program or the availability of consortiums, contact Craig Anderson, manager of the Regulatory Compliance Assistance Program (RCAP), offered by the Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association Inc., at 1-800-292-2680, ext. 2311.

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EPA to proceed with pesticide cancellations — important pesticides threatened

The Environmental Protection Agency has announced that it will proceed with canceling the use of pesticides used on raw food products, even though the action is not required by the Delaney Clause, which applies only to processed food. EPA claims that the action is required by EPA's "coordination policy" which requires the agency to revoke pesticide tolerances for raw foods if a corresponding processed food tolerance revocation is required by the zero-tolerance Delaney provision.

EPA announced the decision in response to a 1992 petition by the National Food Processors Association, which requested that the agency discontinue linking tolerances for raw and processed food. In denying the petition, EPA justified its action by claiming that the coordination policy is necessary to protect farmers from the use of pesticides which could result in violations of food processing requirements.

"Farm Bureau believes that the action is unjustified and that it imposes unnecessary costs on farmers and food processors," said Al Almy, director of Michigan Farm Bureau's Public Affairs. "In effect, this extends Delaney's flawed zero-tolerance provision to raw food. This allows the agency to ignore consideration of pesticide benefits which are required under the Federal Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), the law that regulates pesticide



use on raw agricultural commodities."

EPA plans to announce its intent to revoke raw tolerances for about 10 pesticide products. This announcement will be followed by a 90-day

comment period. If the revocations are issued, the corresponding use of the pesticide will be cancelled. Revocation and cancellation actions on as many as 80 other pesticide products will follow.

Although the specific pesticides and uses which will be affected first are not yet available, it's expected that they will include key pesticides for production in apples, grapes, wheat, feed grains, and fruits and vegetables.

The decision could have a major impact on Michigan's highly diversified agricultural industry, according to MFB's Director of Commodity Activities and Research, Ken Nye. "We have some very important specialty chemicals that are used on Michigan crops," he cautioned. "If the cancellations go forward, it could have a very quick and severe impact this spring."

Almy says that Farm Bureau is supporting legislation passed by the House Agriculture Committee that would reform the Delaney Clause and prevent the EPA from banning safe crop protection chemicals. He says that EPA's action underscores the need for legislation to change Delaney's zero-tolerance provision.

"There is strong bi-partisan support for H.R. 1627 and its companion bill, S.1166," Almy said. "Delaney Clause reform is supported by the medical community, the Clinton administration, the Food and Drug Administration and, ironically, Carol Browner, administrator of the EPA. Farmers should not have to suffer because of the inaction of the 104th Congress." ■

Monitor agrees to purchase a controlling interest in Graceland Fruit

Graceland Fruit Cooperative of Frankfort, Mich., and Monitor Sugar Company of Bay City, Mich., the producer of Big Chief™ brand sugar products, are pleased to announce the signing of a definitive agreement whereby Monitor agrees to purchase a controlling interest in Graceland Fruit.

Graceland Fruit is the country's premier supplier of preservative-free dried fruit products to the food processing, food service and grocery markets. Cherries, cranberries, strawberries, blueberries and a variety of other fruits including peaches and bananas are dried, sliced and diced to bring new natural fruit taste to cereals, baked goods, dairy products, trail mix, candy and other food products.

Graceland's President, Donald Nugent, said:

"I am very pleased about our association with Monitor Sugar. This alliance will help Graceland realize its true potential and progress into new products and markets at a more rapid pace."

"This acquisition broadens our company's investment in the food processing industry in Michigan," Monitor Sugar's President, Robert Hetzler, said. "The companies complement one another and both see considerable opportunity for growth in the years to come."

Nugent, who is a trustee of Michigan State University, will continue as president of Graceland and will become a member of the Monitor Sugar Company board of directors. ■

Narrow rows — How low can you go?

COVER STORY

Continued from front page

acreage of corn that will be grown in 15-inch rows in the near future."

One of those who already took the plunge to 15-inch rows, Don Morse of Birch Run, says that lack of a corn head to accommodate 15-inch row heads is the biggest hurdle to be cleared. Farming over 1,400 acres of corn, soybeans and wheat, Morse used a narrow row no-till planter to no-till over 400 acres of corn in 15 inch rows in the spring of 1995.

Using some ingenuity and a design from a three-row prototype, designed by Alpha, Ill., farmer/researcher Marion Calmer, Morse set about building a larger-scale version of a 15-inch, 11-row corn head. Since Morse had to wait for a patent to be approved on the three-row prototype, he didn't get started actually building his creation until August. The final product uses just one gathering chain per row, and an ear-guide on the opposing side to reduce the number of parts and space required for the narrow rows.

Morse took two 863 International heads, stripped them down, picked out the best frame and started rebuilding the narrow rowhead. Gear boxes had to be milled 3/8 inch from each side, and then the super structures that the stripper plates and gathering chains run on had to be cut with a plasma cutter down to 15-inch widths.

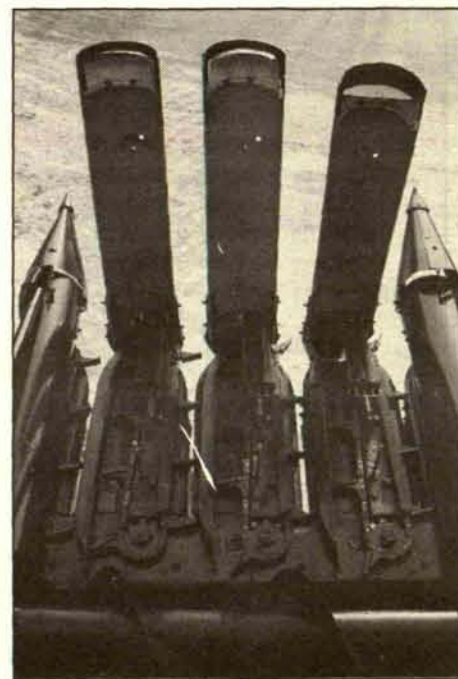
The covers were built out of 10-inch plastic water mains cut in half length ways. The snouts on the head are the actual tips from the regular corn head. Morse believes the total weight of the 11-row unit is close to the weight of a typical eight-row unit.

Morse estimates that he has approximately \$250 per row invested in machine work and rebuilding the corn head. Making an allowance for a trade-in of a John Deere six-row head on the two six-row International heads, Morse estimates that he's got an additional \$4,500 invested in the narrow head.

"On the flip side, however, I estimate that I grossed an extra \$10,000 the first year on corn, and I had the best soybeans that I've ever grown," Morse said. "Payback in the total narrow row package is already accomplished."

According to Morse, Case and John Deere are both looking at Marion Calmer's 15-inch corn head concept and considering purchase of the patent to the narrow-row corn head. Once that happens and the narrow head becomes commonplace, Morse expects producers will quickly convert to 15-inch rows.

While getting soybeans planted in narrower rows using a no-till planter originally got him started thinking about narrow rows, Morse says, the appeal of increasing corn yields with little additional cost, except for seed, peaked his interest in narrow rows. "I finally came to the conclusion that if we could



A close look under the hood of the 15-inch row corn head.

increased yields at no real extra cost, it just seemed like a natural thing to do," he said.

Morse traded a two-year old, 12-row front fold planter in on a factory built, semi-mounted Case 800 tool bar planter. The planter had factory, built splitter units that can be hinged up or down for 30-inch or 15-inch rows. For peace of mind, as Morse puts it, he leaves the units behind the tractor tire up, making tramlines that allow for herbicide application if needed, and for sidedressing 28 percent.

Although coulters penetration wasn't a problem in narrow row no-till, trash flow was, says Morse. To get around residue flow problems, Morse extended the staggered splitter units from just 6 inches to 20 inches. Poindexter says that residue becomes a bigger challenge in corn-on-corn rotations, since heavy residue levels can slow down soil warm-up and dry-down.

Morse set his population at 30,000 but is considering bumping it to 33,000 to 34,000. He broadcasts all of his fertilizer and puts all of his nitrogen down in the form of 28 percent with herbicide. This year, however, he plans to reduce the amount of 28 percent that he puts on with the herbicide, and then nitrate test at sidedress time and coulters inject what's needed based on test results. "I think I'd realize a dollar savings and not look at any yield loss," Morse speculated.

Morse also speculates that 15-inch rows provide an ideal environment in soybeans to reduce the incidence of white mold. "Fifteen-inch rows are supposed to be the threshold for optimum soybean yields, and you're also affording yourself some airflow, compared to drilled beans," Morse concluded. ■



Serving Michigan Farm Families is Our Only Business

Since its beginning in 1971, Michigan Farm Radio Network's only objective has been to serve Michigan's farm families. This dedication to serve agriculture is shared by 29 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 Farm	Noon Farm
WABJ	Adrian	1490	5:45 am	11:50 am
WATZ	Alpena	1450	5:30 am	11:30 am
WTKA	Ann Arbor	1050	6:05 am	12:05 pm
WLEW	Bad Axe	1340	6:30 am	12:50 pm
WHFB	Benton Harbor			12:30 pm
WKYO	Caro	1360	6:15 am	12:15 pm
WKJF	Cadillac	1370	5:55 am	11:20 am
WTVB	Coldwater	1590	5:45 am	12:20 pm
WDOW	Dowagiac	1440	6:05 am	12:15 pm
WGHN	Grand Haven	1370/92.1	5:45 am	12:15 pm
WPLB	Greenville	1380	6:15 am	11:45 am
WBCH	Hastings	1220	6:15 am	12:30 pm
WCSR	Hillsdale	1340	6:45 am	12:45 pm
WHTC	Holland	1450		12:15 pm
WKZO	Kalamazoo	590	5:15 am	
WLSP	Lapeer	1530	7:20 am	11:50 am
WOAP	Owosso	1080	6:15 am	12:30 pm
WHAK	Rogers City	960		12:15 pm
WSJ	St. Johns	1580	6:15 am	12:15 pm
WMLM	St. Louis	1540	6:05 am	12:20 pm
WSGW	Saginaw	790	5:55 am	12:20 pm
WMIC	Sandusky	660	6:15 am	12:45 pm
WCSY	South Haven	940		12:15 pm
WKJC	Tawas City	104.7		12:45 pm
WLKM	Three Rivers	1510/95.9	6:15 am	12:15 pm
WTCM	Traverse City	580	5:55 am	11:20 am

* Station signs on at different times during the year. Morning farm times change with the sign-on times.

** Station airs various farm reports between 5:30 and 6:00 a.m.

*** Station airs various farm reports between 12:00 and 1:00 p.m.

Some stations carry additional market reports throughout the market day.

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Market Outlook

by Dr. Jim Hilker,
Department of
Agricultural Eco-
nomics, Michigan
State University



CORN

Is a \$3.50 corn price high enough to ration demand? At this point, it hasn't seemed to do the trick; however, there are some signs that it may be coming. Export sales and actual shipments continue to run ahead of a year ago, but Japan has just about bought all of their 1995-96 needs. Hog, cattle and poultry numbers are still up, but there are some very recent sow slaughter numbers and speculated cattle placement numbers which may indicate things are changing — more on that in "Livestock."

The point is, use will be cut back. When we see it, is the question, and we want to have old crop moved before we see it.

My best estimate would say March futures will make it back toward its previous high. If it does, and doesn't shoot right through it, consider selling most of your remaining 1995 corn. We can price new crop to take advantage of weather rallies. New crop futures have made new highs and the pricing opportunities look pretty good for a portion of your 1996 corn production. Don't let last year's forward pricing decisions get in the way of sound decisions this year.

WHEAT

All of the current focus for most producers is on new crop prices, with old crop being long gone. However, demand through the remainder of this crop year is important for next year. At this point, it appears exports will meet the USDA projections, which is the biggest unknown. Weather in the Southwest continues to be a major concern of the market. And, with light snow cover over much of the soft wheat areas, the recent cold spell is also a concern.

If I still had some old crop, I would seriously consider letting it go. Face it — whether prices continue to go up or not, they are great now. New crop futures were making new highs the first of the month. If those prices have held or gone higher, it is providing wheat producers with some good forward pricing opportunities.

Seasonal Commodity Price Trends

Corn	↔	↑
Soybeans	↔	↑
Wheat	↔	↑
Hogs	↔	↑
Cattle	↔	↑

Index: ↔ = stable prices; ↑ = higher prices; ↓ = lower prices; TP = topping; BT = bottoming; ? = unsure

SOYBEANS

While soybean stocks are tight, it is a little clearer than with corn that we will have a sufficient supply through the year. Exports are running quite strong, but that has been calculated in and we should ride on through this marketing year with prices at or a little above today, "if."

The big "if" is the 1996 crop. Unlike corn, there is not likely to be a lot more acres planted, and maybe no additional acres planted. If that is true, we could have a trend yield and still stay above \$6.00, and quite possibly near \$6.50.

As with corn, I would project March futures to be near their old highs. However, without weather scares, there is no reason to really go higher. At this time, I would consider having most or all of my old crop moved.

While I have painted a picture above that says we will have good prices next fall, it does not mean that I would wait to start pricing my 1996 soybean crop. The market also believes we will have good prices and is offering it to you. When we can price 1996 soybeans across Michigan from between \$6.70 and \$7.00 for harvest delivery, let's price some, and I don't mean just 5 percent, but rather something significant.

HOGS

The hog/corn price ratio is, and has been for some time, very low. Yet sow slaughter through the end of 1995 was low for even good years and would indicate expansion versus liquidation. However, the sow slaughter in late January was up significantly. With only two weeks of data, however, it's not clear the trend has changed. With the recent jump in cash prices, will the optimism return?

Keep current with the good cash prices we are now seeing. The likelihood is that cash prices will fall off again as we go through March. The futures prices through 1996 are near my projections after you take off a couple dollars for basis. Over the longer-term, there is probably more downside risk than upside potential. Therefore, if we do have a rally in the futures in the near-term, consider some forward pricing if you have not already done so.

CATTLE

The USDA recently released two major reports on cattle numbers — the *Cattle-On-Feed Report* which helps determine why we are where we are at and where we may be headed the next few months, and the *Cattle Inventory Report* which also helps in determining the short-run picture, but more importantly gives us a look as to what might happen further down the road.

The first report showed we had 8 percent more cattle on feed in the 12 major producing states on Jan. 1 than we had the previous year. This inventory accounts for 81 percent of the cattle on feed in the U.S. All cattle on feed in the U.S. were up 3 percent on Jan. 1, 1995, versus Jan. 1, 1994. The report also showed that 8 percent more cattle were placed in feedlots in the 7 major states in December 1995 than December 1994. In short, we will have a plentiful supply of cattle on feed on into the summer. There were 1 percent less cattle marketed in December than the same period the previous year in the 7-state report.

This is the first release of the new 12-State Report, which only counts feedlots over 1,000 head. In the future, it will become the norm. This new report also tells the weights of feeders placed. However, since this was first release of this report, we have no historical data with which to compare it to. It should become more useful over time and is a step in the right direction.

The Jan. 1 *Cattle Inventory Report* was positive from a longer-term price point of view. We expected all cattle and calves to be up 2 percent, but they were up only 1 percent. Beef cows that have calved were up 1 percent, but expectations were 2-3 percent. Milk cows were down 1 percent. Beef cow replacements were down 3 percent, 1 percent more than expected. At mid-year, these numbers looked like they would be much bigger. This is a quick turnaround since cow-calf producers really only had these very poor prices the past 7-8 months.

The other surprise was the size of the calf crop. The trade expected the 1995 number would be 41.6 million head based on the July 1 estimate. The actual number was 40.3 million head, 3 percent less than expected. This would mean placements will have to slow up sometime. The information probably will not help near-term prices much if at all, but it may help prices in the latter half of the year and it certainly helps the longer-term picture.

All cattle and calves in Michigan were down 2 percent at 1.2 million head. Beef cows that have calved were down 8 percent at 122,000, but beef heifer replacements held at 30,000. Milk cows that have calved were down 2 percent at 328,000 head, with milk cow replacements being down 6,000 head at 155,000. The Michigan 1995 calf crop was down 1 percent at 420,000; there is no break-down of Michigan calves into beef and milk types. Cattle on feed in Michigan were down 1 percent at 200,000 head versus January 1995 at 210,000 head.

DAIRY SITUATION

by Dr. Larry G. Hamm

The dairy product markets are firm and appear to be holding at current levels. The farm level milk prices will be holding for the next couple of months. Profit levels will be determined by feed cost trends.

The wholesale cheese price, which determines the protein price on producer checks and much of the basic formula price (BFP) has been steady. In past years, the seasonal pattern has been for cheese markets to weaken in late January. This resulted in weak producer prices in late spring. The fact that cheese prices have held is an indication that dairy markets are still tight. Commercial disappearance through November 1995 was 3.2 percent above 1994. The 1995 year has shaped up as one of the best dairy demand years in a decade. Strong demand is bumping against static milk production.

December milk production nationally was flat. For the first time in recent memory, California production was 2 percent below a year earlier. The higher feed prices are taking a toll on the finances and morale of dairy producers nationwide. The combined effects of higher feed costs, lower cull cow prices and residual weather-induced production problems will continue to constrain milk supplies. Even if demand for dairy products weakens slightly, the tight supply situation will keep milk prices at around their current levels for the next couple of weeks.

The intermediate-term outlook (March through June) will depend on the feed cost trends. If feed cost increases stop and start down, profit margins can return to levels that would return some optimism to the dairy business.

Similarly, the dairy industry has had several rounds of hope that the dairy policy situation would be settled. Even though there is nearly total agreement on eliminating the dairy deficit deductions, the lack of a dairy bill means that producers are still under the yoke of assessments. Because of last year's production problems, the May 1996 assessments may be increased to 20 cents or more per hundredweight (cwt.).

If feed costs decline and the assessments are eliminated, some profit margins can return to Michigan's producers. If they do not, more producers will leave the business assuring that milk supplies will be tight and price levels will stay up at their current general levels. ■

Ten-year corn outlook: \$2.30 to \$3

U.S. corn prices will probably peak this year and then trade between \$2.30 and \$3 per bushel over the next 10 years, says the U.S. Feed Grains Council, which plans to reveal a bullish corn outlook at its annual convention next week.

"This is the most positive look at the future that we have ever projected," says Erick Erickson, director of planning and evaluation for the council.

In an interview with Reuters, he calls next week's World Grain Demand Model "fabulously positive" for U.S. feed grain demand over the next 10 years.

He says it will forecast a sustained period of expanding trade and improving economic growth throughout the world.

"There doesn't seem to be an end in sight," says Erickson.

Says council President Ken Hobbe: "We are on the verge of some very sound growth in the international market that will be sustained in economic development in the countries it's coming from, and we'll have minimal distortion from subsidized competition."

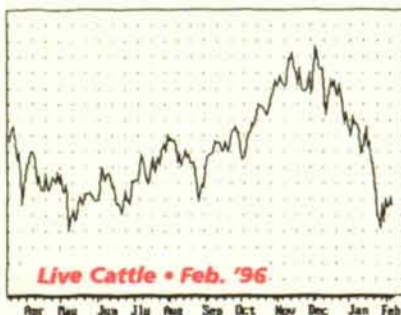
Hobbe and Erickson say China holds "amazing" potential for U.S. feed grains. "China has the potential to rival some of our largest markets in the future — equal to Japan, or what the Soviet Union used to be," says Hobbe.

He looks for Chinese feed grain demand to triple in the next 10 to 15 years. Just 15 months ago, China was a net exporter of feed grains.

Russia is a different story — a long-term investment. "We hold some fairly strong views that Russia has the potential to come back as a major market, but not for 10 to 15 years," says Hobbe.

And Japan is also a challenge. Hobbe says, demand in Japan — the largest U.S. feed grain market — has matured and will probably not increase much more. He says the challenge there is to increase value-added uses for feed grains. ■

COMMODITY PRICE TRENDS



Source: Knight Ridder Financial

1995 farm bill

Continued from front page

- The Conservation Reserve Program would be reauthorized.
- Money would be provided to help farmers pay for conservation and a program would be created to help livestock producers with manure-handling facilities. There are reportedly some restrictions on the size of livestock operations that would be eligible.

- The Market Promotion Program would be cut to \$70 million per year from the current \$100 million per year, and its use would be restricted to only small businesses.
- An amendment to reinstate the Farmer Owned Reserve was defeated.
- Research programs were reauthorized.
- The food stamp program was reauthorized.
- The 1938 and 1949 farm bills are retained as

permanent law. This provision was necessary to get enough Democrat votes to pass the bill.

"While Congress is on recess during most of February, it will be important for Farm Bureau members to talk with their congressman back in the district and tell him or her, very clearly, that they expect Congress to pass a farm bill promptly," Almy urged. "It's time for both Republican and Democratic congressmen to pass a farm bill so farmers and bankers can plan for the 1996 crop year."

Business Strategies

John D. Jones,
Telfarm Director and
District Extension
Farm Management
Agent, Department
of Agricultural
Economics,
Michigan State
University Extension



Michigan State University Extension has tracked enterprise returns and farm financial performance since the birth of the MSU Farm Records Program in 1928. In the early years, the farm business analysis results were compiled by hand calculation through the use of comptometers and pencils. In the early 1960s, the use of the mainframe computers allowed for faster and more sophisticated analysis of the farm financial information.

Today, with the development and acceptance of personal computers, a comprehensive farm financial analysis can be run quickly and easily on the kitchen table. You need, of course, the right program; up-to-date income and expenses; and liability, asset and inventory balances or values.

FINPACK FINAN now available allows efficient and comprehensive business analysis on MSU Extension field staff computers. The analysis includes an accrualized net income statement, beginning and ending balance sheets, a statement of accuracy and net worth reconciliation, Farm Financial Standards Council's 16 financial measures, and comparative financial statements and trend analysis.

FINPACK FINAN is a stand-alone analysis program from the University of Minnesota that can be run by any farmer, consultant or Extension agent that has purchased the software program. Besides the historical financial analysis module called

A new era in financial analysis

FINAN, FINPACK also includes two other modules: (1) FINLRB for long-run budgeting, and (2) FINFLO for annual cash flow and financial statement projections.

The FINAN program, which allows for the electronic import of data, can be used in conjunction with other programs including Telfarm's MicroTel program.

How Do You Get a FINAN Analysis Run?

You can run the FINAN analysis through many different avenues. Some farmers and farm management consultants, many Area of Expertise (AoE) agents and county Extension agents, most campus Extension farm management specialists and all district Extension farm management agents have the FINPACK 8.0 programs, including FINAN, residing on their computers and are trained in their use. Start locally for MSU Extension assistance, as that will maintain the strongest and most responsive relationship that you would have available.

You can purchase an individual farmer FINPACK version from the Center for Farm Financial Management, University of Minnesota, for \$295 (phone 800-234-1111) and run the program yourself. You may also call the Telfarm Center for assistance if needed (phone 517-355-4700).

The following items will need to be available to run the FINAN program: (1) beginning and ending feed, crop, supplies and livestock inventories; (2) beginning and ending machinery, building and land valuations; (3) beginning and ending balances in savings, investment and liability accounts including accrued accounts payable and receivable; (4) crop acreage and yield information and basic livestock production information; and (5) your financial cash flow, reporting, what was expended or taken in under each individual account.

You are encouraged to check out this opportunity and update your farm analysis procedures.

Why is FINAN Important?

The FINAN analysis answers the big financial questions.

Am I Profitable?

Did my business earn a profit after making all year-end accrual entries for inventory change,

prepaid expenses, accrued interest and others?

Did My Equity (Net Worth) Change and How Much?

The analysis will show how much your equity increased or decreased on an accrual basis after family living expenses and other draws. The analysis also reports on the accuracy of the equity change when reconciled with the net income.

Am I Viable?

The FINAN analysis will assess the cash flow and indicate whether there is adequate liquidity and working capital to withstand short-run disruptions to the cash flow.

Enterprise Analysis

FINAN allows for detailed enterprise or cost center analysis. This permits farm managers to calculate farm profit by enterprise. Economic changes over the last 20 years have been associated with increasing capital costs that impact the profitability of many enterprises.

For example, many farmers may find it beneficial to purchase feed products rather than produce them, as cited in a paper by Dr. Dan Undersander, University of Wisconsin, titled *Reducing the Cost of Forage Production*, states that enterprise analysis done in Wisconsin has shown that many farmers are producing hay or haylage at costs in excess of \$100 per ton. Farmers with these high costs could be buying hay or haylage and eliminating their work and risk of yield loss from drought or stand failure.

What is the cost of production on your farm?

Summarization

Probably the most important facet of the FINAN program is the ability to build an individual farm financial trend database and financial ratio report. This allows you to quickly and clearly see the direction and magnitude of vital financial concerns. Tracking financial performance over time can bring important issues and trends to the surface that would otherwise go unnoticed for a number of years. With delays in detection and action, manageable issues or problems can become unmanageable and a crisis situation.

Finally, the FINAN program has the ability to create a summarizable file that can be used for statewide farm performance averages. Some preliminary 1995 financial performance averages, updated weekly, have already been distributed to the district Extension farm management agents and selected other Extension agents to assist in analyzing any currently run FINAN analysis reports.

This database is very important to the Department of Agricultural Economics. The department will be collecting as many of these summarizable files as possible but only from farm managers who consent to the file's use in the MSU database and after any personal identification has been stripped off. MSU Extension programs and publications, and MSU research and teaching efforts will all benefit from the database. ■

Alfalfa production experts to meet at MSU

Agronomists from universities in eight states, Ontario and from industry will be featured speakers for the National Alfalfa Symposium, March 4-5, at Michigan State University.

The symposium will be held in MSU's Kellogg Center for Continuing Education and is being sponsored by MSU Extension, the Michigan Hay and Grazing Council, and the National Certified Alfalfa Seed Council.

The program will run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday and from 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. on Tuesday.

Topics the first day will focus on alfalfa breeding and production, its use in livestock rations, managing alfalfa in grazing systems, weed competition in alfalfa, and dealing with high levels of potassium in alfalfa in the dairy ration.

The second day's program will include topics such as the economics of home-grown alfalfa, growing alfalfa as a cash crop, custom contracting for alfalfa haylage, alfalfa and bloat prevention, and nutrient and insect management in alfalfa.

The registration cost, which covers refreshments, noon meals and a copy of the symposium proceedings, is \$45 for two days and \$30 for one. Lodging (advanced registration is recommended) can be arranged through the Kellogg Center by calling 517-432-4000 (ext. 5121).

For more information about the alfalfa symposium, write to Richard Leep, MSU Extension, E3773 University Dr., Chatham, MI 49816-0168 or call (906) 438-5698. ■

Milk production down slightly

Dairy herds in Michigan produced 458 million pounds of milk during December. That was down 1 percent from a year ago, according to the Federal/State Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service. Milk per cow was 1,405 pounds, compared to 1,415 last year, and the dairy herd was estimated at 326,000 head, unchanged from both November 1994 and last month.

The preliminary value of milk sold was \$14.20 per hundredweight (cwt.) in December, 20 cents more than last month and 70 cents more than December 1994. The midmonth December slaughter cow price was \$30.50 per cwt., compared to \$37.70 in December 1994.

Milk production in the 22 major states during December totaled 11.1 billion pounds, slightly above production in these same states in December 1994. Production per cow averaged 1,373 pounds for December, 3 pounds above December 1994. The number of cows on farms in the 22 major states was 8.08 million head, 12,000 head less than December 1994 and 6,000 head less than November 1995.

Dairy manufacturing plants in Michigan produced 2.2 million pounds of butter in November, 71 percent more than a year ago. Ice cream output totaled 1.5 million gallons, 16 percent below November 1994. ■

Fall potato crop up 11 percent

Michigan fall potato production was estimated at 16.5 million hundredweight (cwt.), an increase of 11 percent from a year ago, according to the Federal/State Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service. Fall planted acreage was estimated at 57,000, down 2 percent from last year. Harvested acreage was estimated at 55,000, unchanged from last year. Fall potato yields averaged 300 cwt. per acre, up 11 percent from last year and 3 cwt. below the record of 303 set in 1993. The 1995 fall crop includes the areas previously designated as "summer" potatoes — Arenac, Bay, Huron, Saginaw, Sa-

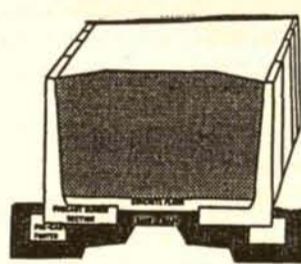
nilac and Tuscola counties.

Fall potato stocks in Michigan on Dec. 1 were placed at 9.0 million cwt. This year's stocks represent 55 percent of the total production. Stocks include potatoes stored by both processors and growers.

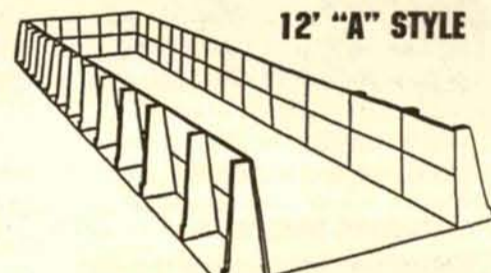
Nationally, production of fall potatoes was estimated at 402 million cwt., 5 percent below comparable totals in 1994 and 3 percent above 1993. Dec. 1 stocks, at 252 million cwt. in the 15 storage states, were down 8 percent on a comparable basis. Disappearance was up 2 percent, including a 7 percent gain in processor usage. ■

PRE-CAST CONCRETE

BUNKER SILOS



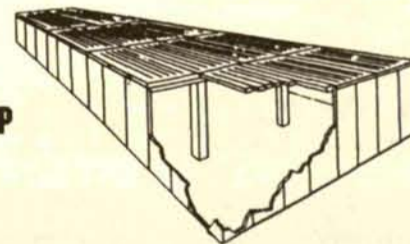
9' OR 10' "L" STYLE



12' "A" STYLE

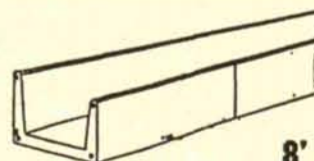
EASILY CONVERTS TO CENTER WALL

MANURE STORAGE TANKS



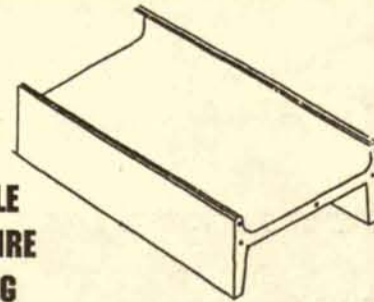
SOLID OR SLAT TOP
6'-8' OR 10' DEEP
SCS APPROVED

FENCELINE FEED BUNKS



8' LENGTHS
BEEF/DAIRY CATTLE
CONCRETE WITH WIRE
MESH REINFORCING

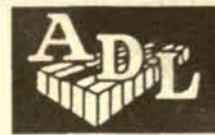
"H" STYLE FEED BUNKS



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Planned post program provides top weed control

Back in the late 1980s, Tim Stutzman took a look at his family's heavy reliance on atrazine for weed control and concluded that there had to be a better way. Weed control on corn acres wasn't up to snuff. Triazine-resistant lambsquarters was beginning to break through. The farm's highly variable soils, which have organic matter ranging from 2 percent to 17 percent, complicated the situation.

"We told ourselves we had to come up with something better than atrazine," recalls Stutzman, who farms near Seneca, Mich., with his father, David Stutzman, and grandfather, Jack Raymond.

"Weed control wasn't adequate in our book," he says. "We decided to handle broadleaf weeds by coming back over the top with a planned postemergence herbicide treatment. Today, we've gone away from atrazine and we are getting a lot better control."

Achieving top control can be a tall order on Raymond and Stutzman Farm's 1,250 acres, which are grown in continuous corn to provide feed for the 3,000 cattle fed out on the farm each year. The lack of a rotational crop can make controlling grasses a challenge. And manure from the cattle complicates the weed-control situation by providing a steady supply of weed seeds to fields where it is spread.

"Velvetleaf is our biggest problem," says Tim Stutzman. He rated weed control in 1995 as the cleanest in years. For broadleaf control, he used a new postemergence herbicide, Permit[®], from Monsanto Company, on about 750 acres. He had tested

the product on 10 to 15 acres the previous two years under a federal Experimental Use Permit (EUP), which allows limited use of new products before they are commercialized.

"It worked well both years, so we were comfortable with applying it on several hundred acres," says Stutzman.

The herbicide was applied at various crop stages from spike to 8-inch tall corn. Crop safety was excellent, as was control of a broad range of weeds, including velvetleaf, giant and common ragweed, and yellow nutsedge.

Permit can be applied until the corn canopies and has excellent crop safety. It can be tank-mixed with 2-4 ounces per acre of Banvel[®] to improve control of lambsquarters, pigweed and waterhemp. This additional mode of action also helps prevent resistant weeds from building up.

The herbicide has good soil residual, so it provided control until the crop canopied, says Stutzman. "One thing I really like about Permit is its low volatility," he added. "With some of the older herbicides, volatility is really a problem. We have neighbors with soybeans or gardens. So volatility is important to us."

Control of nutsedge was also a pleasant surprise. "The herbicide just smoked it," he says. "We got 90 to 95 percent control with a single application."

For grass weed control, the operation relied on Harness[®] herbicide, which was sprayed while planting. The herbicide, which controls small-seed-

ed broadleaf weeds like triazine-resistant lambsquarters and common ragweed, in addition to grasses, handled broadleaf weeds well enough on about 250 acres that no postemergence herbicides were needed.

"Grass control was excellent," he says. "And common ragweed control was good enough that in some fields we didn't even need to cultivate."

Stutzman was especially impressed with preemergence weed control because of the high variability of organic matter on the farm and within individual fields. On one field three-quarters of a mile long, organic matter ranges from 3 percent to 16 percent, according to Stutzman.

To compensate for more difficult weed control typical at higher organic matter levels, Stutzman varied the herbicide rate on the go. Harness rates varied from 2 pints per acre for 3 percent organic matter soil, to 2.5 pints per acre for 6-7 percent organic matter, and 2.8 pints per acre for 15-16 percent organic matter.

"With the monitor tied to a radar gun, I feel I can be about 80 percent as accurate as a Global Positioning System tied to a variable rate rig," he says.

By varying the rate, he was able to achieve excellent control across the board at a lower cost than otherwise might have been the case.

"It would be too expensive to treat everything at the high rate," he says. "But weed control would slack off in the high OM (organic matter) areas at anything less than the top rate." ■



Tim Stutzman says weed control has improved significantly since switching away from atrazine to a two-step program that relies on a soil-applied herbicide for grass control, followed by a postemergence product to control broadleaf weeds.

Permit[®] is a registered trademark of, and used under license from, Nissan Chemical Industries, Inc. Harness[®] is a registered trademark of Monsanto Company. Banvel[®] is a trademark of Sandoz LTD.



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Yet, Permit does not carry over from one season to the next.

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Savage on broadleaves,



safe on corn.

Monsanto announces commercialization plans for Roundup-Ready soybeans

Growers planning to use Roundup-Ready soybeans in their cropping rotation will be required to sign an agreement with Monsanto and pay a \$5-per-bag "technology fee," at the time of seed purchase. According to Doug Dorsey, soybean marketing manager for Monsanto, the agreement will ensure that growers understand the benefits and the responsibilities associated with the technology before purchasing Roundup-Ready soybeans.

Two key elements outlined in the agreement stipulate that Roundup-Ready soybeans cannot be saved for replanting and that Roundup brands of herbicides are the only herbicides containing glyphosate that can be used over Roundup-Ready soybeans.

Because Roundup-Ready soybeans are patented, growers cannot save seed for replanting or for sale as seed. The patent rights extend beyond Plant Variety Protection (PVP) rights, which prevents growers from brown bagging or selling to other growers, but may allow them to save back seed to plant on their own farms. Patented varieties, unlike PVP varieties, cannot be saved.

The company expects that Roundup Ready soybean seed will be limited during the introductory 1996 season, and will be available primarily for growers planting Group III through mid-Group VII varieties. Asgrow Seed Company and Jacob Hartz Seed Company will sell the majority of Roundup-Ready seeds this season, although several other seed companies will have small quantities available.

In a company press release, Monsanto said that Roundup-Ready soybeans will be widely available in 1997, and that by 1998 there will be enough seed available that every grower who wants it will be able to purchase the new seed. ■

Dry bean stocks up

Commercial elevators in Michigan held 4.8 million hundredweight (cwt.) of dry beans in storage as of Dec. 31, 1995, according to the Federal/State Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service. This stock level is 49 percent more than last year. The quantity on hand included 2.8 million cwt. of navy beans and 2.0 million cwt. of all other classes. This compares with 2,150,000 cwt. of navy beans and 1,075,000 cwt. of all other classes on hand a year ago. All other beans recorded the highest Dec. 31 stocks since records began in 1983. Stocks on hand Aug. 31, 1995 included 370,000 cwt. of navy beans and 300,000 cwt. of all other classes. Dry bean stocks account for all beans in commercial off-farm storage and include a small portion of non-Michigan grown products. An estimate of the quantity of dry beans held on farms is not included in this report. ■

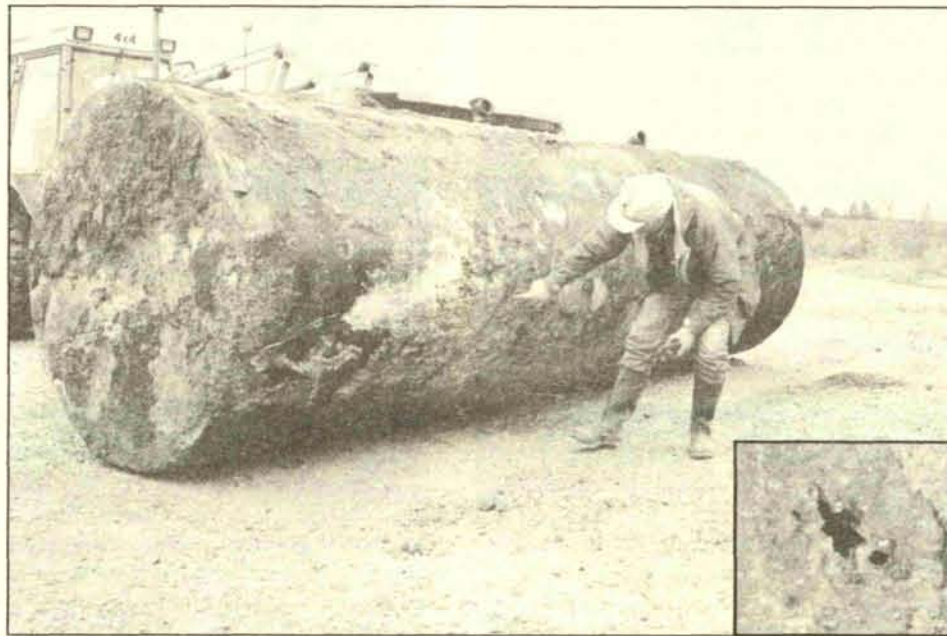
Are your fuel storage tanks insured?

With the demise of the Michigan Underground Storage Tank Fund Act (MUSTFA), operations with underground fuel storage tanks in excess of 1,100 gallons are now required to demonstrate financial responsibility. That means demonstrating evidence of at least \$1 million of first party liability for cleanup and restoration, as well as \$1 million worth of third party liability, explains Jim Gallagher, manager of Community Service Acceptance Company (CSAC).

CSAC, which provides Farm Bureau Insurance agents with an underground fuel tank insurance product, underwritten by Zurich Insurance and marketed through Foster Environmental Insurance Group, has been offering farmers an opportunity to purchase the required insurance since last June.

Roger Brunner, president of Foster, says the policies are surprisingly affordable and are quite prescriptive, based on U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standards. Premiums start as low as \$350 per tank annually, with deductibles starting as low as \$5,000.

"What we are required to provide is coverage for releases that happen after the insurance is purchased, meaning that insurance will not cover historical spills," Brunner said. "We provide coverage for environmental cleanup both onsite and offsite if the leak has migrated, as well as third party liability for bodily injury and/or property damage."



Historical spills, according to Wayne Gay of Farmers Petroleum, refers to existing, known spills or leaks, and are based on actual date of discovery of a spill or leak. Brunner says that although soil tests or probes aren't actually taken, applicants are asked whether or not they have knowledge of an existing or historical spill at the time of application.

"It's pretty clear that if you've got historical contamination that you haven't dealt with, then in terms of dealing with that from a financial standpoint, it's going to come out of the owner's pocket," Brunner advised.

Each tank is evaluated and the premiums based on the risk characteristics of that individual

tank, says Brunner. "It's a totally risk-based scenario — we don't have minimum premiums — and then we charge on a per tank basis," he said.

Although the number of farms with underground fuel tanks over 1,100 gallons is not clear, Brunner says the size is the primary determinant as to whether insurance is required. Underground farm tanks under 1,100 gallons in size, residential tanks and tanks used to store home heating oil do not fall under the insurance requirement.

Brunner says the company does provide insurance coverage for both smaller underground tanks and above ground tanks. However, construction and installation criteria must meet the same standards applied to the bigger tanks.

"Above-ground tanks, as a general rule, are less expensive to insure than underground tanks," Brunner explained. "There are some new underground tank installations that, because of all of the bells and whistles, are less expensive to insure than above-ground tanks."

Your best bet, however, says Brunner, is to seriously consider whether or not you even need an underground fuel storage tank since the risks are substantial. "As somebody that's been involved in environmental risk financing, I'd suggest that if you don't have serious need for a tank to get rid of it," he advised. "People don't seem to realize just what a risk underground tanks are, but they're a high risk that requires a lot of effort." ■

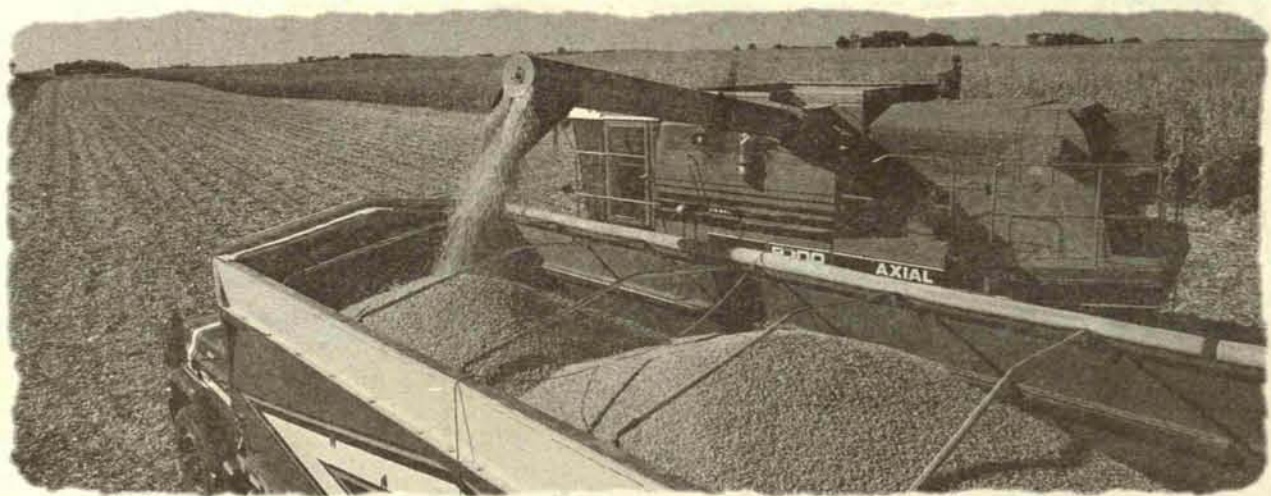
Michigan hog inventory declines

Michigan's hog and pig inventory on Dec. 1 declined 8 percent from a year ago, according to the Federal/State Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service. Total inventory was estimated at 1,150,000 head. Market hogs made up 87 percent of Michigan's hog and pig inventory while breeding stock comprised 13 percent of the state total. Market hog inventory was down 8 percent from last December at one million head. The under 60 pound weight group totaled 320,000 head, down 55,000 head from a year earlier. The 60-119 pound weight group at 235,000 head was 5,000 less than a year ago, while the 120-179 pound weight group was estimated at 245,000, down 20,000 head from last year. Hogs weighing 180 or more pounds totaled 200,000 head, a drop of 10,000 from last year. The Michigan breeding stock inventory at 150,000 head, was down 10,000 head from the previous year.

Producers farrowed 50,000 sows during the September-November quarter, down 10,000 head from the previous year. Average pigs per litter was 8.0 pigs, unchanged from last fall. Fourth quarter pig crop dropped 17 percent from the previous year, totaling 400,000 pigs. Producers' farrowing intentions for the next two quarters are 40,000 for the December 1995-February 1996 period and 82,000 for the March-May 1996 period.

Nationally, the inventory of all hogs and pigs on Dec. 1, 1995, was 60.2 million head. This was slightly above December 1994 but 1 percent below the Sept. 1, 1995, inventory. This is the highest December inventory since 1980. Breeding inventory, at 7.13 million head, was up 1 percent from both Dec. 1, 1994 and Sept. 1, 1995. Market hog inventory, at 53.1 million head was slightly above last year but 2 percent below last quarter.

The September-November 1995 U.S. pig crop at 24.9 million head was 2 percent more than 1994 and 4 percent more than 1993. Sows farrowing during this period totaled 2.99 million head, only 9,000 head below last year. Litter rate increases continue at a record level, with an average of 8.34 pigs saved per litter for the September-November period. U.S. hog producers intend to have 2.92 million sows farrow during the December 1995-February 1996 quarter, 1 percent more than the actual farrowings during the same period last year and 1994. Intended farrows for March-May 1996, at 3.31 million sows are 2 percent above 1995 but 2 percent below the 1994 period. ■



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Johnson Farms — Pinconning, MI (Bay County)
Planted: 05/07/95 Harvested: 10/25/95

DK 471

Brand-Hybrid	#2 Yield	Harvest Moisture	\$ Return Per Acre*
DEKALB — DK471	187.4	18.6%	\$513.10
DEKALB — DK442	171.4	18.4%	\$469.98
Pioneer — 3751	170.6	19.2%	\$465.05
Ciba — 4214	175.6	19.1%	\$479.04
Great Lakes — GL471	172.5	20.6%	\$465.40

Doug Boerman — Fremont, MI (Newaygo County)
Harvested: 10/16/95

DK 527

Brand-Hybrid	#2 Yield	Harvest Moisture	\$ Return Per Acre*
DEKALB — DK527	174.7	24.6%	\$457.36
Pioneer — 3527	155.6	25.8%	\$403.63

"I ran the DEKALB side-by-side, the Pioneer, and it was 19 bushel better and was standing great. It came out of the ground good and looked good all year with good plant health."

DK 546

Brand-Hybrid	#2 Yield	Harvest Moisture	\$ Return Per Acre*
DEKALB — DK546	146.1	21.5%	\$391.55
DEKALB — DK493	146.0	17.7%	\$402.38
Great Lakes — GL 450	138.0	22.7%	\$366.53
Pioneer — 3751	134.4	17.1%	\$372.10

*Return Per Acre Calculated @ \$2.80 per Bushel and \$.02 Drying Cost per Point of Moisture above 15.5%.



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Weed Strategies

Hemp dogbane control in corn



by Dr. James J. Kells & Corey V. Ransom, Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, Michigan State University

Hemp dogbane is a perennial weed, native to North America, that can be found in most of the lower 48 states. Michigan farmers identify hemp dogbane as a serious problem more frequently than any other perennial species. Once established, hemp dogbane spreads primarily by underground rootstock as compared to seed production.

Tillage can reduce the density of hemp dogbane infestations but may simultaneously increase the size of the infestation by spreading root sections across the field. Hemp dogbane can survive under

any tillage system, but it is most competitive in a no-tillage environment. As the number of acres of no-tillage increases, hemp dogbane will likely become an even greater problem.

Two years of research, financially supported by the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan, has been conducted at Michigan State University to evaluate postemergence herbicides for hemp dogbane control in corn.

In each year, one site was no-tillage while the other site was tilled. Accent and Beacon were evaluated alone and in combination with 2,4-D or Clarity. Nonionic surfactant (0.25 percent v/v) was added to all treatments containing Accent or Beacon. The results are summarized in Figure 1.

Beacon tank mixed with 2,4-D amine gave the greatest hemp dogbane control (82 percent) and was the most consistent across sites in years. Accent or Beacon tank mixed with Clarity were the next most consistent treatments, with an average of 60 percent control. Hemp dogbane control with 2,4-D alone averaged 50 percent while control with Clarity averaged 34 percent. Accent and Beacon alone averaged less than 25 percent control.

Hemp dogbane control was generally greater at the no-tillage sites. Control was lower at the tilled sites because additional hemp dogbane shoots

emerged following herbicide application. At the no-till sites, hemp dogbane emerged more uniformly and control was more complete.

Beacon tank mixed with 2,4-D amine is the most effective treatment for selectively controlling hemp dogbane in corn. Tank mixtures of Accent or Beacon with Clarity also provide greater, more consistent control than any single herbicide applied alone. Tank mixtures of Accent with 2,4-D are not currently labeled.

Hemp dogbane requires long-term, persistent management to minimize its spread and impact. An effective strategy for controlling hemp dogbane could include corn, soybeans and wheat grown in rotation. During the corn rotation, the treatments suggested above could be used to control hemp dogbane.

In soybeans, Roundup could be applied with wipers or other selective equipment when hemp dogbane grows above the canopy. Roundup could also be applied broadcast in Roundup-Ready soybeans. If wheat is included in the rotation, hemp dogbane could be treated in the fall, following harvest. Small patches of hemp dogbane can also be spot-treated in season with Roundup.

Detailed recommendations for hemp dogbane control are described in Extension Bulletin E-2247 IPM Fact Sheet available from any county MSU Extension office. ■

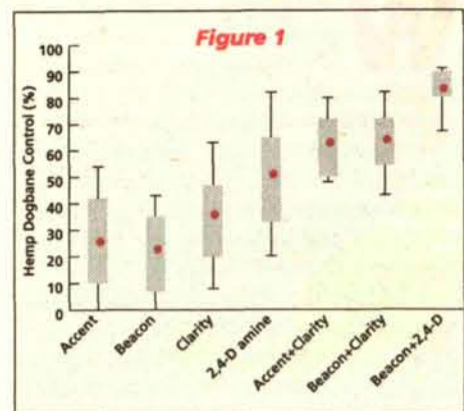


Figure 1
Hemp dogbane control six weeks after treatment averaged over four sites. Herbicides were applied at the following rates: Accent - 0.33 oz/A, Beacon - 0.38 oz/A, Clarity - 0.5 pt/A, 2,4-D amine - 1.0 pt/A. The red dot represents the average control provided by each treatment. The gray boxes represent 50 percent of the data and the whiskers represent 80 percent of the data. Smaller boxes and shorter whiskers indicate more consistent control.

1995 MSU soybean tillage by variety study

Maurice L. Vitosh, MSU Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, Michigan State University

Two soybean studies were conducted in 1995 at the MSU Research farm, East Lansing. Fourteen varieties were evaluated in adjacent no-tillage and conventional tillage experiments. The soil type was a Capac loam. The data are shown in Tables 1 and 2. Both experiments were planted on May 19, 1995. All seed was inoculated with Rhizobium inoculant. The surface residue cover on the no-till was estimated to be 65 percent.

During the growing season, the crop encountered some periods of moisture stress. There was no white mold in the trial. No-till plots were harvested on Oct. 11. Conventional plots were harvested on Oct. 16. The overall yield average for no-till and conventional plots was 56.1 and 57.0 bu./acre, respectively. Some varieties performed slightly better under no-till; however, the reverse is true for other varieties. Most varieties performed similarly for the two tillage systems. ■

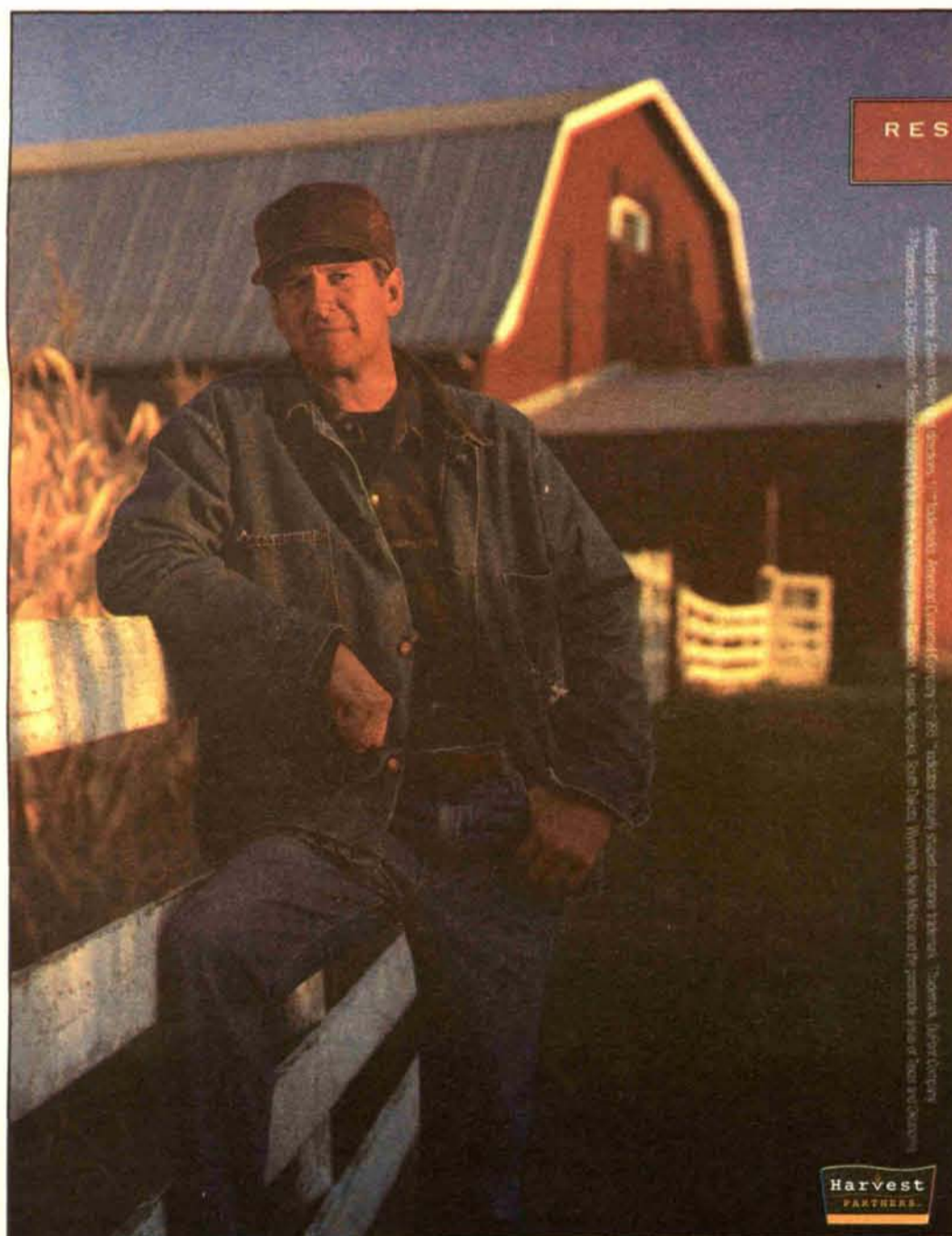
Table 1 — Performance of 14 soybean varieties on no-till

Variety	M.G.	Yield* Bu/A	Moisture %	Height (cm)	Lodging [†] (1-5)	
15Hardin 91	I	57.3	14.2	86.6	3.3	
Parker	I	54.4	13.0	86.3	2.5	
NK 519-90	I	57.9	13.7	85.6	1.0	
Sturdy	II	58.5	13.8	86.9	3.4	
Burlison	II	51.1	14.7	91.3	2.9	
NK S24-92	II	58.8	13.4	80.6	1.4	
Asgrow A2506	II	56.4	13.7	80.0	1.1	
Asgrow A2242	II	56.6	13.6	82.5	1.5	
Terra TS253	II	61.9	13.5	82.8	1.1	
Pioneer 9242	II	55.4	13.9	96.9	1.9	
DeKalb CX232	II	56.9	13.3	78.1	1.0	
Great Lakes 2415	II	60.8	13.6	86.9	3.0	
Resnik	III	51.3	13.8	88.1	1.8	
Pella 86	III	48.4	14.1	93.8	2.0	
LSD		(0.05)	3.4	0.5	7.4	0.7

Table 2 — Performance of soybean varieties on conventional tillage

Variety	M.G.	Yield* Bu/A	Moisture %	Height (cm)	Lodging [†] (1-5)
15Hardin 91	I	58.6	12.3	104.4	4.4
Parker	I	54.4	11.7	101.9	4.3
NK 519-90	I	61.0	11.9	95.6	1.3
Sturdy	II	59.2	12.1	104.7	3.1
Burlison	II	54.5	12.0	99.4	2.0
NK S24-92	II	55.6	11.7	88.1	1.3
Asgrow A2506	II	56.8	12.0	86.9	1.4
Asgrow A2242	II	57.5	12.1	87.5	1.5
Terra TS253	II	60.7	11.8	85.6	1.3
Pioneer 9242	II	56.0	12.1	108.1	1.8
DeKalb CX232	II	60.4	11.7	81.9	1.1
Great Lakes 2415	II	60.0	11.9	88.1	1.4
Resnik	III	50.9	11.9	92.5	1.4
Pella 86	III	52.5	12.0	98.1	1.4

*Yield adjusted to 13% moisture; [†]Lodging Score: 1 = no plants lodging; 2 = 25% lodging; 3 = 50% lodging; 4 = 75% lodging; 5 = 100% lodging.



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I PROMISE TO "RETIRE" MY INSECTICIDE IF IT "QUITS" BEFORE MY INSECTS DO.

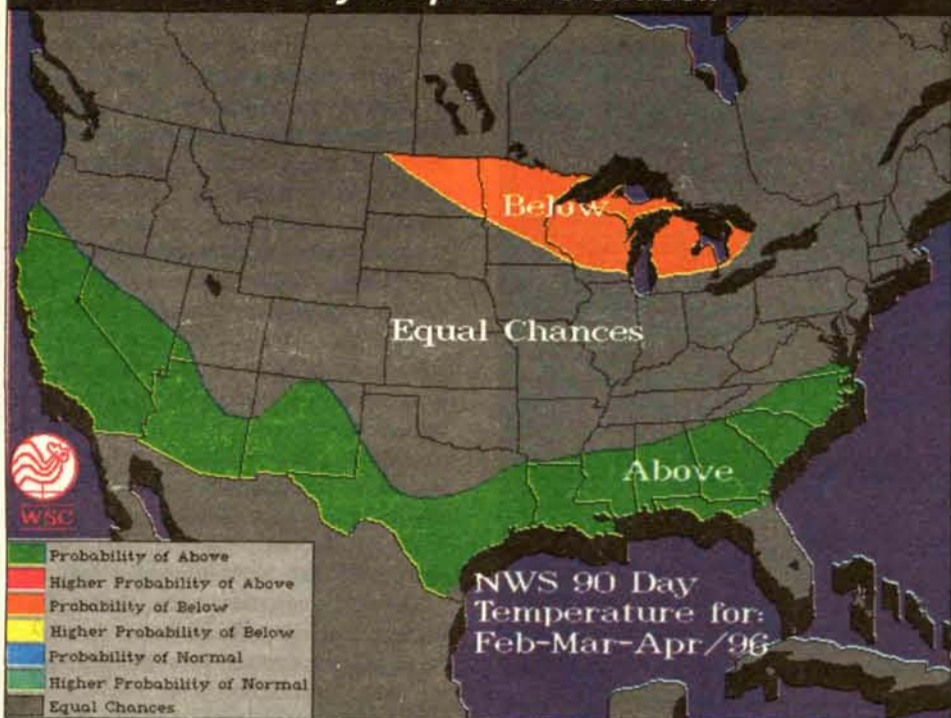


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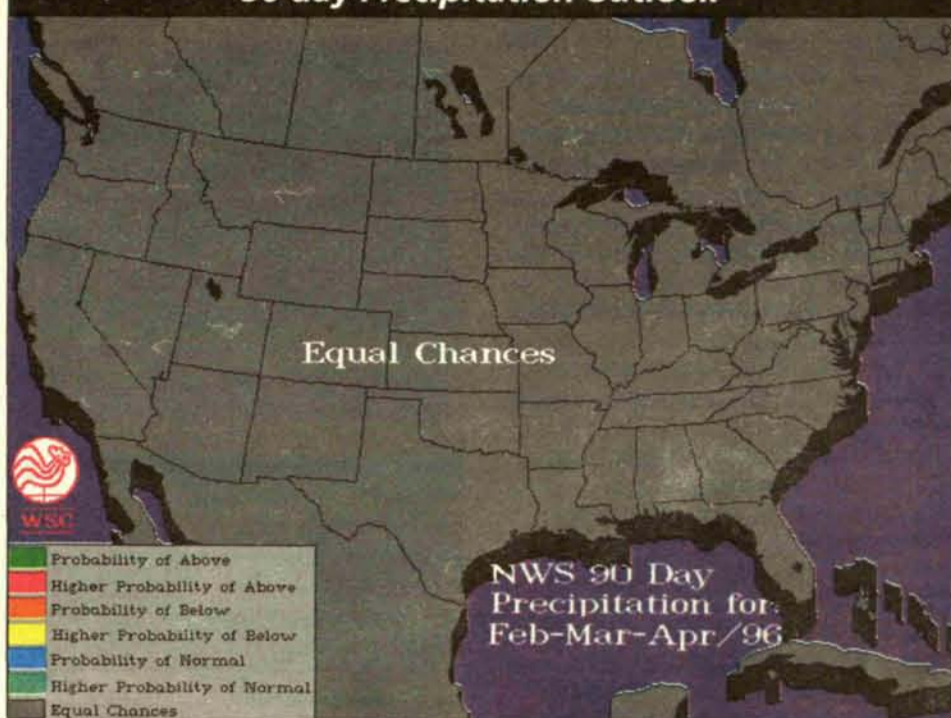
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90-day Temperature Outlook



90-day Precipitation Outlook



Weather Outlook

by Dr. Jeff Andresen, agricultural meteorologist, Department of Geography, Michigan State University

Temperatures moderated across the entire state during the middle of January as an upper level trough of low pressure, which had been centered over the Great Lakes region during much of the fall and early winter, shifted westward to the northern and central Great Plains. This upper air regime provided a series of strong storms that moved into Michigan from the southern Plains bringing abundant precipitation to much of the area. The most intense system of the month occurred Jan. 17 and 18 as a strong storm moved north-northeast from the lower Mississippi Valley. Several record high temperatures were established across the Lower Peninsula ahead of this system. Blizzard conditions prevailed across the western

Upper Peninsula, while severe thunderstorms with damaging winds marched across southern portions of the state. 12-hour temperature drops of more than 40 degrees occurred with passage of the storm. The jet stream plunged southward during the final week of January bringing much below normal temperatures to the entire state; however,

temperatures averaged near to slightly below normal for the entire month at most locations. Above normal precipitation occurred across much of the state, particularly in lake effect locales, where substantial snowfall occurred on several occasions; however, southwestern portions of the state received below normal precipitation for the month.

Long-range models suggest that the current jet stream configuration may continue into the late winter/early spring, with normal to below-normal temperatures forecast statewide. Confidence in the long-term precipitation forecast is low, however, with outlooks calling for near equal probabilities of below-, near-, and above-normal totals.

Michigan Weather Summary

1/1/96 to 1/31/96	Temperature		Precipitation	
	Observed mean	Dev. from normal	Actual (inch)	Normal (inch)
Houghton	13.5	-1.0	4.19	2.02
Marquette	11.4	0.3	4.44	2.02
Escanaba	14.4	-2.1	3.10	1.82
Sault Ste. Marie	11.3	-2.6	3.93	1.82
Lake City	14.8	-3.9	3.42	1.91
Pellston	14.9	-1.4	3.87	1.91
Traverse City	19.6	-2.0	6.71	1.91
Alpena	17.1	-1.8	1.57	1.69
Houghton Lake	17.0	-1.7	1.78	1.69
Muskegon	22.1	-1.4	1.51	2.38
Vestaburg	17.9	-4.3	1.21	1.68
Bad Axe	19.7	-2.3	2.99	1.56
Saginaw	20.4	-2.0	1.90	1.56
Grand Rapids	21.7	0.0	1.11	2.44
South Bend	25.8	2.6	1.51	2.44
Coldwater	22.9	-1.4	1.35	1.70
Lansing	21.4	-0.5	0.87	1.70
Detroit	23.8	1.1	1.80	1.74
Flint	21.7	-0.2	2.26	1.74
Toledo	24.3	-0.3	1.80	1.74

Observed totals are accumulated from April 1. Normals are based on district averages.



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Hog lot debate in Iowa

The Iowa Legislature may begin debate this week on a bill that would give county officials new controls over large hog lots. The state senate measure would allow counties to use zoning laws to regulate hog producers who don't raise at least 20 percent of the grain needed to feed their animals.

Supporters say it is important to allow counties to control the growth of large hog lots. Opponents say the proposal will hurt small producers.

In a related move, county officials in Garner, Iowa turned down a request by DeCoster Farms to build a 10-building complex housing 14,000 hogs. The county board based the decision on a court order that makes it unclear whether the county has jurisdiction over zoning local farmers. DeCoster Farms said it doesn't really need county permission to build the facility since the land is already zoned for agricultural use.

Fifth generation farmer makes commitment to agriculture, education

by Sue Ann Stuever

Making the decision to farm wasn't a tough one for Blaine VanSickle, a Marshall native. After a year away at college aspiring to be an ag teacher, he decided to return to the family farm.

VanSickle's father owned the farm along with a trucking business, "but his heart was in his trucks," VanSickle said. "I came home, replaced one of the hired men and just basically took over the farm at about 19."

The VanSickles grow corn, soybeans, wheat and hay and have a small farrow-to-finish operation. Blaine is the fifth generation to run the family's sesquicentennial farm, which his ancestors purchased from the government in 1835.

Farming isn't the only thing that's a family tradition for Blaine VanSickle. So is Farm Bureau. While he represents District 2 on the Michigan Farm Bureau board of directors, his son Kent is president of the Calhoun County Farm Bureau. VanSickle's father, Lorain, was also an active member.

VanSickle first joined Farm Bureau in his 20s to take out a life insurance policy. He became active in the organization and held positions as county president and county vice president. "I was on the county board when I became a state board member, so I resigned from the county board," he said.

His work as a state board member has led him to become involved on several state committees.



VanSickle first joined Farm Bureau in his 20s to take out a life insurance policy. He became active in the organization and held positions as county president and county vice president, before being elected to serve on the MFB state board of directors.

He also served on the American Farm Bureau Federation Swine Advisory Committee for four years. VanSickle is now a member of the board of directors

for Farmers Petroleum Cooperative.

Staying active in agriculture keeps him abreast of industry issues. "Probably one of the greatest

issues that we have to face in agriculture today is the conversion to free enterprise," VanSickle said. "As government tries to wean itself from agriculture, as we recover from dependency on farm program payments to the open market, as we work with GATT and NAFTA and the effects they have on agriculture," he continued, "there are going to have to be some adjustments in farm operations."

"I always look for a better tomorrow," VanSickle said of the industry.

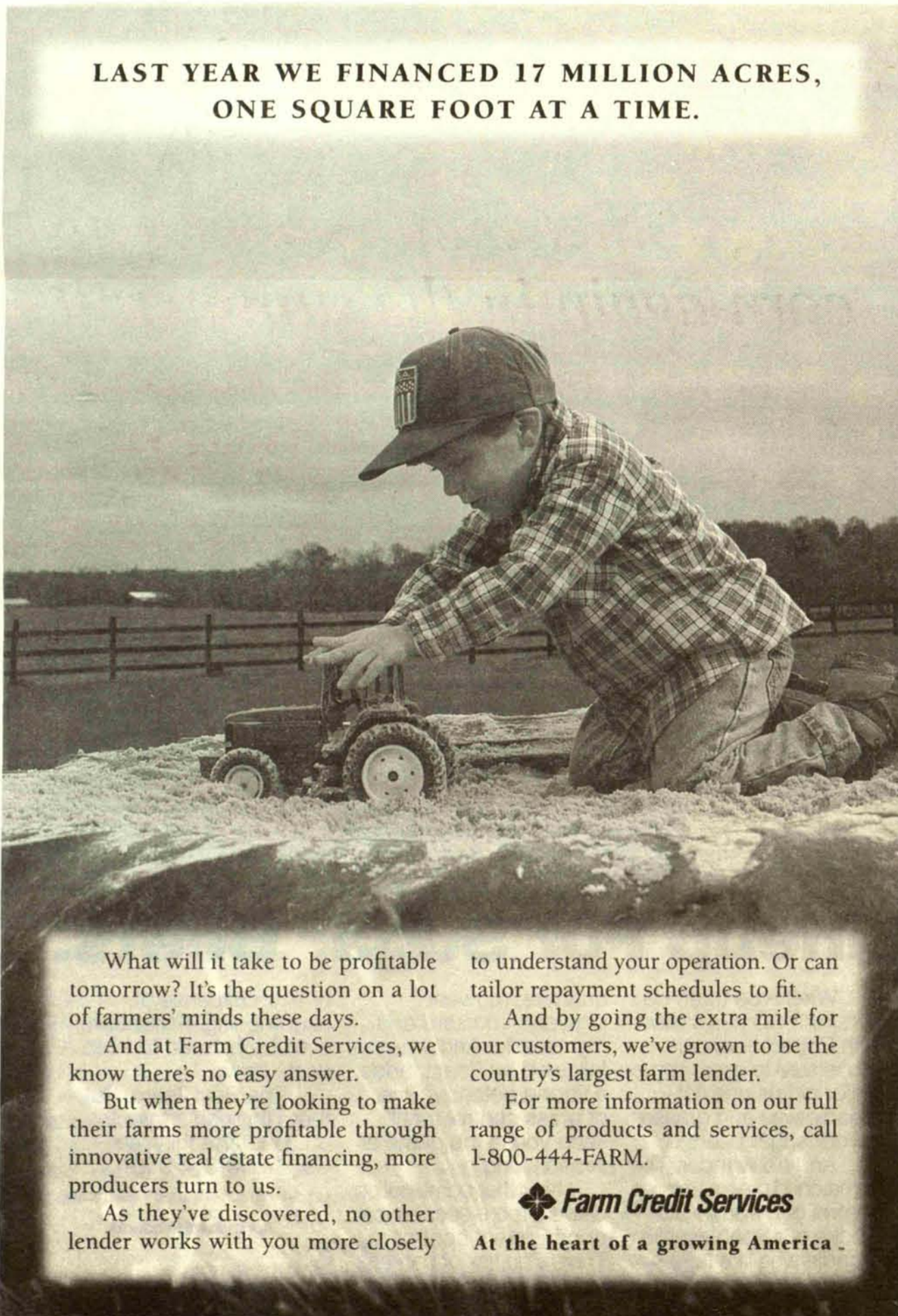
Besides his involvement in Farm Bureau, VanSickle has served on his township's planning commission since 1976, was a 4-H leader and ASCS Board member.

Following yet another family tradition, VanSickle is the third generation to serve on the local school board. He's starting his 23rd year on the MarLee Schools board of education, the largest K-8 district in Michigan, and is its president. VanSickle is very involved in education, and had a seat on the Michigan Association of School Boards' State Committee, as well as their task force on school finance.

Blaine VanSickle doesn't just farm because it's tradition. He likes the people, the land and the lifestyle. "People talk about retirement, and I'd like to have a few more days to go fishing or something, but I don't look for retirement because I like what I do," he said.

Blaine VanSickle and his wife, Sharon, have three grown children. ■

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Farmers to use more fertilizer in '96

Farmers in the Midwest are expected to apply more fertilizer in 1996 than last year because they will be planting more corn and other grains in response to higher prices and increasingly tight stocks, according to a report from Reuters News service.

"We fully expect planted corn acreage to increase more than 10 percent as we see 80 to 81 million acres of U.S. corn planted versus 71.2 million acres in 1995," said John Douglas, of Douglas Associates, a consulting group in Florence, Ala.

U.S. corn prices hit a 13-year high this month and extra fertilizer can boost corn yields 40 percent, experts said.

"Any time you have high grain prices, farmers want to maximize their production," said Ed Wheeler, president of Ed Wheeler Associates in Washington, D.C. He estimated sales of all fertilizer to be up 5 percent to 7 percent for the 1995-96 (July-June) season.

"Last year we sold 50.7 million short tons," Wheeler said. He said he expects an additional 2.5 million plus tons to be sold in 1996. "That includes all fertilizers," he said.

Corn should lead in number of acres planted. Last year's crop was down one-third from the 1994 record, and projected end-year stocks next Sept. 1 are less than a month's usage.

Corn farmers are big users of fertilizer and corn takes about 45 percent of total U.S. fertilizer sales, Wheeler said. He noted nitrogen will probably lead the charge. "All corn planted now is hybrid seed and hybrid corn takes a lot of nitrogen," Wheeler said.

Pat Mino, manager of the Maxon, Ill., Farmers Elevator and a fertilizer dealer, said there was excellent demand last fall for potash, anhydrous ammonia and phosphates. But he was concerned about rising phosphate prices, which are at least \$30 to \$40 per short ton higher than last fall. "That may affect spring usage," he said.

Diammonium phosphate (DAP) prices currently are about \$225 per short ton FOB barge New Orleans compared with \$190 last September.

But high corn prices may offset stronger DAP values.

"Corn is \$1 a bushel higher, so even if phosphate prices are up, the farmer still benefits," Wheeler said.

Weather permitting, anhydrous ammonia use also will rise.

"Soil conditions are more critical to the usage of ammonia than other products," said Allen Carpenter, vice president for trading with Continental Nitrogen and Resource Inc. "But, weather permitting, ammonia is the cheapest source of nitrogen there is. So, it is the product of choice," he said. ■

Apple committees pursue funding increase

200 grower signatures attained in petition drive; MDA hearing set for March 18.

Faced with growing competition from major apple-producing states on the east and west coasts and the need to increase research funding, the Michigan Apple Committee launched a successful petition drive last fall to put the funding increase to a vote among Michigan's apple growers this spring.

The proposed promotional assessment will add five cents per hundredweight every year for the next three years on fresh apples, raising the assessment from 30 cents to 45 cents per hundredweight by 1998. The promotional assessment will also increase on processed apples by two cents each of the next three years, going from 15 cents per hundredweight to 21 cents in 1998. No increase is being sought in the juice category, currently assessed at five cents per hundredweight. The last increase in the Apple Committee's promotional assessments was in 1989.

"Looking at our competition — primarily Washington, but also New York and California, we see a tremendous increase of apple trees planted," explains Michigan Apple Committee and Farm Bureau member John Bull, from Manistee. "It became evident that as these other states were promoting their apples to a larger degree every year, that we had to use that to develop a five-year plan with some goals and objectives that we thought were realistic; we just did not have the budget. We've got increasing apple production in this state that needs additional dollars in the area of promotion and also for research."

Last year, Michigan grew the second largest U.S. apple crop, raising 29 million bushels, behind Washington's mammoth 123.8-million-bushel crop, according to Secretary-Manager of the Michigan Apple Committee Mark Arney. New York and California followed closely at 26.4 and 23.8 million bushels, respectively.

Following a successful grower petition drive last fall, MDA will hold a hearing on March 18 regarding the proposed referendum, according to MFB's Director of Commodity Activities and Research Division Ken Nye.

"There will be an MDA hearing held to assess the interests of the industry in pursuing the referendum," explains Nye. "Growers will get the opportunity to vote and once the growers have voted, either an affirmative or a negative, we'll either have an assessment increase or we'll stay exactly the same as we are now."

According to Nye, the actual vote could take place in the spring or early summer of this year and, if the referendum passes, will need to be renewed every five years as required by P.A. 232.

"We (the Michigan Apple Committee) currently have two people out in the Midwest calling on accounts and we'd like to add a third person," explains Bull. "We feel that a big demand could be created for Michigan apples in the processing arena and in the juice arena, that we currently don't have the manpower to call — for instance, on bakeries that are making pies or whatever."

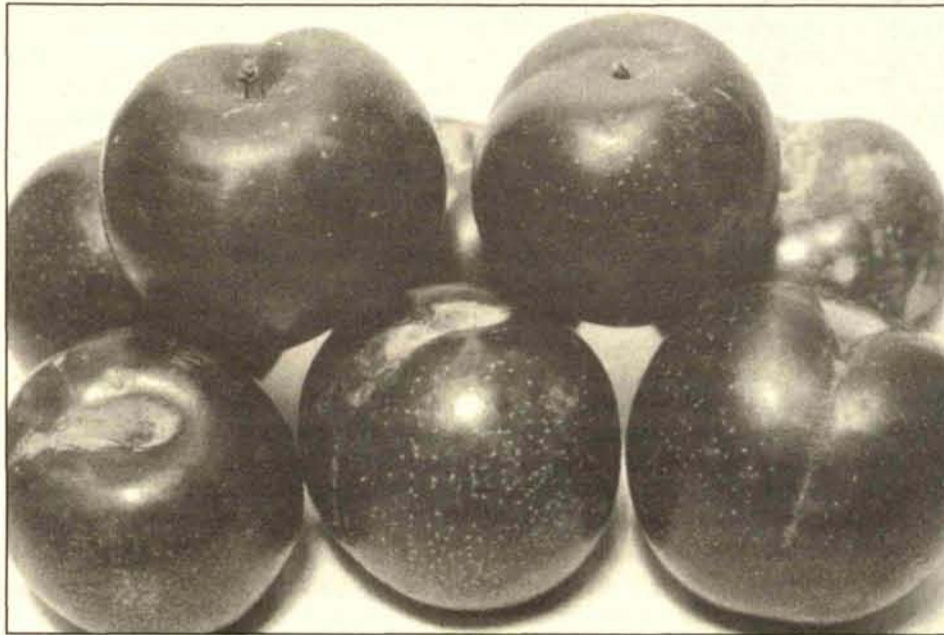
"From an advertising standpoint, we see a need to expand our promotional programs, both domestically and off-shore," Arney added. "For example, the Jonagold is a variety that is increasing dramatically in new planting and soon will have a more important role in the marketing mix for Michigan, and we need to be ready for that."

Arney says that, through Michigan's participation in the U.S. Apple Export Council, markets are becoming established in Brazil, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom and Mexico.

The Michigan Apple Research Committee also recommended an increase in assessments on all categories of apples to fund expanded research efforts. The research funding tariff of one cent currently would increase a penny per hundredweight on all fresh, processed and juice apples each of the next three years for a total of four cents per hundredweight in 1998.

"The Apple Research Committee was established in 1982, and we haven't asked for an assessment yet," states Michigan Apple Research Committee Chairman Jim Swindeman from Deerfield. "Everybody knows that the ag program at the federal government is sooner or later going to be cut, and with that, we're going to be standing on the outside looking in, if we don't do something to help ourselves out."

"One of the things we want to focus on with this increased money is to do some marketplace



research," continues Swindeman. "We're an arm of the Apple Committee and, since we're the research committee, that's what we definitely should be doing some research in — the market aspect of it."

"The referendum will generate approximately \$500,000 more to the Apple Committee's advertis-

ing budget and approximately \$360,000 more for the research budget," explained Arney.

Swindeman says, the additional funds would allow the research committee to focus its energy on apple quality and production research including pest control measures, environmental stewardship

and pre- and post-harvest research.

"All this is hand-in-hand with the university," states Swindeman. "We're right now one of the industry groups in the state that are funding the integrated pest management project that's going on at Michigan State University. This research group right now is funding that for \$10,000 a year."

"I think growers recognize the need to promote and to fund programs for research and development," states Nye. "The apple industry is large here in Michigan, and I think the apple growers want to make sure that we're going to have a very viable industry in the future."

"I just feel it's time for the industry to stand on their own two feet a little bit more," adds Swindeman.

"We want to continue to stretch the growers' dollars," notes Arney. "So we always constantly evaluate the programs that we're conducting."

"From a personal standpoint, an individual has invested a small fortune in the land and in the trees and time to grow this crop," explains Bull. "It just makes sense to me that we have some control on where this crop is going to go and in creating a demand for this crop. By increasing our budget for advertising, and promotion in general, we can help create a demand for these apples that we have so much time and money invested in now. We just have to take responsibility ourselves for creating a demand for these apples." ■

"Prowl lets me worry about things other than spraying my corn again in the summer; it works great all season."

Phillip
Potter

Tully,
New York



What's the future of dairy futures?

Dairy producers now have a new marketing tool at their disposal that's been available to crop and livestock producers for quite some time — futures contracts, at both the Coffee, Sugar & Cocoa Exchange (CSCE) since December 1995 and, effective Jan. 11, 1996, the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME).

While there are some significant differences between the contracts offered by the two exchanges, the overriding concept is the same — offer producers and fluid milk purchasers a chance to lock in prices,

Milk Futures Trading: The Basics

A futures contract is a standardized, binding agreement between two parties to make or take delivery of a specified quantity and grade of a commodity at an established price. Buyers are said to be "long" and sellers "short" the futures contract.

The milk futures contract calls for delivery of a tanker load of Grade A milk (50,000 pounds or 500 cwt.) with a 3.5 percent butterfat content. Prices are quoted in dollars per cwt., with a minimum fluctuation of one cent/cwt. (equal to \$5 per contract).

Milk deliveries will take place at an Interstate Milk Shippers certified plant, receiving station and transfer stations in the "Madison District," an area comprised of counties in southwestern Wisconsin and northern Illinois. The delivery months are February, April, June, August, October and December (delivery months for CME are different). Trading hours are 9:15 a.m. to 2 p.m. New York time.

Because all contracts are standardized, market participants are able to focus on the only variable — price. Price is established on the floor of the exchange through a competitive auction market system, known as "open outcry" trading. Under the open outcry system, all traders call out bids and offers in the ring. The traders recognize each other's bids and offers, and prices change as buyers and sellers agree on transactions.

The vast majority of futures contracts never result in actual delivery. While delivery is required of contract buyers and sellers that hold their position through contract expiration, most prefer to remove delivery obligations by executing offsetting transactions in the market. In other words, those who are long in the futures market sell contracts, and those who are short in the futures market buy contracts.

Source: Coffee, Sugar & Cocoa Exchange, Inc., Trading Milk Futures and Options

says MFB Dairy Specialist Kevin Kirk. He says the need for such a marketing tool will become more critical as the dairy market grows more unstable.

"Milk prices have fluctuated 15 to 16 percent over the past year, while cheese prices varied 17 percent and butter prices dropped 34 percent in one week," Kirk cautioned. "At the same time, feed costs are higher and government policy remains uncertain at best."

Errol Baxter, director of commodity marketing and education for the CME, is predicting that there will be no government price supports in the future, meaning that prices will vary widely, similar to cattle and hog prices. He suggests that producers consider the use of future and option contracts as one way of leveling out the prices they receive.

"If you know the market is going down... you're better off selling futures contracts," Baxter advised. "It is, by far, the best way of protecting your milk price — no question about it. However, if they (prices) go up, options provide a price floor. It's nice to pay a premium and have the potential for the higher prices."

MSU Agricultural Economist Jim Hilker predicts that if the fluid milk contracts are to be successful, however, that milk cooperatives will have to play a role in providing their members a chance to utilize the futures contracts through forward pricing, similar to what elevators offer cash crop producers, as a risk management tool.

"If these contracts are going to work, in my opinion, the co-ops are going to have to use them as a marketing tool for their individual members," Hilker suggested. "There's a good deal of risk in the markets, and the co-ops would be the logical place to use the contracts, to help reduce that risk. They would theoretically have the expertise and the resources to do it right."

Michigan Milk Producers Association (MMPA) General Manager Walt Wosje says that, although the cooperative is studying the contracts, they have no immediate plans to get involved in using them.

"This is more of an individual farmer assessment as opposed to the co-op," Wosje said. "It's pretty easy for a producer to buy or sell a 50,000-pound unit — the forward pricing opportunities are there with or without a co-op. I don't know that we (MMPA) should be speculating or gambling on behalf of all farm members."

Hilker and Wosje do agree, however, that indi-

vidual producer utilization, early on, will be minimal. "Some big dairy farmers may use the contracts," Hilker said. "But they need to have someone in place who's an expert in getting the right contract and understands the contract specifications and details."

"It should really be used as a risk tool," Hilker continued. "Anytime the price is in a range that offers you a profit margin, that's a reasonable time to consider using the contracts. That's especially critical with these high feed prices, because you don't want to risk a drop in milk prices with these current grain prices."

Contract Specifications of Milk Futures

The contract specification for Grade A milk for the CSCE and the CME are given below. There are some significant differences between the two contracts.

The biggest distinction between the CSCE and the CME contracts is the delivery point. The CSCE contract requires delivery from an approved plant or facility in the Madison, Wis., district of the Chicago

Regional Federal Milk Market Order. The buyer is responsible for picking up the shipment and assuming all transportation costs from the point.

The CME contract, on the other hand, requires delivery to a CME-approved facility within the boundaries of Wisconsin and Minnesota or located in the portion of surrounding states included in the Chicago Regional or Upper Midwest Federal Milk Marketing Orders. The seller assumes all transportation costs to the buyer's facility except that the buyer will be assessed a standard freight rate per mile for each additional mile the milk is hauled over and above the distance between the seller's facility and either Eau Claire or Fond du Lac, Wis. The excess hauling costs will be paid to the seller. ■

Source: Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Futures Contracts For Milk: How Will They Work?, Ed Jesse and Bob Cropp, Professors and Extension Dairy Marketing and Policy Specialists

Contract Specification	CSCE	CME
Commodity	FOB delivery of Grade A milk with 3.5 percent butterfat content from an approved plant.	FOB delivery of Grade A milk with 3.5 percent butterfat content to an approved plant.
Trading Unit	One tanker load.	One tanker load.
Delivery Unit	One tanker load; allowable variation 48,000 to 50,000 pounds.	One tanker load; allowable variation 3 percent.
Trading Hours	9:15 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. NY time	8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Delivery Months	Feb., Apr., June, Aug., Oct., Dec.	Feb., Apr., June, July, Sept., Nov.
Price Quotation	Dollars and cents per hundredweight.	Same
Minimum Fluctuation	\$0.01 per cwt., equivalent to \$5.00 per contract.	\$0.025 per cwt., equivalent to \$12.50 per contract.
Daily Price Limits	From the previous day's settlement price, \$0.50 per cwt. with variable limits effective under certain conditions. No price limits on two nearby months, with no limits on third nearby month from first day of a delivery month until the last trading day of the delivery month.	From the previous day's settlement price, no trading at a price more than \$1.50 per cwt.
Standards	Grade A raw milk with 3.5 percent butterfat content.	Same
Delivery Points	From Interstate Milk Shippers (IMS) certified plants, receiving stations or transfer stations located in the Madison district of Chicago federal order.	To CME approved facilities within borders of Wisconsin and Minnesota or that portion of surrounding states included in the Chicago or Upper Midwest federal orders.
Delivery	Pick up by the buyer from the seller's plant.	Seller to buyer's facility.
Last Trading Day	Six Exchange business days prior to the last Exchange business day of the delivery month.	Seven Exchange business days prior to the last Exchange business day of the delivery month.
Notice of Delivery	First Exchange business day following the last trading day.	Same
First and Last Delivery Day	First Exchange day following notice day up to the last Exchange business day of the delivery month.	Buyer and seller shall select a day so that delivery can be made by the last calendar day of the delivery month. If no agreement is conveyed to the Clearing House, the Exchange will choose a delivery date from calendar days beginning four days after notice of no agreement and ending on the last calendar day of the delivery month.

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MPPA honors farmers, veterinarian

Ray named Michigan's 1996 Master Pork Producer.

Chip Ray, of Gobels, has been named by the Michigan Pork Producers Association (MPPA) as Michigan's 1996 Master Pork



Producer. The award is given annually to producers who demonstrate skills in proficient swine production and take an active leadership role in the Michigan pork industry.

Ray is currently nearing completion of converting his 400-sow

farrow-to-finish operation into a 10,000-head-per-year finishing operation. "I looked at my operation and decides that in order to remain competitive, I needed to make some changes," Ray explained. "When I looked at the facilities that I had, it was only natural to convert everything to finishing space."

Ray has been active both nationally and locally in pork industry activities, having just served as the immediate vice president of the National Pork Board. He has also served on numerous committees for both the National Pork Producers Council and the former National Livestock and Meat Board's Pork Industry Group. Ray also served as the first president of MPPA and is currently serving on the organization's executive committee.

Schug receives Michigan's 1996 Pork All-American Award



Mike Schug, from Climax, was named to receive the 1996 Pork All-American Award and will represent Michigan on the National Pork Producers Council's Pork All-American team at the World Pork Exposition next June in Des Moines, Iowa. The award, created

in 1970, is intended to acknowledge outstanding young pork producers who have established themselves as dedicated, involved business professionals and leaders in their communities.

Schug entered into the family partnership in 1980 with his father, Lloyd, and brother, Denny, in a 400-sow farrow-to-finish operation. Mike now manages the pork production portion of the operation, while Denny manages the cropping program.

The Schugs closed the herd in 1980 to help with disease control. Since then, no new animals have been brought into the operation, with all replacement stock produced through the use of artificial insemination. The operation also utilizes all-in all-out production, phase feeding and split-sex feeding.

Schug serves as a regional representative on the MPPA board of directors and also serves on the Pork Quality Assurance Program Committee, and the Michigan Pork Expo Planning Committee.

Granger receives MPPA's Distinguished Swine Service Award



Dr. Larry Granger, swine species veterinarian in the Animal Industry Division of the Michigan Department of Agriculture, received the MPPA's Distinguished Swine Service Award, which is given annually to recognize individuals who have made significant

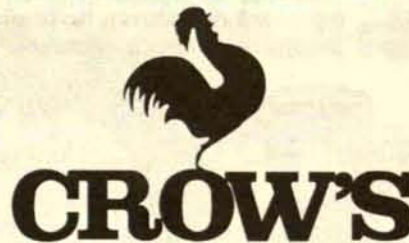
contributions to Michigan's pork industry and MPPA.

Prior to assuming his present position, Granger was in private practice for several years and also worked with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection and Veterinary Services Division. Granger was recognized for his efforts in the state's pseudorabies eradication program to eradicate the costly disease by the year 2000. Dr. Granger has also been active in working with producers interested in setting up producer networks. ■

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196 B.P.A.

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Crow's 494

179 B.P.A.

20.1% Harvest Moisture
2% SL

Plot Average

175 B.P.A.

18.9% Harvest Moisture
2% SL

Central Clay Loams, Regular Population

Crow's 494

162 B.P.A.

18.4% Harvest Moisture
1% SL

Crow's 490

158 B.P.A.

21.6% Harvest Moisture
7% SL

Plot Average

153 B.P.A.

18.9% Harvest Moisture
2% SL

Southern Silt Loams, Regular Population

Crow's 490

157 B.P.A.

21.9% Harvest Moisture
3% SL

Plot Average

141 B.P.A.

20.0% Harvest Moisture
4% SL

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Nutritional benefits of soybeans growing

Soys now thought to help prevent cancer, fight heart disease and lower cholesterol levels

What's the next big growth area for soybean demand? Ask Dr. Mark Messina and he'll tell you the answer could be as close as your kitchen table. Messina, a nutritional consultant based in Port Townsend, Wash., just outside of Seattle, says that the negative image of soybean products for human consumption is largely undeserved and unjustified today. Messina holds a master's degree in nutrition from the University of Michigan and a Ph.D. in nutrition from Michigan State University.

"If you haven't tried soy products in the last five to six years, you haven't tried soy products," Messina claims. "Compared to the soy products of the '60s and '70s, the products of today are much more improved. When you have companies like Green Giant coming out with a soy burger, that's certainly an indication that soy is becoming a bit more mainstream — but it's still an uphill battle."

So why is Messina sold on increasing soybean consumption? He spent a little over five years heading up a \$3 million research project for the National Cancer Institute looking at the anti-cancer effects of soybeans in the human diet. Messina was surprised to also learn that, in addition to helping prevent all types of cancers, including breast and colon cancer, soybeans also provide a host of other health bene-

fits such as reduced heart disease, reduced cholesterol levels, improved bone health and reduced osteoporosis, better kidney function, and reduced menopause symptoms.

Soybeans contain Isoflavones, one of which is a product called Geinsein. Researchers suspect that Geinsein is the key ingredient, found only in soybeans, that provides all of the health benefits. "It's a weak estrogen," Messina explained. "It's theorized that consuming a soy product will help replace the estrogen lost when menopause occurs, helping to lessen the severity of the symptoms as well as providing a host of other benefits."

Messina says that, although soybeans are commonly used as an ingredient in more and more food products, the average one gram per day consumption level isn't nearly enough to provide the nutritional benefits that soybeans are capable of. He, along with a growing list of nutritionists and dietitians, is recommending that American consumers attempt to consume at least three to four grams, or one serving per day, of a soy-based product.

U.S. per capita consumption is dwarfed by other countries, such as Japan, where daily soybean consumption averages 30 grams per day. "The Japanese, on average, consume about one serving per day of some type of soy product — they're not sitting around all day just eating tofu," Messina pointed out.

"Americans need to start viewing the soybean as another very healthy food to add to their overall

diet," Messina suggested. "It's not a miracle food and it's not just for vegetarians or the health-conscious — it's another healthy food that everyone should try to have every day."

Dr. Kathy Rhodes, a registered dietitian and a cardiovascular nutritionist for Preventative Cardiology at MedSport, University of Michigan, echoes Messina's call for increased consumption of soybeans. Her work involves counseling heart patients, which generally includes a recommendation to make soybeans a part of their daily diet.

"It can be as simple as having some soy milk on your cereal in the morning, or a tofu stir-fry or tempeh burger for lunch," Rhodes explained. "It could also include a texturized vegetable protein in your spaghetti sauce instead of hamburger, and there are soy cheeses now available, so it can be worked in quite easily."

Rhodes says that the growth of frozen foods and prepared dishes containing soybeans, along with better tasting soy products, are available and will be key to increasing American consumption of soybeans. She contends, however, that additional product development and research are needed to help make soy products more commonplace in American diets.

Michigan soybean producers, through their checkoff dollars, have been helping to fund such research at Michigan State University. Dr. Maurice Bennink, a professor in Food Science and Human

Nutrition, has received funding from the Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee and the American Soybean Association to fund research regarding the soybean's effect on colon cancer.

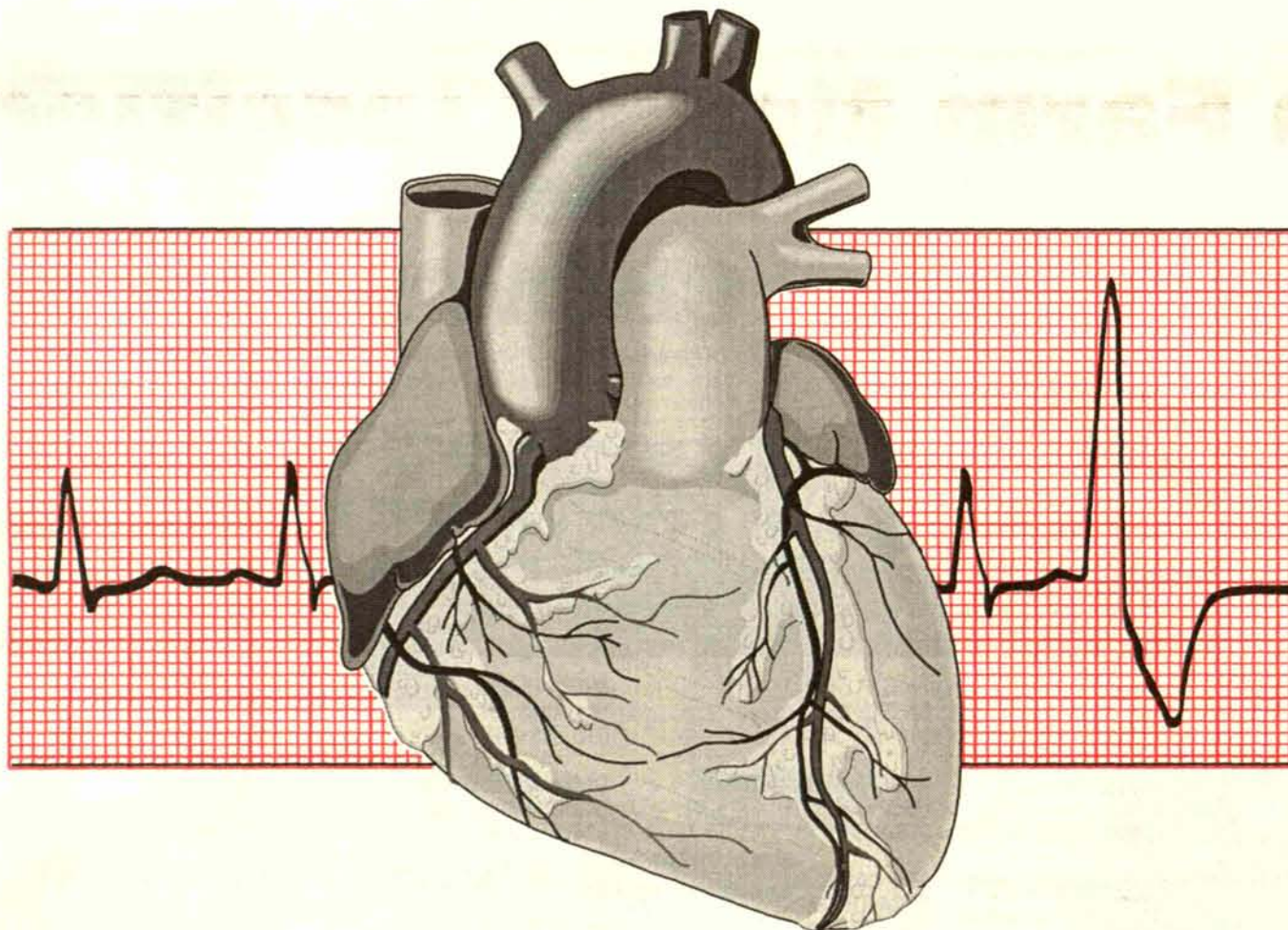
Although the results are only preliminary at this point, Bennink says it appears that soybeans might actually serve as a treatment as well as a preventive measure in the fight against colon cancer.

"Some of the Isoflavones definitely inhibit the growth of colon cancer cells in cell culture tests," Bennink explained. "We have purified the chemicals from soy and put them in a media where we're growing cancer cells, and the chemicals appear to inhibit the growth of cancer cells. When we fed whole soy to rats that had been treated with a colon carcinogen, we saw that there was also a decrease in some of the early symptoms of colon cancer."

Product development is also being worked on at MSU, by incorporating soy flour into pasta dishes and other food items to increase human consumption. Bennink says that scientists have been successful in increasing the soybean mixture to as high as 35 percent in spaghetti and as much as 30 percent in noodles.

Researchers are also attempting to integrate more soybeans into breakfast foods and snack items. "If we can convince consumers and major food manufacturers that there are definite health benefits, these types of food items would be a good way to increase soybean consumption," Bennink concluded. ■

Do You Need to Get Your Heart Back on Track?



Incorporate Healthy Soyfoods into Your Daily Diet!

As technology advances, science is discovering that unique compounds found in soybeans may help prevent or even treat some diseases such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, high blood pressure, gallstones and kidney disease.

Consuming even one portion of soy per day may help your body fight against these diseases. Whether whole soybeans, soy flour, tofu, soy oil, soy milk or other soy products, the health benefits associated with soyfood consumption are truly remarkable.

For more information on soyfoods, write to:

Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee
P.O. Box 287
Frankenmuth, MI 48734



Products Containing Soybean or Soy Products

The number of soy products on the shelves of supermarkets, food co-ops and health food stores is increasing rapidly. These products are being produced by small companies and major manufacturers. Products range from main dishes to snack foods and desserts.

Tofutti — Wide variety of frozen tofu desserts
Ken and Robert's Veggie Pockets — Wide variety
Amy's Tofu — Lasagna
Yves Veggie Cuisine — Tofu Weiners
Worthington Natural Touch — Fat Free Vegan Burger, Veggie-Links, Okara Patty, Prosage Links, Prosage Patties
White Wave — Sea Veggie Tempeh, Tempeh Veggie Burger, Teriyaki, Dairyless Yogurt, Tempeh, Reduced Fat Tofu, Meatless Jumbo Franks, 5-Grain Tempeh, Soy Rice Tempeh, Wild Rice Tempeh, Original Soy Tempeh, Veggie Burger, London Broil, Baked Tofu
Soy Dog — Meatless Leaner Wieners, Veggie Sizzlers, Not Dogs
Morning Star Farms — Meatless Breakfast Links, Meatless Breakfast Patties, Meatless Grillers
Mori-Nu — Lite Silken Tofu, Silken Tofu
Lightlife — Tofu Pups
Green Giant — Harvest Burger
Fantastic Foods — Tofu Burger, Tofu Classic, Mandarin Chow Mein
Frieda's — Firm or Soft Tofu
Chiecko — Tofu
Boca Burger — Chef Max's Favorite and Original
Azumaya — Regular Firm, Extra Firm, Soft Tofu
Arrowhead Mills — Soybeans
Health Valley — Tofu Baked Beans Vegetarian Cuisine, Tofu Black Beans Vegetarian Cuisine, Tofu Lentil Vegetarian Cuisine
Westbrae Natural — Wide variety of soy milks
Health Valley — Soy Moo
EdenSoy — Multiple varieties of soy milks
EdenBlend — Rice and Soy Beverage
Tofurella — Wide variety of soy cheeses
Betsy's Tempeh
Wide variety of products containing soy oil, such as crackers, breads, cookies and other baked goods
Soy nuts
Soy flours
Miso
Soy sauces and Tamari — light and regular
Texturized vegetable or soy protein — used in chili and sloppy joes, etc.

Source: Dr. Kathy Rhodes, Registered Dietitian and Cardiovascular Nutritionist, Preventative Cardiology at MedSport, University of Michigan

Michigan Farm News Classified

14
Real Estate

FOR SALE: 150 ACRE DAIRY farm, double six parlor, free stall, dry cow and calf barn, three harvesters, and four bedroom house. Additional land, equipment, and cattle available. 1-517-766-8028.

NEAR HOLLAND: 10 acre horse farm, 1 1/2 story home, double garage, 30x60 barn, storage loft, 1000 bales capacity, two other buildings. \$139,500.
Yonker Realty Company
1-616-396-4618
Evenings, call Peter Yonker, Realtor, 1-616-396-2532.

VEGETABLE FARM: Western Michigan, 190 acres, tillable ground. Two outbuildings for storage and refrigeration. Four bedroom home. \$450,000.
Faust Real Estate
Adrian, 1-517-263-8666

15
Real Estate Wanted

157 ACRE FARM in southwestern Lenawee County. 101 acres tillable, 40 wooded, custom built ranch. \$295,000. May be split.
Faust Real Estate
Adrian, 1-517-263-8666

WANTED: Farms and land throughout Michigan, agricultural and recreational. Large parcels preferred. We have buyers!
Faust Real Estate
Adrian, 1-517-263-8666

18
Antiques/Collectibles

COLLECTORS ITEM for sale. Restored Adams road grater #3. Horse or tractor drawn. Also, other graders. Call 1-517-834-5187.

FOR SALE: 4' rotary mower for Farmall cub. Pulley belt, adjusting shelves, mounting brackets. Also, one cylinder gas engine. Call 1-616-873-2742 after 7pm.

19
General

CRANBERRY ROOTED cuttings for sale. One year old, 72 cell plug size. Stevens variety. Plugs will establish very quickly, 15¢ each. 10,000 minimum order. Order now! Lawton, Michigan. 1-616-657-5040.

FARMERS, ARE YOU FRUSTRATED? Do you have a need to: increase profitability of your farm? Improve soil condition? Increase crop yields? Conserve and use water more efficiently? These are just some of the many possible benefits we can provide. We have a solution! Call Mr. Bielas today at 1-616-463-4602.

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For more information on Maupintour's 1996 Rodeos of the Wild West call 800-292-2693, Monday-Friday, 8 AM-5:30 PM



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Jamboree Acres

12
General

Mineral Owners Gas/Oil: Investor interested in purchasing, producing royalty income for immediate cash. Prefer Antrim gas. Other formations considered. Call Jay, 1-800-968-7645.

PROFESSIONAL CATTLE hoof trimming: Statewide! Over 14 years experience. Prices start at \$6. Call **Norman Beale** 1-616-775-0488

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HART'S AUTO PARTS
Cecil, OH
1-419-399-4777

20
Wanted to Buy

SOFTWOOD WANTED: Sawlogs and pulpwood. White, Red, Jack, Austrian and Scotch pines. Also, Balsam, Spruce and Hemlock. Especially White Pine sawlogs; standing or roadside. Lower Peninsula only!
Northern Timberlands, Inc. in business over 35 years!
Call 1-517-356-9759 for pricing and specifications.

TRAVERSE CITY: If you wish to buy or sell farm or recreational property in north-west Michigan, we can help. Call Ron McGregor, **Northern Michigan Land Brokers**, 1-616-929-1515, 1-616-943-7709.

WANTED TO BUY: Standing timber of all kinds. Call **R. H. Rehkopf** Big Rapids, Michigan 1-800-725-7861

WANTED, STANDING TIMBER: Buyers of timber of all types. Cash in advance! 1-517-875-4565, ask for Tim. **Maple Rapids Lumber Mill, Inc.** St. Johns, MI

20
Wanted to Buy

WANTED: 2"-8" used aluminum irrigation tubing. Buy, Sell or Trade! Call **Rain Control** 1-800-536-7246

WANTED: Old gas pumps and globes, old oil bottles, old porcelain signs. Any old gas station items. Call 1-616-984-5183 anytime.

WANTED: Old motorcycles, snowmobile and off road vehicles. 1965 and older. Call JD at 1-517-676-0583.

21
Special Events

9th ANNUAL EASTERN MICHIGAN FARM TOY AND CRAFT SHOW, February 18, 9am-3pm. Imlay City Middle School, Imlay City, Michigan. Days, 1-810-724-8010. or 1-810-724-1186.

23
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1st National
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25
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5. Livestock	14. Real Estate	24. Investors Wanted.
6. Poultry	15. Real Estate Wanted	25. Buildings
7. Dogs and Puppies	16. Estate Sales	26. Lawn And Garden
8. Ponies/Horses	17. Auctions	27. Announcements
9. Help Wanted	18. Antiques/Collectibles	28. To Give Away
	19. General	29. Vehicles

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Check \$ _____ (payable to Michigan Farm News Classified)
Visa Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____
Master Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____
Classified Rates - \$8 for up to 24 words - 30 cents each additional word
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Circulation over 46,000 in State of Michigan.

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Discussion Topic Ag and the Internet

March 1996
A monthly resource for the Community Action Groups of Michigan Farm Bureau



Farmers have always been eager adapters of new technology, especially when it improves their bottom line. So what should farmers make of the hoopla over the Internet? *What is it? What does it mean for agriculture? How can farmers take advantage of the Internet's capabilities?*

The formal answer for "What is the Internet?" is that it is a linked computer network that links individuals, universities, government agencies, commercial organizations and non-profits (like Farm Bureau). The informal way to describe the function of Internet is that it is something like a world-wide system of electronic sidewalks. You can "walk" along the Internet to visit specific people, go directly to specific destinations for information or products, or just meander along, stopping when you feel like it at interesting spots.

Visiting people on the Internet is accom-

plished by using e-mail. Computer users can use e-mail to send (or receive) messages with anyone in the world who also has an e-mail address. It's similar to the way your county Farm Bureau office uses an e-mail system to communicate with the Farm Bureau Center in Lansing.

This e-mail function makes available the part of the Internet that is perhaps most useful to farmers: newsgroups. Newsgroups have been formed around nearly every subject you can think of. "Large numbers of practicing producers, literally from all over the world, can talk to one another through newsgroups," said Don Jones, Extension agricultural engineer with Purdue. Jones is a well-known expert on agriculture and the Internet and was a featured workshop speaker at the 1995 AFBF Annual Meeting in St. Louis. "The newsgroups let farmers have something like a coffee-chat about their farm operations. Many agribusiness people and Extension staff monitor these conversations."

Another important part of the Internet is the World Wide Web. This lets people navigate along the Internet using "hyperlinks" that send them directly to a destination. Unlike the text-only messages of e-mail, the information on the Web is multimedia and rich with graphics, photos, video and sound.

Getting hooked into the Internet can be somewhat technical. You need a computer and a device called a modem that connects your computer to a phone line. Accessing the Web also requires

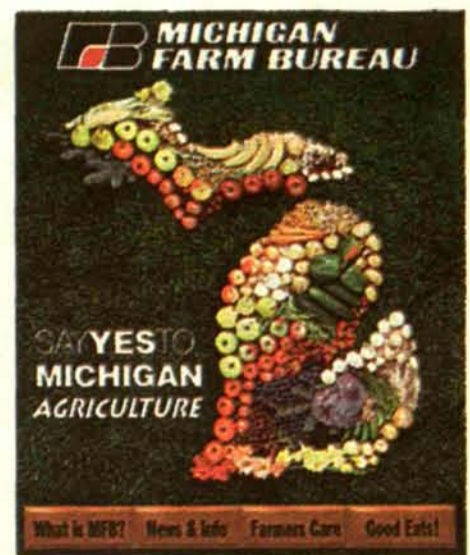
Windows (or the Macintosh operating system.) You also need to subscribe to a service that connects you to the Internet (known as an Internet provider.) All three of the major online services (America Online, Prodigy and Compuserve) offer e-mail and Internet access.

Once you are connected, the possibilities are nearly limitless. One of the highlights of the Web's many resources for agriculture is the new Michigan Farm Bureau site. MFB's Web pages offer weekly news summaries and the opportunity to get news releases (and Ag in the Classroom lesson plans) by e-mail; information about how agriculture cares about the environment, details on the latest MACMA sales offers and weekly excerpts from the *Michigan's Cookin' with Karen and Dean* recipe book.

The address for MFB's Web page is http://www.fb.com/mich_state/. The e-mail address for the MFB Information and Public Relations Division is mfbinfo@aol.com.

The American Farm Bureau Federation's Web page is <http://www.fb.com>. It offers news, background information about American agriculture and links to about a dozen other state Farm Bureau Web sites, including Michigan, Texas and Georgia.

Other Web sites of interest to agriculture include the USDA's Agricultural Research Service and its National Agricultural Library; Agriculture On-line (*Successful Farming*); Michigan State University and nearly every other university in the country;



Michigan Farm Bureau's Web address is: http://www.fb.com/mich_state/

Cowtown America (the National Cattlemen's Association) and the National Pork Producers Association.

The key to understanding the impact of the Internet is avoiding getting overwhelmed by the technical hype. Don't worry about comprehending all of the computer jargon that unnecessarily complicates discussions about the Internet. The important thing to remember is that accessing the Internet is getting simpler, easier and cheaper all the time. Watch for your opportunity to take advantage of the "information superhighway's" capabilities for bringing farmers together and providing them with endless amounts of useful and interesting information. ■

INTERNET TIP

Check the ends of Web addresses for clues on what the addresses connect to. For example, endings like:

- .org are for organizations (www.nppc.org),
- .com for commercial groups (www.monsanto.com),
- .edu for educational institutions (www.msu.edu), and
- .gov for governmental bodies (www.usda.gov).

Discussion Questions

- 1) How many members of your group own computers?
- 2) What do they use the computers for?
- 3) For those members who do not currently own computers, what kinds of uses would they have for a computer if they did own one?
- 4) When you hear the word "Internet," what kind of picture enters your mind?
- 5) What information or topic areas have you heard about that you might be interested in connecting to through the Internet? If you could connect to newsgroups, what kinds of things would you discuss?

Expect 12 percent increase in corn acres

According to a recent FarmDayta report, fertilizer producer Vigoro Corporation expects U.S. producers to plant about 79.5 million acres to corn in 1996, up 12 percent from last year's 71.2 million acres, while soybean acreage, on the other hand will be down approximately 2 percent, based on the company's survey of Midwest farmers in December 1995.

The corn estimate of 79.5 million exceeds the 79.2 million acres planted for the record 10.1 billion-bushel crop planted in 1994. Vigoro, who will be doing a follow-up survey in March, predicts that 1996 corn acreage could go even higher. "It's possible that our second farmer-survey will show planted corn acreage exceeding 80 million acres," said Vigoro President Robert Fowler.

Apparently, major seed companies concur with those estimates, with several major suppliers predicting corn acreage of 80 to 82 million acres, which translates into higher earnings for 1996. Northrup King is projecting an increase in sales of 15 percent, while DeKalb is expecting a 15 to 18 percent increase in sales. While Pioneer didn't release projections, Dave Nelson, agribusiness consultant, predicts that Pioneer's market share of seed sales will grow to 46 percent, while DeKalb's and Northrup King's market shares will grow to 11 percent and 4 percent, respectively, he concluded. ■

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