

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

MICHIGAN'S ONLY STATEWIDE FARM NEWSPAPER

MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU



MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU

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Michigan's 1997 cherry crop "phenomenal"

Financial woes force Ada Beef to close its doors

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

Conrail acquisition to open new markets for Michigan grain

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Continued on page 4

COVER STORY "Phenomenal" 1997 cherry crop

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

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

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

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

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

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

According to Harmson, the new order is financed by cherry handlers and authorizes volume,

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News in Brief

From the President



Ol' McDonald had a backache

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

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

mention many other businesses.

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Jack Laurie

Jack Laurie, President
Michigan Farm Bureau

ORGANIZATIONAL BRIEFS

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



Over 100 county Farm Bureau members from Hiawathaland, Menominee, Copper Country, Mac-Luce-Schoolcraft and Iron Range volunteered at the second annual Miracle of Life exhibit at the recent Upper Peninsula State Fair held Aug. 12-17. Thousands of fairgoers witnessed the birth of dairy calves, lambs, piglets and hatching chicks in an effort to educate the public about animal agriculture and the health aspects of the birthing process. The Michigan State Fair will also host the fifth annual version of the Miracle of Life exhibit with volunteers from all over Michigan available to answer questions and explain the steps they take on their own operations to care for their livestock.

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

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

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USDA to use DEIP to improve markets

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

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

surpassed the total for the first six months of the previous year.

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

Glickman sees co-ops as necessity for small farms

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

"I am convinced that cooperatives will be critical to the economic security of family-sized farmers and an important way to provide them economic opportunities," Glickman said.

Representatives of farmer-owned cooperatives called Clinton's veto of the provision disappointing, "unfair and unjustified."

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

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

DuPont buying 20 percent of Pioneer Hi-Bred

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

A company statement says farmers will benefit from this alliance by being able to grow new, higher-value crops for specific uses. Also, live-stock producers will use grain from the crops to improve efficiency and product quality. And consumers will benefit from healthier, more nutritious food and food ingredients. Consumers also

will benefit from the long-term prospects of using more products made from renewable resources.

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

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

William G. Bickert receives Henry Giese Structures and Environment Award

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

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

Bickert's principal accomplishments include teaching and leading research projects concerning automated milking systems. These research

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

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

\$4.8 million paid to MMPA members

Michigan Milk Producers Association (MMPA) made cash payment to its members this week of nearly \$4.8 million in equity earnings. These cash payments are in addition to the \$1.9 million in equity paid to members earlier this year. Combined, MMPA has paid \$6.7 million in addition to the monthly milk checks to its dairy farmer members in the first seven months of 1997.

"Our well-managed plants and efficient marketing program allow us to continue to revolve back several million dollars each year while still maintaining the best competitive pay price in the market," says Walt Wosje, MMPA general manager. MMPA members received substantially more in pay price and equity payments in 1996 than other milk cooperatives in the state. The difference was about \$2,500 for every million pounds of milk shipped.

"As the major milk supplier to the Michigan fluid market, we work to maintain the over-order premiums, returning as much each month to our member-owners as possible. These are difficult times for dairy farmers as the milk price continues to make erratic swings. The farm milk price has decreased 20 percent from its level of last fall while most input costs for dairymen have not declined. The payment of MMPA equity is intended to provide some needed cash during this stressful period," stated Wosje.

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

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

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

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

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

Capitol Corner

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

NATIONAL

Senate and House votes on ag appropriations and tax package

1. Senate Ag funding bill July 23, 1997, the Senate voted, 53-47, to table (kill) the Durbin (D-Ill.) amendment that would eliminate funding for tobacco crop insurance. **MFB supported a "yea" (Y) vote.**
2. The Senate voted 59-40, to table (kill) the Bryan (D-Nev.) amendment that would reduce funding for subsidized overseas market promotion programs from \$90 million to \$70 million. **MFB supported a "yea" (Y) vote.**
3. House Ag funding bill July 24, 1997, the House voted, 209-216, to reject an amendment to prohibit the use of funds to pay salaries of personnel who provide tobacco crop insurance or non-insured crop disaster assistance for tobacco. **MFB favored a "nay" (N) vote.**
4. The House rejected, 175-253, an amendment to prohibit the use of funds to pay salaries of Agriculture Department personnel who issue non-recourse loans to sugar beet or sugarcane processors. **MFB favored a "nay" (N) vote.**
5. The House rejected 185-242, an amendment to prohibit the use of funds to pay salaries and ex-

- penses of Agriculture Department personnel who maintain a quota price for peanuts in excess of \$550 per ton, effectively establishing the maximum market for price for peanuts at that level. **MFB supported a "nay" (N) vote.**
6. The House rejected, 150-277, an amendment to prohibit the use of funds to pay salaries and expenses of Agriculture Department personnel who administer the market access program. This would have limited funding for the program that provides grants to businesses and associations to promote exports of agricultural products. **MFB supported a "nay" (N) vote.**
 7. Senate, House Tax package July 31, 1997, the Senate voted 92-8, and the House voted, 389-43, to pass H.R. 2014, the tax package portion of the 1998 fiscal budget reconciliation conference report. The package provides a net tax cut of \$95.3 billion over five years. It lowers the top capital gains tax rate from 28 percent to 20 percent and raises the federal estate tax exemption gradually from \$600,000 to \$1 million. **MFB supported a "yea" (Y) vote. ■**

Michigan	Vote	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Abraham (R)		n	n					Y
Levin (D)		n	Y					Y
1 Stupak (D)				y	N	N	y	Y
2 Hoekstra (R)				y	y	y	y	Y
3 Ehlers (R)				y	N	y	y	Y
4 Camp (R)				N	N	N	N	Y
5 Barcia (D)				N	N	N	N	Y
6 Upton (R)				y	y	y	N	Y
7 Smith (R)				N	N	N	N	Y
8 Stabenow (D)				y	N	N	N	Y
9 Kildee (D)				y	N	N	N	Y
10 Bonior (D)				N	N	N	N	Y
11 Knollenberg (R)				N	N	y	y	Y
12 Levin (D)				y	N	y	N	Y
13 Rivers (D)				y	N	y	y	Y
14 Conyers (D)				y	y	y	y	n
15 Kilpatrick (D)				N	N	N	N	n
16 Dingell (D)				?	N	N	N	Y

STATE

Passengers in back of pickup trucks

Representative Deb Cherry (D-Burton) introduced H.B. 4255 dealing with passengers in the back of pickups early in August. The bill was substituted and reported out of the House Transportation Committee on Monday, August 11. However, it did not include the Farm Bureau-requested amendment to allow a farmer the use of trucks for the transport of employees in the course of farming operations. The amendment failed on a five-to-six vote. Farm Bureau will continue working with legislators to attempt the amendment on the floor of the

House when the bill is considered after they return from summer recess in September. Apparently there are no statistics available indicating any accidents, injuries or fatalities related to farm employment or employees. None of the recent accidents had any connection with agriculture. **MFB position:** Supports an amendment to H.B. 4255. **Action needed:** Contact members of the Michigan House of Representatives and urge their support for the Farm Bureau amendment. **MFB contact:** Ron Nelson, ext. 2043 ■

STATE

Transportation funding (correction)

The Aug. 15, 1997 issue of the Michigan Farm News incorrectly reported that county road commissions can no longer require a funding match from townships for state highway dollars.

This amendment was not adopted by the Legislature and, therefore, was not part of the final package. **MFB contact:** Tim Goodrich, ext. 2048 ■

Michigan farm numbers decrease

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

for the large farms (up 2 percent). Nationally, the number of farms was estimated 2.06 million farms, a less than 1 percent decrease from 1996. Also decreasing by less than 1 percent was the total land in farms at 968 million acres. The average farm size was unchanged from 1996 to 470 acres. Estimates for the number of farms and land in farms refer to June 1. A farm is defined as "any establishment from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold or would normally be sold during the year." The farm categories are defined by economic sale classes as: small, \$1,000-\$9,999; medium, \$10,000-\$99,999; and large, \$100,000 and up. Land in farms includes: crop and livestock acreage, wasteland, woodland, pasture, land in summer fallow, idle cropland, land enrolled in the conservation reserve program, and other set-aside or commodity acreage programs. ■

Policy change could help both species, landowners

Proposed policy changes to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) that involve farmers could benefit both species and landowners, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF). In comments to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the farm group said the government's proposed "safe harbor" and "no surprises" policies would create the type of "win-win" scenario for species and landowners that Farm Bureau has long advocated. "Farm Bureau believes that endangered species protection can be more effectively achieved by removing disincentives and recognizing the efforts of private landowners and public land users who provide food and shelter for listed species, rather than by imposing land use restrictions and penalties," said Richard Newpher, executive director of AFBF's Washington, D.C., office. "Safe harbor agreements can help remove this disincentive." Under the safe harbor plan, the landowner would be responsible only for the protection of a predetermined baseline number of species or size of habitat. The landowner would not be restricted or penalized under the ESA for any additional numbers of the species that might take up residence on the property. Any increase in species number or habitat resulting from the safe harbor agreement is an asset to the species, and the landowner retains some flexibility to use the land in the most productive manner, Newpher said. Farm Bureau praised the government's plan to implement the safe harbor policy through landowner agreements instead of exclusively through habitat conservation plans (HCPs). Landowner agreements provide more flexibility and are less costly than HCPs, Newpher said. It has long been

acknowledged that HCPs have not generally met the needs of private landowners, he added. The "no surprises" policy provides regulatory certainty for landowners by protecting them from additional regulation under the ESA when they enter into an HCP, Newpher said. "People who agree to take certain actions to protect listed species need to know that their commitments will be honored and that no new obligations will be placed on them," he said. "This is especially true for farmers and ranchers, who may require a long lead time before committing to certain actions." Farm Bureau also expressed general support for the government's proposed candidate conservation agreements, which would allow farmers to enter into agreements that protect species threatened with extinction. The organization voiced concern, however, that the government may not be able to deliver on its proposed assurances to landowners. "If landowners are going to voluntarily sacrifice some use or activity on their land, it is only natural that they would expect some assurances in return," Newpher said. "The assurances set forth in the proposal are tenuous at best." Farm Bureau believes permanent reforms are needed to make the Endangered Species Act work effectively and will continue to press for those legislative changes, Newpher said. But until that happens, he said, the organization welcomes the government's attempt to allow some flexibility in enforcing the law. "This is a positive move toward changing the thrust of the Endangered Species Act from a negative enforcement mechanism into a positive and proactive law that benefits both species and landowners," Newpher said. ■

Financial woes force Ada Beef to close its doors

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Reed adds, "They were sending them to specialty stores already, and this will just be focusing on that subject even more. They may still kill some cows there, because there's a local trade that really needs that plant. I haven't made that judgment and, of course, the new partner will make that judgment." "We were in the middle of an Angus program," Vanderboon adds. "That's really where you've got to be. If we were going to go head to head, on efficiency we'd lose out, because of our plant. We do a lot of stuff with muscle that they do with conveyors, and they're in a little lower labor rate area."

"The plant needed to be renovated, and securing a long-term agreement with a buyer for their products with a bigger company will give them the ability to compete," adds MFB Livestock Department Manager Kevin Kirk. "It's the whole transition process to economies of scale we are dealing with." "From my perspective," Reed adds, "this is really a good-news issue for the Michigan farmers, not a bad-news issue, because we absolutely need that plant in Michigan, and the chances of having it operate long-term without a bigger partner was slim to none, and now we have an opportunity for that plant to thrive." ■



Serving Michigan farm families is our only business

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

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

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Conrail acquisition to open new markets for Michigan grain

Continued from page 1

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

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

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

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

Railcar shortages

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

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

complicates delivery issues of the crop.

"We quickly acknowledge we do not have all of the cars to meet the combined demand on top of the existing CSXT demand today," Owens remarks about the Conrail demand coupled with the existing CSXT demand. "In quarter four when harvest first spikes, historically we've never had enough cars to meet that spike. So we're not saying anything that's new, it's just a matter of the degree of which we're unable to meet that demand."

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

According to Owen, CSXT also provides a car guarantee

program to short-line customers. "We've had a 99.7 percent success ratio in placing cars at that time," Owens explains.

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



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

New test detects harmful *E. coli* bacteria

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

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

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

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

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

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

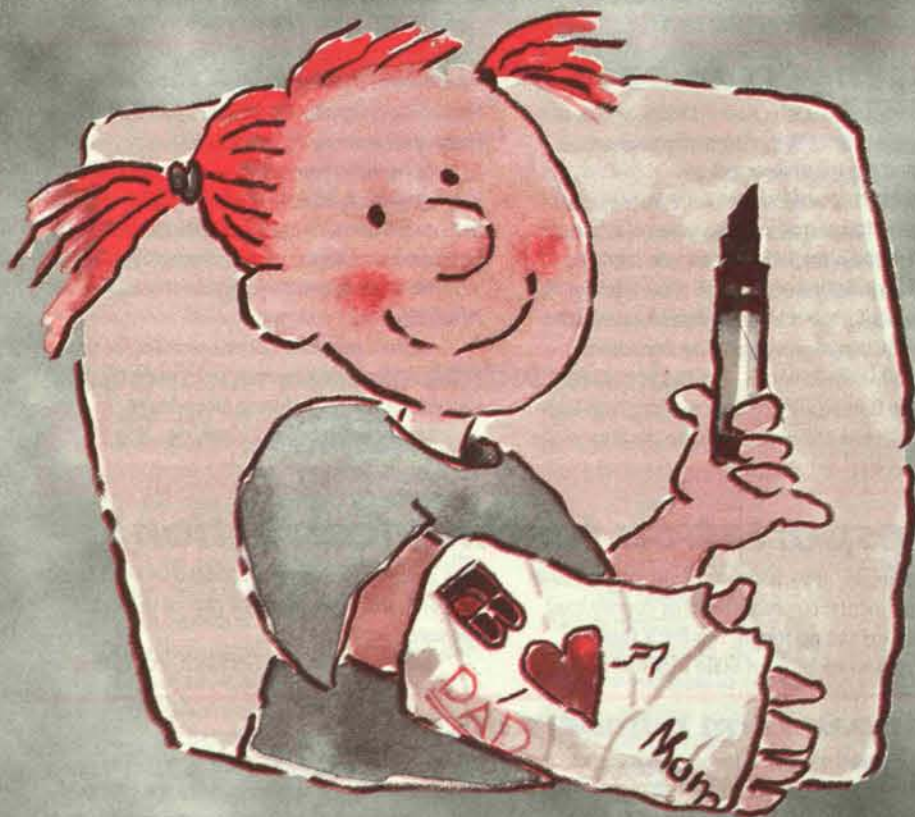
USDA scientists at Clay Center, Neb., developed the material used in the test that will now be marketed by private industry. This rapid test may potentially be used to test food animals and for diagnosis of *E. coli* 0157:H7 and related infections in humans. Availability of simple, rapid tests with improved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

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Business Strategies

1997 Michigan land values and farmland lease rates

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

1997 farmland lease rates

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ratio at 12.

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

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

Note: n/a indicates fewer than 10 responses were received.

1997 Michigan land values

Average farmland values from the 1997 MSU land value survey are reported in Table 1. In the southern lower peninsula the average value of higher quality C-SB-H farmland was \$1,300 per acre while lower quality C-SB-H farmland averaged \$917 per acre. In the

upper and northern lower peninsula C-SB-H farmland averaged \$593 and \$583 per acre for higher and lower quality land, respectively. There appears to be little distinction between high and low quality land in the upper and northern lower peninsula. Sugar beet land averaged \$1,758 per acre and irrigated land averaged \$1,414 per acre. Nearly all of the sugar beet and irrigated land is located in the southern lower peninsula.

Land Type	Southern Lower Peninsula		Upper and Northern Lower Peninsula	
	Average	Coefficient of Variation	Average	Coefficient of Variation
Corn-Soybean-Hay (above average land)	\$1300	0.32	\$593	0.40
Corn-Soybean-Hay (below average land)	\$917	0.35	\$583	0.23
Sugar Beet	\$1,758	0.29	n/a	n/a
Irrigated	\$1,414	0.47	n/a	n/a

Note: n/a indicates fewer than 10 responses were received.

upper and northern lower peninsula C-SB-H farmland averaged \$593 and \$583 per acre for higher and lower quality land, respectively. There appears to be little distinction between high and low quality land in the upper and northern lower peninsula. Sugar beet land averaged \$1,758 per acre and irrigated land averaged \$1,414 per acre. Nearly all of the sugar beet and irrigated land is located in the southern lower peninsula.

Table 1 also shows the coefficient of variation (CV) which is calculated by dividing the standard deviation by the average value. The CV provides a "standardized" measure of variability and can be thought of as the amount of variability in proportion to the average land value. The smaller the CV the closer the responses tend to be the average land value. This

means the smaller the CV, the more representative the average value is of land prices reported by respondents. The higher quality C-SB-H farmland in the upper and northern lower peninsula and irrigated farmland show the largest CV values at 0.4 and above. Sugar beet land and lower quality C-SB-H land in the upper and northern lower peninsula show the lowest CV levels both under 0.30; while C-SB-H land in the southern lower peninsula shows CV levels between 0.3 and 0.35.

The change in the value of farmland during the last 12 months is reported in table 2. High- and low quality C-SB-H land increased in value by an average of 8.4 percent and 8.1 percent, respectively, during the last year in the southern lower peninsula. In the upper and northern lower peninsula higher quality C-SB-H land showed a similar change, increases in value by an average of 7.6 percent. Sugar beet land rose in value by an average of 5.3 percent during the last 12

Land Type	Southern Lower Peninsula		Upper and Northern Lower Peninsula	
	Last 12 Months	Expected Next 12 Months	Last 12 Months	Expected Next 12 Months
	Corn-Soybean-Hay (above average land)	+8.4%	+5.6%	+7.6%
Corn-Soybean-Hay (below average land)	+8.1	+5.3	n/a	n/a
Sugar Beet	+5.3	+4.5	n/a	n/a
Irrigated	+10.0	+4.2	n/a	n/a

Note: n/a indicates fewer than 10 responses were received.

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

Table 2 also shows the expected change in farmland values during the next year. Values are expected to show strong gains during the upcoming year but the increases are generally expected to be below those experienced last year. High-quality C-SB-H land is expected to increase by 5.6 percent in the southern lower peninsula and by 8.5 percent in the upper and northern low-

Land Type	Southern Lower Peninsula	Upper and Northern Lower Peninsula
Corn-Soybean-Hay (above average land)	+0.7%	-6.4%
Corn-Soybean-Hay (below average land)	+1.2	n/a
Sugar Beet	+0.7	n/a
Irrigated	-1.4	n/a

Note: n/a indicates fewer than 10 responses were received.

Type of Development	Southern Lower Peninsula	Upper and Northern Lower Peninsula
Residential	\$4,568	\$1,045
Commercial/Industrial	\$10,897	\$3,638
Recreational	\$2,096	\$750

er peninsula during the year. Lower quality C-SB-H land in the southern lower peninsula is expected to rise by 5.3 percent. Sugar beet and irrigated land are expected to show average increases of 4.5 percent and 4.2 percent, respectively, during the upcoming year.

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

Non-agriculture-use value of farmland

In recent years, the pressure of non-agriculture influences on farmland values appears to have increased in some areas. These factors typically include pressures to develop farmland for residential, commercial, or recreational use. In many areas it is difficult to completely remove the option value of future development from the agriculture-use value of farmland. The farmland values reported in table 1 are the respondents' best estimate of the value of farmland in a particular area but the values may also reflect the value of the future development. In an effort to gain a better understanding of the impacts of these non-agriculture development factors on farmland values, we asked for information on the development value of farmland.

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

is \$4,568 per acre in the southern lower peninsula and \$1,045 per acre in the upper and northern lower peninsula. The value of farmland converted to commercial or industrial development averaged \$10,897 in the southern lower peninsula and \$3,638 in the upper and northern lower peninsula. Farmland converted to recreational uses was valued at an average of \$2,096 and \$750 in the southern lower peninsula and upper and northern lower peninsula, respectively.

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Conclusions

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

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

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

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

Michigan's 1997 cherry crop "phenomenal"

Continued from page 1

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

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

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

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

"The key thing is that most of us growers are

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

CherrCo Inc. formed to establish price

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

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

"If things continue to go as they are, in terms of the harvest and the pack, we should be able to raise those prices soon," added Harmson. "For the first time in a long time, we will see prices rise

instead of the usual downturns that we have experienced in the past because of oversupply."

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

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

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

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



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

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

Land-use planning and farmland preservation tour

More than 100 county and township officials attended a July 31 land-use planning and farmland preservation tour in Calhoun County.

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

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

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



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

agement; and a presentation on the economic impact of not only their business, but of livestock agriculture in general in southwest Michigan.

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

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

The Calhoun County Extension team of Kathy Foerster, Roger Betz, Stan Moore, Brian Hines and Natalie Rector partnered with the county Farm Bureau for a very worthwhile event. ■

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

The USDA's North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCRSARE) program is requesting applications from researchers, educators, nonprofit organizations and others for competitive grants addressing environmental, economic and social agricultural improvements, including innovative marketing strategies.

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

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

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

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

The special marketing call was the culmination of a series of NCR SARE-sponsored "roundta-

bles" that collected ideas from producers across the region on obstacles to marketing sustainable products.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Growers find soybean cyst nematode threat has spread, not declined

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

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

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

The SCN is a microscopic worm-like parasite that burrows into the soybean plant roots and steals nutrients. Soybean plants infected with the SCN tend

to be stunted, with yellow leaves and poorly developed root systems.

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

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

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

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

Warner says the SCN is spread primarily by tillage and planting equipment and other farm machinery

that tracks dirt from field to field. To some extent, migratory birds can contribute to the spread of the parasite when they feed in fields infested with SCN.

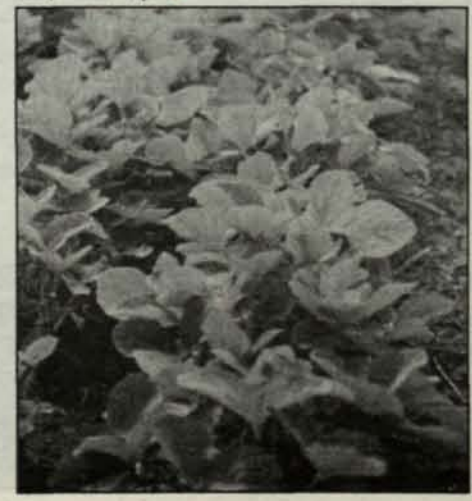
Growers first need to find out if they have SCN-infested fields. That's done by removing a pint to a quart of soil from fields in which soybeans will be planted next year.

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

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

The only way growers can cope with SCN is by expanding crop rotations to keep soybeans, dry edible beans and snap beans out of SCN-infested fields.

Some of the rotations could run longer than nine years, depending on the severity of the SCN infestation, Warner says. ■



MASA signs training agreement with MDA, MSUE and NRCS

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

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

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

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

"There will be farmers who will be doing

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

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

government.

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MDA director appointed to MASDA Board

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

MASDA is one of four regional associations of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA), housed in Washington, D.C. NASDA supports and promotes the American agriculture industry through the development, implementation and communication of public policy and programs. MASDA members include Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

"It is a great privilege to serve with agriculture industry leaders from throughout the Midwest, to help communicate the importance of our state's and region's agriculture industry to the economy of the United States," said Wyant. "I look forward to strengthening these working relationships, to help expand the marketing opportunities for Michigan agriculture products."

As a result of Wyant's appointment to the MASDA board, Michigan will also have the honor of hosting the 1999 MASDA annual meeting.

For more information, contact Dale Sherwin, MDA Director of Agriculture Policy & Special Projects at (517) 335-3403. ■

Grassley reports ethanol progress

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

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

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Michigan resident teaches Ukrainians farm management

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

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

Schauer described basic principles of accounting, and how to determine when is the best time to sell crops/livestock. Schauer also focused

on how to choose the following year's crops based on costs. In addition, Schauer discussed the responsibilities a farmer takes when receiving credit, as well as what bankers and creditors expect from a farmer when giving credit, and how to reduce money loss by making good investments and decisions.

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

Schauer currently works for Michigan State University as a district farm management agent. Schauer has extensive experience as a farm management specialist, working internationally in the Caribbean, the South Pacific, China and the former Soviet Union.

Since 1993, more than 300 CNFA volunteers have participated in project assignments across Russia and Ukraine — ranging from farmers' association-building to cheese processing. CNFA volunteers bring years of hands-on experience to their counterparts in Russia and other former Soviet countries, easing the transition to a market economy and resulting in creative and effective U.S. foreign assistance. CNFA's Volunteer Program operates with the support of the Farmer-to-Farmer Program of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Grain handling equipment safety

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Russian students call Michigan home for summer

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

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

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



Tom Guthrie Jr., Sergei Korabline and Tom Sr.

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

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

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

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

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

Jan has kept Dimitriy busy working on the

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

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

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

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

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

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



Jan and Nellie Lou Vosburg and Dimitriy Popov

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

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

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

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

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

Political change

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

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

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

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

"Many young people have ... skepticism," Vasily said, after thumbing through his Russian-English dictio-

nary for the right word. "I not have skepticism."

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



Jim and Patty Miller with Vasily Shipilov

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

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

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

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

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



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Friday, September 12, 1997 - 10:00 a.m.

Tractors and Hay, Forage Equipment, Tillage: 1994 Ford 8240 Powerstar SLE MFWD dsl. tractor, cab, air, w/7413 hyd. quick tach loader, material, tine, bale prong bucket, only 1944 hrs., Bought new! Orig. cost over \$60,000; IH 1066 dsl. tractor, T/A cab, Firestone 20.8x38R tires, 4364 hrs.; IH 1066 dsl. tractor, cab, Firestone, 20.8x38 tires, 6400 hrs.; IH 766 gas tractor, cab, 18.4x38 tires, dual PTO, 1766 hrs. shown; AC 200 dsl. tractor, cab, 20.8x38 tires; New Holland L455 dsl. skid steer, material, tine buckets, 1538 hrs.; New Holland tire scraper for skid steer; JD 1600 14' Hydro Swing haybine, 5 seasons old; New Holland 654 4'x6' round hay baler, 1 season old, elec. controls; 1996 New Holland 900 forage chopper, Metalert, elec. cont.; New Holland 8' hay pick-up head, only 400 acres; New Holland 2 row adj. com head, only 40 acres used; New Holland 195 tandem axle manure spreader w/slush gate, poly floor, 3 seasons old; (2) JD 716A self-unloading forage wagons on JD tandem gears; Cloby metal hyd. dump box on tandem Cloby gear; wood hyd. dump box on Kory gear; IH 435 square baler w/15-lb. bale thrower; (4) H&S metal rack bale thrower wagons on HD gears; 18' tri-cycle green chop wagon; New Holland chop all 38 flail chopper; JD side throw manure spreader; (2) 11 round bale cap, wagons; (2) metal feeder wagons; (2) 11 round bale tandem wagons; (2) single axle 11 bale wagons; (2) flat rack hay wagons; (2) wagon gears for round bales; 52' skeleton bale elev. w/transport and elec. motor **Machinery:** AC 2300 20' hyd. fold wheel disc; AC 1200 20' hyd. fold field cultivator; JD 12' cultipacker; IH 3x14" fast hitch plows; Win Power 45/25 PTO generator on cart; IH 400 Clyclo 4 row wide planter; AC 66 pull type combine

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Tractors - Combine: 1978 Ford 9700D tractor w/cab, air, 18.4x38 axle duals, rebuilt engine; Ford 8000D tractor w/cab, 18.4x34 tires, 9600 eng. installed; Bobcat 600 gas skid steer w/2 buckets; JD 2010 gas utility tractor, 14.9x28 tires; (2) AC Model B & C tractors (need repair); M Ferguson 510 dsl combine w/15' floating cutter bar grain platform & MF 43 4-row com head; extra MF 43 4-row com head; old MF dummy head w/sund pickup; Int. 91 bean special self-propelled combine; M Ferguson 65 dsl. low profile tractor

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Machinery: JD 494A 4-row planter, rubber press wheels; MH 15-hoe grain drill; Glenco 7-shank soil saver; AC 4-row com planter; MF 20' wheel disc (needs repair); brush hog 20' soil finisher w/hyd. wings; buster bar levelers; Int. 550 5-16' semi mtd. plows; AC 18' wheel disc (needs repair); Mayrath 40' hay or grain elev. PTO; JD 535 field sprayer 2/400 gal. tank, 50' boom; New Holland side throw flail manure spreader; 12' stalk shredder (needs repair); tandem axle fert. spreader (not complete); Noble 4-row s tine cultivator; 2 & 3 sec. drags; MF 5-bar rake; N Idea 7' trailer mower; Gehl 115 portable grinder mixer; Clay 750 gal. single axle liquid manure spreader; gravity box w/Cobey 10 T gear; gravity box w/wagon gear; Innes 570 4-row bean windrower; (2) speedy front mtd. 4-row bean pullers; 8' crow foot packer; wagon w/poor rack; tender feed wagon; side throw manure spreader (for parts); Case square baler (for parts); (2) 55' 6" & 8" transport augers, 5hp & PTO; 8'x40' transport auger; 6'x48' transport auger, 7-1/2 hp; 3 pt. 6" disc; 3 pt. 5' brush hog; 3 pt. 6" blade

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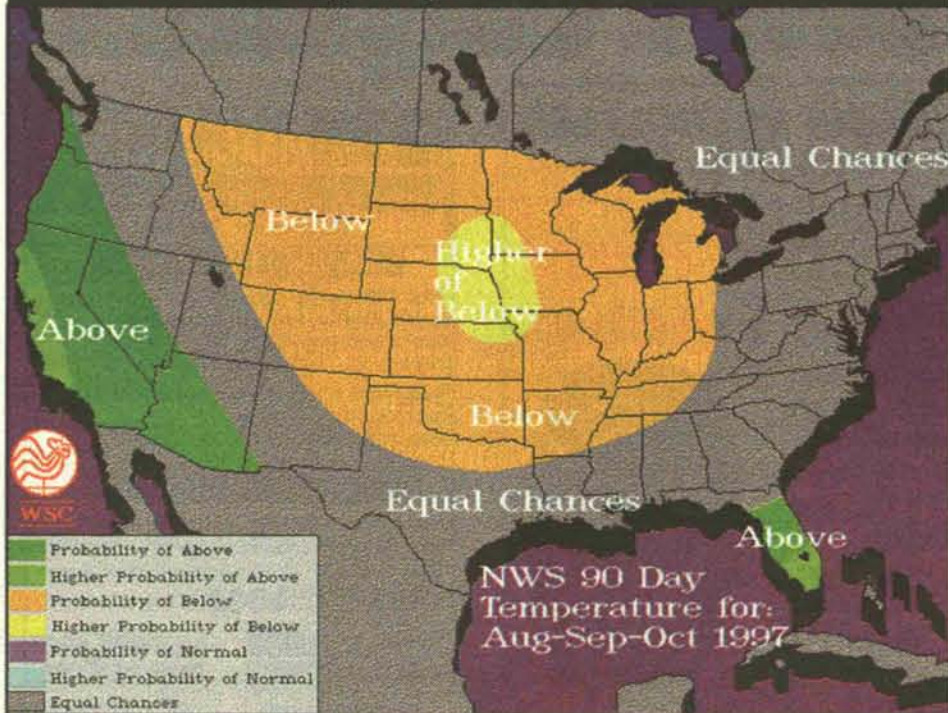
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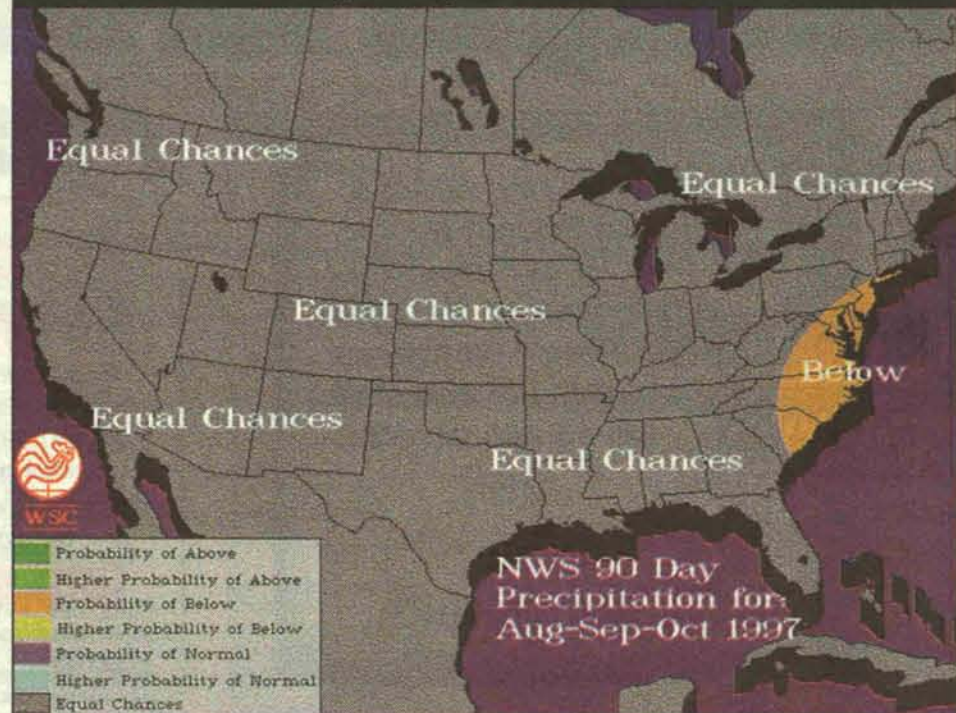
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Michigan State
University



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

The message in new NOAA Climate Prediction Center long lead outlooks is one of continuity, with strong El Nino conditions continuing in the equatorial Pacific. The outlook for September calls for persistence of the present pattern, with odds favoring cooler and possibly wetter than

normal weather, especially across southwestern sections of the state. Looking further ahead, the outlooks for the late summer and early fall months also call for increased chances for cooler and wetter than normal weather, gradually giving way to milder and drier than normal conditions by early winter and continuing through early next year. Given the current seasonal deficits in growing degree day accumulations and prospects for more cool weather, some full season crops may have trouble reaching maturity this season. Even though the historical skill of long lead weather outlooks during the transitional fall season is low, growers should consider this possibility and their own management response options now, as well as the potential difficulties and complications caused by cool, wet conditions at harvest.

Michigan Weather Summary

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

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

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