

## Open Production Systems Not Always Humane

Proposed legislation that would restrict the professional judgment of veterinarians and livestock producers by mandating arbitrary "humane" standards for food animal production must not become law, the American Farm Bureau Federation told Congress.

"This legislation assumes that farm animals are not routinely treated humanely, an assumption that is deeply flawed and grossly unfair to America's family farmers and ranchers," said AFBF President Bob Stallman.

In a letter to House members, Stallman noted that every major U.S. livestock and poultry species group has either a professionally developed, science-based quality assurance program or has established specific, science-based animal welfare practices to which their members adhere. The proposed legislation would go beyond these standards and require producers to convert to so-called "open production systems."

"Such systems are not always the most humane for each and every livestock operation," said Stallman. "To require the use of such systems could in fact compromise human and animal health, food safety and animal welfare."

Farm Bureau is urging lawmakers to oppose the Farm Animal Stewardship Purchasing Act, H.R. 1726.

## AFBF Market Update

With higher interest rates hanging over the economy in general, volatility hitting the crop markets and a 2007 livestock market that looks like it's one of a kind, there's plenty to digest in this month's issue of the American Farm Bureau Federation's Ag Market Update. The Market Update is produced by AFBF's economic analysis team. This analysis is released monthly and indicates the direction of the agricultural industry in general, as well as specific sectors. This information provides insight that can be used in market-related articles. Attached is the June market update. AFBF distributes this information monthly as an added service. Members of our Economic Analysis Team are available for follow-up interviews on these topics.

For the complete report visit the AFBF website at [www.fb.org](http://www.fb.org).



## CAG in Kalamazoo Celebrates 50 Years!

The Latecomers Farm Bureau Community Action Group of Kalamazoo County will celebrate fifty years of meeting on July 15th with a family picnic.

Current members of the group include:

- Harlow & June Bailey
- Robert & Evelyn Haas
- Jerry & Patricia Clough
- Ronald & Florence Hayward
- Lee & Lori Coville
- William & Gloria Oldenkamp
- Newell & Ruth Dean
- Milford & Joanna Weinberg
- Norman & Elizabeth French
- Matthew & Caroline Wiley

Michigan Farm Bureau congratulates the Latecomers and wishes them continued successful involvement with their county Farm Bureau!

## MFB selects new State Affairs manager

Tonia Ritter has been selected to succeed Ron Nelson as manager of the Michigan Farm Bureau State Governmental Affairs Department. Nelson will retire later this month, ending his 37 years of employment with MFB, the state's largest general farm organization.

For the last six years Ritter has worked as a legislative counsel in the State Governmental Affairs Department of MFB's Public Policy and Commodity Division. In her new role, she will head up MFB lobbying activities at the state Capitol and be responsible for coordinating, planning and executing all state-level MFB policy implementation efforts. Among her many other new duties will be planning and conducting MFB's annual Lansing Legislative Seminar.

Prior to joining the MFB staff, Ritter worked as a marketing associate in the dairy division of agricultural product supplier Monsanto. In the past she's also worked as a senior account executive for Fleishman Hillard Public Relations and held jobs with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service as well as ConAgra Inc./Grower Service.



JULY 2007



## State Selects Cooperative Elevator as "2006 Michigan Agriculture Exporter of the Year"

The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) has selected Cooperative Elevator Company of Pigeon, MI, as the "2006 Michigan Agriculture Exporter of the Year." The company was lauded at a Lansing Agriculture Club Breakfast for its ability to expand into new markets and significant export sales growth over the last three years, among other achievements.

"Increasingly, Cooperative Elevator and other Michigan businesses are shipping their quality agricultural products to new areas and at higher volumes," said Mitch Irwin, MDA director. "We applaud their success and recognize them for the key role they are playing to grow and diversify the state's economy."

Michigan is second in the nation for agricultural diversity and exports one-third of its agricultural commodities every year. Recent studies show these exports generated \$961 million in 2005 and employed more than 12,877 residents.

"Cooperative Elevator is honored to receive the 2006 Michigan exporter of the year award," said CEO Patricia Anderson. "We are committed to exporting quality branded dry edible beans and grain from our Michigan plants utilizing Michigan labor and Michigan grown products."

Cooperative Elevator is owned by more than 900 Michigan farmers and has been in business since 1915. It is headquartered in Pigeon and has plants in nine other Michigan cities throughout the Thumb area.

The award review committee consisted of representatives from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Michigan Farm Bureau and Michigan State University, as well as MDA. The decision was based upon several factors including, marketing plans, and ability to expand into new markets, alliances with other organizations and exports sales growth over the last three years. To be eligible, the products also had to be more than 50 percent grown, processed or manufactured in Michigan.

For information on Michigan's international marketing programs, contact the Michigan Department of Agriculture at (517) 241-3628.

## Membership Standings

	2006/07	06/28/07
<b>Goal</b>	201,244	166,187
<b>Target</b>	47,655	42,271

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For questions, comments and suggestions, please contact Mike Wenkel at ext. 3232

**Reminders**

- CAG's have a new online resource available. The Loop, Discussion Topics and Questions and the Fun Page are all available to view and print by visiting [www.michiganfarmbureau.com/cag](http://www.michiganfarmbureau.com/cag).
- Any changes to your group can be made directly through your county administrative manager, including changes to discussion leaders. Discussion Leaders are designated to receive all materials.
- Any suggestions or ideas for future articles, discussion topics or fun pages can be e-mailed to [smorris@michfb.com](mailto:smorris@michfb.com) or sent to Michigan Farm Bureau, 7373 West Saginaw Hwy, Lansing, MI 48917 Attention: Sarah Morrison

<p><b>July</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17-19 Ag Expo</li> <li>• 18 FB Welcome Home Open House</li> </ul>	<p><b>August</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 YF Golf Outing</li> <li>• 22-3 State Fair/Miracle of Life</li> <li>• 30 Membership Year End</li> </ul>	<p><b>September</b></p> <p><b>County Annual Meetings</b></p>
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## Michigan supports “carbon trading” on exchange market: Conservation can net landowners \$2 to \$12 per acre

The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA), Michigan Association of Conservation Districts and other agriculture advocates are partnering to reward and encourage conservation by private landowners. The Michigan Conservation and Climate Initiative (MCCI) seeks to sequester-or harness-carbon dioxide that is released into the atmosphere when certain conservation practices are followed. Farmers can earn “carbon credits,” which can then be sold on the Chicago Climate Exchange, a member-based market. In addition to generating revenue for owners, the measure will improve the state’s water quality and wildlife habitat.

“Many Michigan farmers and landowners already incorporate sound conservation practices into daily farm management,” said Mitch Irwin, MDA director. “Participating in this program, however, enables landowners to produce an additional and very valuable commodity - carbon credits.”

To turn carbon credits into dollars, landowners enrolled in the MCCI program allow Delta Institute, a non-profit organization, to sell the credits on the Chicago Climate Exchange - a market comprised of large companies, municipalities and institutions, including Ford, Dow and Michigan State University. At current market prices, a landowner can typically earn between \$2 and \$12 per acre per year depending upon the conservation practice. Landowners must sign a contract and commit to maintain the conservation practice through 2010.

“The Michigan Conservation and Climate Initiative rewards farmers and landowners for being good stewards of the land,” explains Gordon Wenk, director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture Environmental Stewardship Division. “By practicing conservation tillage or planting grasses and trees, farmers and landowners are sequestering or holding carbon dioxide, and in turn, offsetting greenhouse gas emissions.”

The 79 Michigan Conservation Districts throughout the state will be the “gateway” for this initiative, providing landowners with information, enrollment assistance, and verification services, according to Lori Phalen, Executive Director for the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts. Additionally, the Michigan Department of Agriculture has been instrumental in the development of this initiative.

Landowners can earn revenue from this program while still utilizing government cost share programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

## Farm Bureau Welcome Home Open House

Farm Bureau members across the state are invited to Lansing for a July 18 homecoming and hog roast at the expanded and newly-remodeled Farm Bureau Center.



“This is a great opportunity for members to visit the home of the Michigan Farm Bureau Family of Companies,” said MFB President Wayne H. Wood. “To keep up with business we added a 55,000 square-foot wing and remodeled every part of the old building, so there’s a lot to see.”

The Michigan Farm Bureau Family of Companies’ “Welcome Home” open house will run from 3:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. and will include building tours, a free meal for attendees, live entertainment, Farm Bureau historical exhibits, and a ribbon-cutting on the front steps at 5 p.m. Several state VIPs are also expected to participate in the ceremonies.

“It will be like a big family reunion,” said Jim Robinson, FBI executive vice president. “We’ll be serving thousands of meals in a huge tent behind the building, have frequent prize drawings, and provide entertainment for the kids.”

The event is open free of charge to Farm Bureau members, employees, insurance agents and their families, but RSVPs are required to receive tickets. Members can RSVP at their county Farm Bureau offices. The RSVP deadline is July 1.

The open house coincides with Ag Expo at Michigan State University, making it a convenient stop for Farm Bureau members who attend Ag Expo the same day.

“We encourage members to consider making a day of it in the Lansing area by first checking out Ag Expo and then coming home, so to speak, to help us celebrate Farm Bureau as a true family of companies,” said John Vander Molen, MFB chief operating officer.

The Farm Bureau Center, located at 7373 W. Saginaw Highway on the west side of Lansing, originally opened in 1971. It houses nearly 700 employees.

## Farm Safety and Health Workshop

Farm Safety 4 Just Kids has chosen Lansing as the location for a safety workshop August 29 at the Holiday Inn West. The conference will be held from noon until 4:00 p.m.

It is a good opportunity for P&E committees to learn how farm people are being hurt and ways to make sure this doesn’t happen to you. Everyone in attendance will take home at least one safety/health item or resource.

The Farm Safety and Health workshop is FREE and lunch will be provided. Invitations will be out the first part of July.

## Miracle of Life Seeking Volunteers

Planning is underway for the 2007 Miracle of Life Exhibit at the Michigan State Fair, and we need your help!

The Michigan Farm Bureau Promotion and Education Department is seeking volunteers to teach others about the importance of agriculture. Volunteers will be responsible for handling animals for visitors to pet as well as answering questions. Volunteer opportunities exist from August 22 – September 3, 2007. Morning shifts are from 9:45 a.m. – 4 p.m. and afternoon shifts are from 3:45 p.m. – 10 p.m.

If you are interested in being a part of the Miracle of Life, contact Jessica Geurink at 1-800-292-2680 ext. 3242 or by email at [jgeurink@michfb.com](mailto:jgeurink@michfb.com).

## Michigan’s Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) Harvests Recognition

Michigan’s legislative leaders have shown recent bipartisan support of MAEAP. On Wednesday, June 29, 2005, the Michigan House of Representatives passed a resolution that salutes MAEAP as an outstanding program and indicates the support of the legislative body for the program. The resolution also encourages the continued partnering by both MDA and DEQ, along with maximum participation by the state’s farmers. On Thursday, June 30, 2005 the Senate passed a similar resolution.

MAEAP was also selected as a regional finalist in the 2005 Innovations Awards Program of the Council of State Governments. A total of 10 programs that represent exemplary and innovative state initiatives were selected from numerous programs submitted by all branches of government in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin. The Awards Program is designed to give greater visibility to select programs and to facilitate the transfer of those successful experiences to other states.

In addition, the MAEAP story was included as a full case study description in the White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation compendium of the top 150 entries from around the country. A key component of the conference that convened August 29, 2005 was to learn what Americans are doing within their communities and in cooperation with others to steward and conserve the nation’s national resources – and to share the lessons, information, and resources that are critical to everyone’s conservation success.

## Go out with a bang! Fun fireworks facts.

Q: Why do you see the explosion before hearing it?

A: Sound travels at 742 miles per hour, but light travels 670,616,625.6 miles per hour.

Q: How long is the typical fireworks show?

A: 20 minutes, but shows range from 5 to 35 minutes.

Q: How are the colors made?

A: Master pyrotechnicians build shells with bright burning metallic salts, which may be intensified by adding chlorine compounds. The salts are tightly packed into balls called stars, and placed inside the shell. The colors are: green / Barium Nitrate; blue / Cooper Salts and Chlorine; red / Strontium Nitrate; amber & orange / Charcoal & Carbon; white / Magnesium & Aluminum; and yellow / Sodium Salts.

