

■ **July 17-19; 21 — Michigan Livestock Expo.** Youth-raised livestock will be exhibited July 17-19 at the Ingham County Fairgrounds. The show's award-winning animals and dairy products will be auctioned July 21 at the Michigan State University Livestock Pavilion. **Ernie Birchmeier, (800) 292-2680, ext. 2024**

■ **July 21-23 — Ag Expo** at Michigan State University. This is the state's largest general farm show, and showcases the latest in agricultural technology. **Dennis Rudat, (800) 292-2680, ext. 6586.**

AgriNotes & News

Attention Media: The Farm Bureau center will be closed July 3 in observance of the Independence Day. The office will resume normal hours on July 6.

July 2, 2009

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MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU

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THIS WEEK:

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A series of informational meetings will be held across the state to help farmers sort out the confusion surrounding the new Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program, which has a 2009 sign-up deadline of Aug. 14. **For more information, contact Bob Boehm, (800) 292-2680, ext. 2023.**

More than 140 high school juniors and seniors from across the state participated in Michigan Farm Bureau's (MFB) Young People's Citizenship Seminar (YPCS), June 22-26 at Northwood University in Midland. The annual event aims to educate young people about the American political system, and inspire them to take an active role in it. **For more information, contact Matt Kapp, (800) 292-2680, ext. 2027.**

Farm Bureau is disappointed that H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act, passed the U.S. House on June 26, and remains strongly opposed to the bill if it is brought up in the Senate. **For more information, contact Ryan Findlay, (800) 292-2680, ext. 2025.**

AFBF Marketbasket Survey

The 16-item marketbasket has been updated to include sliced deli ham, shredded cheddar cheese, chicken breasts, orange juice and bagged salad, in addition to ground chuck, sirloin tip roast, bacon, eggs, milk, apples, potatoes, toasted oat cereal, flour, bread and vegetable oil.

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AgriNotes & News

Grocery store food prices continue downward trend

LANSING, July 2, 2009 — Retail food prices at the supermarket decreased slightly for the third consecutive quarter, according to the latest American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) Marketbasket Survey.

Contact:

Bob Boehm,
(800) 292-2680,
ext. 2023

The informal survey shows the total cost of 16 food items that can be used to prepare a meal was \$46.29, down about 2 percent or \$1.12 from the first quarter of 2009. Of the 16 items surveyed, 10 decreased, five increased and one remained the same in average price compared to the prior quarter.

Russet potatoes, boneless chicken breasts, eggs, sliced deli ham and whole milk declined the most in price, and together account for most of the decrease in average price of the overall marketbasket. Russet potatoes dropped 29 cents to \$2.76 for a 5-pound bag; chicken breasts dropped 28 cents to \$3.10 per pound; eggs decreased 16 cents to \$1.34 per dozen; sliced deli ham and whole milk dropped 14 cents to \$4.80 per pound and \$3.01 per gallon, respectively.

Other items that decreased in price were: ground chuck, down 12 cents to \$2.82 per pound; sirloin tip roast, down 11 cents to \$3.88 per pound; flour, down 9 cents to \$2.42 for a 5-pound bag; bacon, down 7 cents to \$3.19 per pound; and toasted oat cereal, down 5 cents to \$2.86 for a 9-ounce box.

“The quarter-to-quarter price decline reported by our volunteer shoppers indicates that consumers are seeing some relief at the grocery store. Even more significant is that average retail prices for eggs, milk, chicken breasts and bacon for the second quarter of 2009 are significantly lower than one year ago,” said AFBF economist Jim Sartwelle.

Overall, the average price for the marketbasket of foods declined \$3.10 or about 6 percent over a year’s time. Retail egg prices dropped 26 percent, milk decreased 22 percent, chicken declined 19 percent and bacon was 11 percent lower compared to a year ago.

“The foods that declined the most in retail price are among the least-processed items in our marketbasket. When wholesale prices paid to producers for minimally processed foods such as these decrease drastically, as has been the case over the past few months, consumers typically benefit fairly quickly from retail price reductions in the grocer’s case,” Sartwelle said.

Several items went up slightly in price compared to the prior quarter: bagged salad, up 13 cents to \$2.75 for a 1-pound bag; shredded cheddar cheese, up 7 cents to \$4.31 for 1 pound; apples, up 6 cents to \$1.41 per pound; vegetable oil, up 6 cents to \$2.85 for a 32-ounce bottle; and orange juice, up 2 cents to \$3.02 for a half-gallon. A 20-ounce loaf of white bread remained the same in price, \$1.77.

AFBF’s second quarter marketbasket survey tracks closely with the federal government’s May 2009 Consumer Price Index report for all food, which showed a slight decline (-0.2 percent) for the fourth consecutive month.

Tracking milk and egg trends

For the second quarter of 2009, shoppers reported the average price for a half-gallon of regular whole milk was \$1.92, down 24 cents from the prior quarter. The average price for 1 gallon of regular whole milk was \$3.01, down 14 cents. Comparing per-quart prices, the retail price for whole milk sold in gallon containers was about 25 percent lower compared to half-gallon containers, a typical volume discount long employed by retailers.

The average price for a half-gallon of rBST-free milk was \$3.18, down 1 cent from the last quarter and about 65 percent higher than the reported retail price for a half-gallon of regular milk (\$1.92).

The average price for a half-gallon of organic milk was \$3.63, down 8 cents compared to the first quarter and

AgriNotes & News

approximately 90 percent higher than the reported retail price for a half-gallon of regular milk (\$1.92).

Compared to a year ago (second quarter of 2008), the retail price for regular milk in gallon containers decreased by 22 percent while regular milk in half-gallon containers decreased 20 percent. The average retail price for rBST-free milk dropped about 5 percent in a year's time. The average retail price for organic milk in half-gallon containers went up and down slightly throughout the year, rising 1 percent in the second quarter of 2009 compared to a year ago.

For the second quarter of 2009, the average price for one dozen regular eggs was \$1.34. The average price for "cage-free" eggs was \$3 per dozen, around 95 percent more per dozen than regular eggs.

Regular eggs and "cage-free" eggs dropped in retail price by 26 percent and 1.5 percent, respectively, between the second quarter of 2008 and the second quarter of 2009.

Farmer's share of food dollar

As retail grocery prices have increased gradually over time, the share of the average food dollar that America's farm families receive has dropped.

"Starting in the mid-1970s, farmers received about one-third of consumer retail food expenditures for food eaten at home and away from home, on average. That figure has decreased steadily over time and is now just 19 percent, according to Agriculture Department statistics," Sartwelle said.

Using the "food at home and away from home" percentage across-the-board, the farmer's share of this quarter's \$46.29 marketbasket would be \$8.80.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Americans spend just under 10 percent of their disposable annual income on food, the lowest average of any country in the world.

AFBF, the nation's largest general farm organization, has been conducting the informal quarterly marketbasket survey of retail food price trends since 1989. The mix of foods in the marketbasket was updated during the first quarter of 2008. A total of 82 shoppers in 33 states, including Michigan, participated in the latest survey, conducted in May.

AgriNotes & News

Farmers can learn about new ACRE program at upcoming meetings

Educational sessions are in advance of Aug. 14 sign-up deadline

Contact:

Bob Boehm,
(800) 292-2680,
ext. 2023

LANSING, July 2, 2009 — A series of informational meetings will be held across the state to help farmers sort out the confusion surrounding the new Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program, which has a 2009 sign-up deadline of Aug. 14.

“ACRE is a new program of the 2008 farm bill, so there is a natural learning curve that must take place to fully understand the program’s potential and long-term implications for risk management and farm income. With the sign-up deadline for 2009 fast approaching, we encourage our members to take advantage of these meetings to learn if ACRE is right for them,” said Bob Boehm, manager of the Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB) Commodity and Marketing Department. “Farmers are also encouraged to visit MFB’s farm bill Web site at <http://www.michfb.com/issues/farmbill> for additional information on the new programs.”

The meetings will be held as follows and will be facilitated by Roger Betz, Michigan State University (MSU) District Extension farm management educator. Resource people in attendance will include the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) county executive director and staff.

No registration is required; however, seating may be limited due to anticipated high attendance.

A live Webinar presentation is also being planned. Contact your local MSU Extension or FSA office for more details.

-30-

ACRE educational meeting series

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
July 14	9 a.m.- noon	Ithaca - Gratiot-Isabella RESD Bldg, 1131 E. Center
July 14	6-9 p.m	Caro, Tuscola Tech Center, 1401 Cleaver Road
July 16	9 a.m.- noon	Bad Axe - Expo Center, 170 W. Sowper Road
July 27	6:30-9:30 p.m.	Mason - Monsanto Research Demo Farm, 474 S. Onondaga Road
July 28	9 a.m.-noon	Allegan - Allegan Co. Tech Ed Center, 2891 116th (M-222)
July 28	6:30-9:30 p.m.	Lawrence - VanBuren ISD Conference Center, 490 S. Paw Paw St.
July 29	9 a.m.-noon	Centreville - St. Joseph Co. Courthouse Lower Level, 125 W. Main St.
July 29	7-10 p.m.	Clarksville - Clarksville Horticultural Experiment Station, 9302 Portland Road
Aug. 3	6:30-9:30 p.m.	Coldwater - Branch Co. Fairgrounds 4-H Cabin, 262 S. Sprague St.
Aug. 4	6-9 p.m.	Hanover - Hanover-Horton Historical Society Bldg., 121 Teft
Aug. 7	9 a.m.-noon	Zeeland - Zeeland Township Hall, 6582 Byron Road
Aug. 7	2-5 p.m.	Comstock Park - Alpine Twp. Hall, 2408 7 Mile Road NW

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Farm Bureau seminar introduces local teens to American politics

Contact:

Matt Kapp,
(800) 292-2680,
ext. 2027

LANSING, July 2, 2009 — More than 140 high school juniors and seniors from across the state participated in Michigan Farm Bureau's (MFB) Young People's Citizenship Seminar (YPCS), June 22-26 at Northwood University in Midland. The annual event aims to educate young people about the American political system, and inspire them to take an active role in it.

(TO LOCALIZE BY ADDING TEENS IN ATTENDANCE FROM YOUR AREA, SEE THE FOLLOWING LIST OF LOCAL PARTICIPANTS.)

The conference challenged participants to rally around causes, develop political platforms, caucus, organize campaigns and ultimately win over the hearts and minds of their peers in a mock bid for office. Those who registered to vote made their choices by casting ballots in actual voting booths.

This year's platform issues dealt with current hot topics such as parental responsibility, alternative energy, Fourth Amendment privacy rights, and the potential resurrection of the fairness doctrine to better ensure balanced media coverage of important events.

Throughout the seminar, presentations from a roster of speakers connected the overarching themes of service, perseverance, self-motivation and leadership. Among the guest speakers featured at this year's conference were motivational speaker Sheri Wohlfert and Detroit-area Holocaust survivor Martin Lowenberg.

"Regardless of what kind of environment or background the students come from, YPCS provides valuable exposure to young people at the earliest stages of their political involvement," said Matt Kapp, seminar organizer and MFB land stewardship specialist. "Our goal is to send the participants home with a greater sense of what it means to be an American, and with a well-informed interest in participating in our democracy. This benefits the students, their local communities, and the state of Michigan."

Social and recreational activities throughout the week also help foster a sense of community among students from both rural and urban backgrounds, as participants are not required to come from Farm Bureau member families.

Notable past YPCS participants include former Lt. Governor Dick Posthumus and U.S. Congressman Mike Rogers.

-30-

Editor's note: Participant photos are available at <http://www.michfb.com/newsroom/photos>. For additional media assistance, contact MFB County Communications Manager Jeremy C. Nagel at (800) 292-2680, ext. 6584, or jnagel1@michfb.com.

2009 Young People's Citizenship Seminar Participants

(Arranged by county Farm Bureau)

Allegan County FB
Rachel Huizinga, Hopkins

Arenac County FB
Victoria Kraatz, Standish

Bay County FB
Darin Knochel, Kawkawlin
Nathan Lecronier, Freeland
Sabrina Martin, Bay City
Amber Podojak, Bay City
Teagan Socia, Bay City

Benzie-Manistee FB
Kayla Clarke, Bear Lake
Charles Schoedel, Manistee
Tobia Schoedel, Manistee

Branch County FB
Karice Hard, Quincy
Heather Shilling, Reading
Taylor Truckey, Sherwood

Calhoun County FB
Jordan Cuatt, Homer
Kasey Hinkley, Homer
Frederic Kellicutt, Homer
Kaitlyn Richie, Marshall

Cass County FB
Emily West-McKenzie, Marcellus

Cheboygan County FB
Levi Beckett, Cheboygan
Brooke Lee, Cheboygan
Kelsey Liebenow, Cheboygan

Chippewa County FB
Charles Halsey, Pickford

Clinton County FB
Erin George, St. Johns
Rachel Simmon, Fowler

Genesee County FB
Krystell Blair, Swartz Creek

Gladwin County FB
Emily Donovan, Gladwin

Gratiot County FB
Angelica Armstrong, Breckenridge
Michelle Smith, Wheeler
Chelsea Wilk, Breckenridge

Hiawathaland FB
(Alger, Delta and eastern Marquette counties)
Samantha Bergdahl, Skandia
Christopher Servant, Gladstone

Huron County FB
Haley Dutcher, Pigeon
Bret Foltz, Bay Port
Christopher Hagedon, Harbor Beach
Jessica Roggenbuck, Harbor Beach

Huron Shores FB
(Alpena and Alcona counties)
Andrew Smith, Alpena

Ionia County FB
Alexandra Chipman, Saranac
Amanda Overbeck, Saranac

Iosco County FB
Ciera Charles, Hale

Iron Range FB
(Dickinson, Iron and western Marquette counties)
Kayla Palluconi, Felch

Isabella County FB
Amy Finnerty, Weidman
Nichole Howe, Vestaburg
Shannon Millard, Mt. Pleasant

Jackson County FB
Cassandra Hart, Grass Lake
Aaron Justice, Springport

Kalamazoo County FB
Quinshayla Kelley, Kalamazoo
Jessica Kirklin, Kalamazoo
Jacquelyn Turner, Kalamazoo
Courtney Weaver, Galesburg

Kalkaska County FB
Tabitha Ball, Kalkaska
Ron Fall, South Boardman
Mindy Hill, South Boardman
Travis Persons, Fife Lake
Victor Woodhams, Fife Lake

Kent County FB
Sam Jara, Grand Rapids
Christian Tett, Grand Rapids
Nuri Tett, Grand Rapids

Lapeer County FB
Brianna Banowski, Lapeer
Kevin Burrows, Allenton
Jamie Caminiti, Lapeer
Bradley Deane, Lapeer
Lisa Dinsmore, Lapeer
Joshua Francis, Lapeer
Allison Fuller, Lapeer
Kara Haight, Lapeer
Barbara Jones, Metamora
Alexys Lemans, Attica
Mary Listwak, North Branch
Gabriela Miranda, Attica
Kayla Ortega, Columbiaville

Ellery Owen, Lapeer
Michael Puskar, Lapeer
Katie Volante, Almont

Lenawee County FB
Allen Beck, Morenci
Helen Pizana, Britton
Taylor Smelser, Adrian
Jenna Squires, Britton

Livingston County FB
Cory Grover, Howell

Macomb County FB
Megan Grobbel, Armada

Mason County FB
Jameson Tomaski, Ludington

Mecosta County FB
Savana Hopkins, Big Rapids

Midland County FB
Travis Dice, Midland
Seth Wegener, Coleman

Monroe County FB
Sam Doty, Monroe
Michael Opfermann, Ida
Andrew Woelmer, Monroe

Montmorency County FB
Gregory Baranyai, Hillman
Taylor Noffze, Hillman

Muskegon County FB
Carlos Guzman, Ravenna
Morgan Kantola, Ravenna
Phillip Kantola, Ravenna

Newaygo County FB
Britni Baykowski, Hesperia
Bronwyn Konkel, Hesperia

Northwest Michigan FB
(Grand Traverse and Leelanau counties)
Lauren Aprill, Cedar
Jacob Runkel, Traverse City

Oakland County FB
Catherine McGhee, Ortonville
Faith McGhee, Ortonville

Oceana County FB
Kevin Gowell, Rothbury
Virginia Gowell, Rothbury
Atalissia Howe, Montague
Hannah Myers, Shelby
Laura Sponhauer, Hesperia

Ogemaw County FB
Kristen Dobson, Whittemore
Staci Ostrander, Whittemore

Otsego County FB
Anna Kassuba, Vanderbilt
Daniel Krudy, Lewiston
Magen Renard, Wolverine
Desiree Vail, Wolverine

Ottawa County FB
Angelina Greenrose, Grand Haven
Zecheriah Greenrose, Grand Haven
Tom Wieringa, Coopersville

Saginaw County FB
Bryan Mahoney, St. Charles
Brett Russell, Chesaning
Ann Marie Weisenberger, New Lothrop
Joseph Weisenberger, New Lothrop
Scott Weiss, Frankenmuth

Sanilac County FB
Sara Croff, Yale
Patrick Dischinger, Marlette
Olivia Franzel, Marlette
Amara Wilson, Marlette

St. Clair County FB
Zachary Rickerman, St. Clair

St. Joseph County FB
Sabrina Russell, Mendon
Xenah Trayling, Centreville

Tuscola County FB
Mackenzie George, Clifford
Tyler Ireland, Mayville
William Jenkins, Caro
Audrey Keskes, Millington
Donald Lee, Millington
Stephen Miller, Cass City
Lauren Walther, Cass City

Washtenaw County FB
Robbie Graham, Milan

Wayne County FB
Audrie Bielskis, Brooklyn
Nicholas Cobb, Belleville
Branden Cunningham, Brooklyn
Alan Hill, Belleville

Wexford County FB
Luke Jones, Tustin

Climate change legislation remains 'seriously flawed'

Contact:

Ryan Findlay,
(800) 292-2680,
ext. 2025

LANSING, July 2, 2009 — Farm Bureau is disappointed that H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act, passed the U.S. House on June 26, and remains strongly opposed to the bill if it is brought up in the Senate.

The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) praised House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson's (D-Minn.) effort to improve the bill by including an amendment which establishes an agricultural offset program within the U.S. Department of Agriculture; provides for a list of eligible agricultural offsets; corrects the misuse of indirect land use calculations in evaluating the use of biofuels; and alters the definition of biomass.

"Even after the stellar efforts of House Agriculture Chairman Collin Peterson and many rural members of Congress to win vital changes for America's farm families – efforts that we strongly endorse and support – there are simply too many flaws in the underlying bill," said AFBF President Bob Stallman, adding that the bill will "unquestionably impose enormous costs on the American economy, including agriculture."

An AFBF economic analysis shows that, at a minimum, net farm income will decline by \$5 billion annually by the year 2020 if H.R. 2454 becomes law.

"The \$5 billion impact is under the most optimistic set of assumptions," said Stallman. "Those estimates do not begin to tell the story of what will happen when the program mandated by this legislation fully takes hold."

AFBF is concerned because the bill would result in a net economic cost to farmers with little or no environmental benefit. In addition, it creates an "energy deficit" for the United States by curtailing the use of fossil fuels without supplying any realistic alternative to make up the lost energy.

Another problem with the bill are provisions that would potentially put the United States in violation of the World Trade Organization because it demands other nations to make equivalent commitments to greenhouse gas reductions or face punitive actions. These provisions would be unenforceable, and U.S. products would be subject to retaliatory tariffs and U.S. competitiveness would be harmed.

"H.R. 2454 may be the most important legislation considered in the 111th Congress," Stallman said. "It is critical that legislation not be approved that will harm agriculture, harm our economy and reduce economic opportunity for our children – all in the name of computer-driven scenarios, the science of which is increasingly brought into question."