

The Mi Farm Brief #029

Friday July 3, 2026, Cal "Corn-Bread" Halvorsen

Mi Farm AI

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For internal review

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For Mark Matuska, Milford, Iowa (Dickinson County)

Friday, July 3, 2026. Filed by The Mi Farm AI Desk.

Weather, Milford, IA

Today: High **86F**. Chance Showers And Thunderstorms.

Tonight: Low **67F**. Chance Showers And Thunderstorms.

What this means for today: A chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly sunny, with a high near 86. South wind 5 to 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 50%. New rainfall amounts between a half and three quarters of an inch possible.

Source: NOAA National Weather Service point forecast for Milford, IA, pulled this morning.

Hour by Hour, the day ahead

Hour	Temp	Rain	Wind	Sky
4 AM	69F	54%	S 10 mph	Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
5 AM	69F	81%	SW 10 mph	Showers And Thunderstorms
6 AM	68F	54%	SE 10 mph	Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
7 AM	69F	27%	SSE 10 mph	Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
8 AM	71F	26%	S 10 mph	Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
9 AM	73F	25%	WSW 10 mph	Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
10 AM	75F	24%	SW 10 mph	Slight Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
11 AM	77F	22%	SSW 10 mph	Slight Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
12 PM	79F	19%	SSW 10 mph	Slight Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
1 PM	81F	17%	SW 5 mph	Slight Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
2 PM	82F	16%	SW 10 mph	Slight Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
3 PM	83F	14%	SSW 10 mph	Partly Sunny
4 PM	84F	12%	S 10 mph	Partly Sunny
5 PM	84F	27%	S 10 mph	Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
6 PM	83F	41%	SSE 10 mph	Chance Showers And Thunderstorms

Hour	Temp	Rain	Wind	Sky
7 PM	82F	56%	SSE 10 mph	Showers And Thunderstorms Likely
8 PM	81F	59%	SE 5 mph	Showers And Thunderstorms Likely
9 PM	77F	48%	ESE 10 mph	Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
10 PM	75F	52%	ESE 10 mph	Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
11 PM	73F	51%	E 10 mph	Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
12 AM	72F	64%	ESE 10 mph	Showers And Thunderstorms Likely

Source: NOAA National Weather Service hourly forecast and station observations, pulled this morning.

Rain & Spray Window

No rain at your field in the past 24 hours. The spray window is open.

Rain outlook, what has fallen and what is expected:

Past 24 hours: 0.00 inches so far Next 24 hours: 0.77 inches expected Next 48 hours: 1.19 inches expected Next 72 hours: 1.19 inches expected

Source: NOAA National Weather Service forecast and the local rain gauge network, pulled this morning.

Grain and Livestock, corn, soybeans, wheat, cattle

Corn (Jul 2026)	\$4.2500/bu +0.0400
Corn (Dec 2026)	\$4.4150/bu -0.0075
Soy (Jul 2026)	\$11.3175/bu +0.0550
Soy (Nov 2026)	\$11.4775/bu -0.0150
Wheat (Jul 2026)	\$5.9050/bu -0.0150
Live Cattle (CME)	\$239.23/cwt -1.1%
Lean Hogs (CME)	\$93.85/cwt +0.5%

Source: Chicago Board of Trade.

Cal's Market Read

Overnight, corn added about 4 cents; beans added about 6 cents; and wheat slipped about 2 cents.

Recent trend, over the last 5 sessions, corn has firmed and beans have firmed. That is the backdrop your cash bid is moving against.

Here is our read on why the board leaned mostly higher overnight, and honestly the facts do not point to one clean cause. The likeliest support for corn is the tar spot news out of Hoosier Ag Today, with the disease now confirmed in six corn belt states and spreading fast, which raises worry about the crop. The other pull is the soybean export picture from Tri-State Neighbor, where sales at 9 million came in below expectations and year to date commitments run 18 percent behind last year, so beans firmed even without a strong sales story to lean on.

Stocks are steady going into the open, S&P; futures close to flat. A calm Wall Street is what your banker likes to see, it keeps the rate and input-cost backdrop behind your operating note quiet for another day.

Cal

Wall Street, yesterday's close

Dow Jones	52,900 +1.1%
S&P; 500	7,483 +0.0%
Nasdaq	25,833 to 0.8%
Russell 2000	2,996 to 0.5%

Wall Street, today's futures (where the market is at going into the day)

Dow	53,309 +1.1%
S&P; 500	7,558 +0.0%
Nasdaq	29,845 to 1.1%
Russell 2000	3,023 to 0.4%

Decision Delivered

Your decisions for today and the week ahead:

- Paperwork: FSA crop acreage reporting is due July 15 for spring planted crops. That is in 12 days, so prep now, get your planted acres by field, planting dates, and any prevented planting ready for your county Farm Service Agency office now, a late certification can put your farm program payments and crop insurance at risk.
- Reminder, still on your list: Corn is approaching the canopy and tasseling weeks are ahead, now is the time to book your fungicide window if you plan a VT/R1 pass, before the applicator calendar fills. Confirm your stage.
- Reminder for this week: Hot, dry stretches raise spider-mite pressure on field edges. Scout the south and west borders of soybeans and corn. Verify in-field.
- Standing reminder: Dig an 8-inch root cube on a few plants in continuous-corn fields to confirm your rootworm trait is holding, and rescout soybeans for early defoliators. Verify in-field.

What to Watch Today

- Rain watch: through the workday the best rain chance is around 8 PM (59%). Time spray and field passes to the drier hours, and check the wind first.
- Market watch: corn up about 4 cents, beans up about 6 cents going into the day. Wheat down about 2 cents. Watch the cash bid at your elevator.
- On the wire: European Union lifts tariffs on nuts, fruits, vegetables and lobsters (see Cal's News Desk below).

From Cal's News Desk

The 10 stories that moved across the wires since yesterday's Brief, sourced, dated, and verifiable. Each one carries Cal's review, the same one the news page shows, with a link to read it straight from the source.

1. European Union lifts tariffs on nuts, fruits, vegetables and lobsters

The European Union has scrapped tariffs on American nuts, fruits, vegetables and lobsters while opening a 500,000 metric ton quota for tree nuts, a change the Council approved on June 25 that took effect July 1. Agriculture

Secretary Brooke Rollins called it a MAJOR win, saying the deal delivers billions in new market access and helps shrink an EU farm trade deficit that once threatened to reach nearly 50 billion dollars but is now forecast to fall to 29 billion. California, which grows more than 99 percent of U.S. walnuts and roughly half the world supply, stands to gain since the EU is the walnut industry's biggest export market, and lobster exporters win too, with a 0 percent tariff applied retroactively to August 2025. The bigger story is the horse trading behind it, as the U.S. capped tariffs on EU goods at 15 percent, the Supreme Court struck down Trump's reciprocal tariffs, and he reimposed a 10 percent global tariff under a 1974 trade law, so plenty of sectoral levies still remain in play.

[Read the full article.](#) Agri-Pulse, Thu Jul 2, 2026 9:48 PM CT

2. Ranchers Should Weigh Options for Supplemental Forage During Drought

North Dakota ranchers are staring down a serious feed crunch this year, with drought and a cold spring cutting tame grass and hay production by at least 25 percent statewide and as much as 50 percent in the southwest, southeast and west-central regions. NDSU Extension specialists Miranda Meehan and Kevin Sedivec warn that native pastures will run 70 to 80 percent of normal in most areas but only about half in the hardest hit zones, which will force grazing to end by mid to late summer unless herds are destocked. For emergency forage, they recommend warm-season annuals like foxtail millet, with Siberian millet out west and German millet farther east, while cautioning that sudangrass and drought-stressed crops carry real risks of prussic acid and nitrate poisoning that call for testing before feeding. It matters because producers will likely have to stack several tactics at once, planting diverse cover crop mixes, salvaging failed crops as hay, and culling or early weaning to stretch what little feed the pastures can offer.

[Read the full article.](#) Morning Ag Clips, Thu Jul 2, 2026 8:59 PM CT

3. The Early Days of Organic Ag & Farming with Data to be Covered at Organic Field Day

Organic farmer Blake Burggraaf is opening his 465 Farmstead near Hartford, South Dakota on July 7, 2026, to show fellow producers exactly how he made the leap to organic and what data taught him along the way. The free field day, called "The Early Days of Transition and Farming with Data," runs from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., includes a free lunch for those who pre-register, and is hosted by the Northern Plains Sustainable Ag Society with backing from a USDA organic transition program. Attendees will walk through practical topics like crop rotations, cover crops, hemp and small grain production, custom equipment, record keeping, and using on-farm numbers to guide management and certification. NPSAS director Krysti Mikkonen says hands-on days like this help farmers cut risk and build resilient operations, and with real successes and honest lessons on display, it could be a worthwhile stop for anyone curious about what organic transition really takes.

[Read the full article.](#) Morning Ag Clips, Thu Jul 2, 2026 8:54 PM CT

4. Soybeans

Soybean exports came in at 9 million, below expectations, and old crop sales dropped under 2 million bushels for a marketing year low, though year to date commitments of 1.509 billion are down 18% from a year ago, a touch better than the USDA forecast of down 20%. China has taken 11.9 million metric tons of old crop shipments but made no new crop purchases, while new crop commitments at 89 million bushels, though still historically low, mark a 3 year high and a jump of 52% from last year. On the products side, meal sales of 414,000 tons met expectations with old crop commitments up 17% year over year, but soybean oil commitments slipped to 826 million pounds, down a steep 65%. The analyst Soderberg notes crush margins got pounded, falling another 34 cents to \$2.87 for a 3 month low, and bean oil PV dropped to a two month low at 52.3%, all of which points to a market losing steam that farmers will want the full details on.

[Read the full article.](#) Tri-State Neighbor, Thu Jul 2, 2026 5:23 PM CT

5. Cattle

August live cattle bumped up against a key technical ceiling, the 100 day moving average, and settled almost exactly on that line, according to The Hightower Report. Prices have poked through this same barrier several times since

January, and each attempt has fizzled, leaving the market stuck in a broad sideways drift for the past three months. On Wednesday, live cattle futures still managed to close 52 cents to \$1.32 higher, though open interest slipped by 1,801 contracts, a sign some traders are stepping to the sidelines. For anyone watching where beef prices head next, this stalled market could be coiling for a bigger move, so it pays to know which way it finally breaks.

[Read the full article.](#) Tri-State Neighbor, Thu Jul 2, 2026 5:22 PM CT

6. Conditions Could Lead to Heavy Tar Spot Pressure

Tar spot has already been confirmed in six corn belt states since it first showed up in an Indiana county on June 10th, and BASF technical rep Mike Probst says the only holdouts so far are Wisconsin and Michigan. He blames the fast spread on a cool, wet June with below average temperatures and well above average rainfall, exactly the conditions this aggressive corn disease loves. Probst warns that given the weather and today's tight economics he does not think growers can afford to leave a single acre untreated, though most corn near tassel still has time for a well timed fungicide pass. For anyone using BASF's Veltyma, he urges bumping the rate from the base seven ounces up to ten, nearly a 50 percent boost in active ingredient that his yield data shows pays off and may let one pass do the job even in a high pressure year.

[Read the full article.](#) Hoosier Ag Today, Thu Jul 2, 2026 5:20 PM CT

7. Meet the 5 New Leaders Joining the Indiana FFA Foundation Board of Directors

The Indiana FFA Foundation added five new board members effective July 1, bringing expertise from agriculture, education, finance, utilities and municipal government to steer fundraising and long term investments. The timing matters because the foundation is racing to raise \$1 million to renovate the Main Lodge at the Indiana FFA Leadership Center, half of which is a matching grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. that only unlocks if an equal amount comes from private donors. The new directors carry deep resumes, including Wickard, a former USDA Farm Service Agency leader in Indiana who runs a century Angus and Boer goat farm, Merritt, who directs communications for Indiana Pork and its 2,200 producers, Rekeweg, CEO of the AgriBusiness Council of Indiana, plus Trafalgar town manager Gregg and power engineer House. For any farm family that has watched a kid grow through FFA, this is the behind the scenes crew now working to keep that leadership pipeline funded and the center's doors open.

[Read the full article.](#) Hoosier Ag Today, Thu Jul 2, 2026 5:15 PM CT

8. Ohio Ag Weather and Forecast, July 3, 2026

A shifting high pressure dome is opening the door for an active rain track across Ohio starting this evening, with showers and thunderstorms building in the northwest and west central parts of the state before spreading east overnight. The heaviest action runs tonight, Saturday afternoon into overnight, and again Sunday, with combined totals of .25 to 1.25 inches at a high 90% coverage through Sunday. Rain chances dial back to about 25% Monday and Tuesday, then a drier, still warm stretch settles in Wednesday through Friday, with only a small batch of storms possible next Friday night into Saturday. Looking further out, forecasters are watching a cool front sagging out of Canada that could reshape the pattern across the northern US, though whether it reaches the eastern corn belt is still uncertain, so it is worth catching the full outlook.

[Read the full article.](#) Ohio Country Journal, Thu Jul 2, 2026 4:03 PM CT

9. US beef prices stay red-hot for summer cookouts

U.S. cattle herds have shrunk to their lowest levels in 75 years after drought, wildfires, and pricey feed pushed ranchers to slash their herds, and rebuilding takes at least two years once heifers are held back for breeding. Retail lean ground beef hit a record \$8.62 per pound in May, up more than 12% from a year ago, and Wells Fargo's Michael Swanson says there is no short-term lever to boost domestic supply. President Trump has pushed low-tariff Argentine beef imports and ordered a Justice Department probe into whether meatpackers are colluding, while a screwworm ban on Mexican cattle since last year tightens supply even further, angering groups like R-CALF USA. For the July 4 cookout, Wells Fargo pegs a barbecue for 10 at \$161, up 2.4% with hamburger beef up 14%, so economists suggest grilling cheaper chicken or pork to keep more cash in your pocket.

[Read the full article](#). AgWeek, Thu Jul 2, 2026 3:46 PM CT

10. Security guard rescued from rubble 8 days after Venezuela earthquakes

After eight days buried under 140 tons of concrete, security guard Hernan Gil was pulled alive from a collapsed seven story building in Catia La Mar, a coastal town flattened by Venezuela's June 24 earthquakes. Rescue teams from seven countries, including more than 300 Americans and 23 search dogs, worked around the clock and even fed Gil through a syringe while carefully avoiding the collapse of nearby leaning buildings. The twin quakes, measuring 7.2 and 7.5, have killed nearly 2,600 people and injured over 11,000, prompting interim President Delcy Rodriguez to declare seven days of mourning. Amid the tragedy, rescuers have found other small miracles like an 18 day old baby and a trapped dog, even as survivors now face homelessness, scarce food and water, and looting so bad that four police officers were arrested for stealing from the rubble.

[Read the full article](#). CBS News, Thu Jul 2, 2026 10:45 PM CT

Cal's Receipt

Cal's Receipt is the public ledger of every call this desk made for your farm, what was at stake, whether you followed it, and what it actually saved (or cost). HILT-Transparent. Append-only. Every dollar cites its source.

- [Open your Weekly Scorecard](#), refreshes every Sunday 4:00 PM CT
- [Open your Monthly Receipt](#), refreshes first Monday 7:00 AM CT

Today in Farm Safety

Falls from bins, wagons, and equipment are among the most common serious farm injuries. Keep three points of contact climbing on and off the tractor, face the steps, and clean mud off your boots first. Most of these falls happen on the way down, in a hurry. Source: National Ag Safety Database; NIOSH agricultural injury surveillance.

Cal

The Coffee Shop

Today in Farm History, Soil Bank Act 1956 (precedent set 1936)

On May 28, 1956, President Eisenhower signed the Agricultural Act creating the Soil Bank, the direct ancestor of today's Conservation Reserve Program. The 1956 program paid farmers to idle 28.7 million acres at its peak. The legal mechanism traces back to the 1936 Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act. Source: USDA Farm Service Agency program history.

Cal's Quiz

When the Rural Electrification Act was signed on May 11, 1935, what fraction of U.S. farms had electricity?

- (a) 3%
- (b) 11%
- (c) 33%
- (d) 75%

Answer at the bottom of the Brief.

Cal's Joke of the Day

A silage bag froze solid in January. The farmer chipped at it with a pickaxe. His wife said, "Why don't you wait for the thaw?" He said, "By then the cattle will have written a letter."

The Mi Farm AI Desk

[[CAL-SIGNATURE]]

Cal "Corn-Bread" Halvorsen, your AI Agronomist and Editor in Chief

Quiz Answer

(b) About 11%. By 1953, 90% of U.S. farms had electricity. The cooperative model still serves rural America, your local rural electric cooperative is a direct descendant. Source: USDA Rural Utilities Service historical record.

Your data stays yours. We sell nothing you buy. Your farm data is never sold, shared, or used to train outside models. It lives on hardware we control, not the public cloud. Loyalty in writing.

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