

The MI Farm Brief #142

Wednesday July 22, 2026, Cal "Corn-Bread" Halvorsen

MI Farm AI

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For internal review

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For Sheridan Skala, Owatonna, Minnesota (Steele County, family farm heritage)

Wednesday, July 22, 2026. Filed by The MI Farm AI Desk.

Weather, Steele County, MN

Today: High **74F**. Sunny.

Tonight: Low **52F**. Mostly Clear.

What this means for today: Sunny, with a high near 74. North wind 0 to 5 mph.

Source: NOAA National Weather Service via the MI Farm AI weather layer for Steele County, MN, pulled this morning.

Hour by Hour, the day ahead

Hour	Temp	Rain	Wind	Sky
4 AM	56F	0%	N 0 mph	Cloudy
5 AM	57F	0%	0 mph	Mostly Clear
6 AM	55F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
7 AM	56F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
8 AM	60F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
9 AM	61F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
10 AM	65F	0%	NNW 5 mph	Sunny
11 AM	67F	0%	NNW 5 mph	Sunny
12 PM	69F	0%	N 5 mph	Mostly Sunny
1 PM	70F	0%	NNW 5 mph	Sunny
2 PM	72F	0%	NNW 5 mph	Sunny
3 PM	72F	0%	NNW 5 mph	Sunny
4 PM	73F	0%	NNW 5 mph	Sunny
5 PM	74F	0%	NNW 5 mph	Sunny
6 PM	73F	0%	NNW 5 mph	Mostly Clear
7 PM	73F	0%	N 5 mph	Mostly Clear
8 PM	71F	0%	0 mph	Mostly Clear
9 PM	65F	0%	0 mph	Mostly Clear
10 PM	62F	0%	0 mph	Clear
11 PM	60F	0%	0 mph	Clear
12 AM	59F	0%	0 mph	Clear

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

Spray Window

Do NOT spray right now. Wind is about 13 mph, gusting 13 today. That is over the wind ceiling most labels set (glyphosate and fungicides cap at 10 mph, dicamba and 2,4-D at 15). It will drift onto neighbors or off your field. Wait for a calmer window.

Grain and Livestock, corn, soybeans, wheat, cattle

Futures board (front month): corn Dec 2026 \$4.7925/bu (+0.2575, +5.73%); soybeans Nov 2026 \$12.2600/bu (+0.0650, +0.53%). Chicago board, as of 2026 to 07 to 22.

Corn (Dec 2026)	\$4.7925/bu +0.0400
Soy (Nov 2026)	\$12.2600/bu +0.0325
Live Cattle (CME)	\$226.68/cwt +0.1%
Lean Hogs (CME)	\$101.50/cwt +0.2%

Source: Chicago Board of Trade.

Cal's Market Read

Overnight, corn added about 4 cents; and beans added about 3 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. Cutting the other way, demand still reads firm per AgWeek: USDA restores prevented planting buy-up option for producers. Honest truth, the tape does not hand us one clean reason today, so take this as our best read, not gospel.

Stocks point lower into the open, S&P; futures off about 0.1 percent. A softer tape can tighten the credit and input-cost mood your lender watches, worth a glance, but it does not set your cash bid.

Cal

Wall Street, yesterday's close

Dow Jones	52,225 +0.7%
S&P; 500	7,509 +0.9%
Nasdaq	25,837 +1.3%
Russell 2000	2,987 +1.5%

Decision Delivered

Your decisions for today and the week ahead:

- Standing reminder: Hot, dry stretches raise spider-mite pressure on field edges. Scout the south and west borders of soybeans and corn.

Farm context: Skala Farm, Steele County demo (synthetic data bed; family heritage acres are the reference point). Real intake replaces the synthetic figures the moment you send your farm shape, acreage by field, and bin inventory.

What to Watch Today

- Field window: any rain risk eases by 6 AM, then the working day looks dry enough for field passes. Check the wind first.

- Market watch: corn up about 4 cents, beans up about 3 cents going into the day. Watch the cash bid at your elevator.
- On the wire: Opinion: Loan modernization at USDA is reviving rural America (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. Opinion: Loan modernization at USDA is reviving rural America USDA is rolling out one of the largest modernization efforts in its history, folding 130 separate loan and grant systems across Rural Development and Farm Production and Conservation into a single integrated platform. The overhaul finally replaces an accounting system that has run since 1968, the same year as the first moon landing, which officials say had become tangled in redundant silos and red tape that slowed help to rural communities. Backers frame it as part of the Trump administration's push for government efficiency, promising better cybersecurity, tougher fraud crackdowns, and faster, more targeted assistance. For you, it means producers, business owners, and families could soon apply for loans from any device, anytime, while in person support still stays available for those who want it. [Read the full article](#). Agri-Pulse, Tue Jul 21, 2026 10:26 PM CT

2. Lean Hogs October lean hog futures pushed to another new high this morning before settling with modest gains, according to The Hightower Report, which is siding with the bulls even after a recent pullback. Open interest keeps sliding, notching a fresh 2026 low on Monday, while the pork cutout value climbed to its strongest mark since October 2025 by the end of last week. Analysts pointed to USDA supply and demand figures released last Friday, covering pork production, as another factor shaping the market outlook. For hog and grain producers alike, firming pork prices and bullish momentum could signal steadier demand ahead, making this a story worth watching closely. [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Tue Jul 21, 2026 5:09 PM CT

3. Mamdani says he doesn't have legal authority to arrest Netanyahu "It is clear that we do not have the independent legal authority to enforce this warrant. [Read the full article](#). The Hill, Tue Jul 21, 2026 9:41 PM CT

4. Prince William, Kate Middleton wrestled with major decision over Prince George's future: expert Prince William and Kate Middleton wrestled with a major decision about Prince George's future. No doubt Princess Catherine and Prince William are also anticipating staying close to Prince George in a similar manner." "Additionally, Eton is well-versed in protecting its students from media scrutiny with global elites in attendance," Fordwich noted. Charles was sensitive and sent to a faraway school, which was a bad mistake." Princess Catherine and Prince George attend the men's singles final at the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in London, England. There are zero accounts of him ever behaving in an entitled manner because he hasn't been pampered at all." Stephanie Nolasco is an Entertainment Reporter for Fox News Digital. [Read the full article](#). Fox News, Wed Jul 22, 2026 5:00 AM CT

5. USDA restores prevented planting buy-up option for producers Senator John Hoeven of North Dakota announced that Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins has agreed to bring back the prevented planting buy-up option, which the USDA's Risk Management Agency had planned to eliminate starting with the 2027 crop year. This coverage pays producers when weather or other covered problems keep them from planting insured crops on time, and it has been used across more than 67 million acres nationwide, including 10 million acres in North Dakota. An NDSU analysis warned that without this option, farmers trying to replace the lost protection would face premium increases as high as 1,429 percent, or about 25 dollars per acre, and those already at the maximum 85 percent coverage level could not make up the difference at all. For corn and soybean growers who know how often spring rains can drown out planting plans, this reversal restores an important safety net that could mean the difference between a bad year and a ruined one. [Read the full article](#). AgWeek, Tue Jul 21, 2026 4:37 PM CT

6. Iowa Farmers Union Announces Confirmed Candidates for Barn Party "We are so excited to have these candidates talk about their priorities with our members," said Aaron Lehman, IFU president. Iowa farmers and ranchers, as well as Friends of the Family Farmer, can join IFU throughout the year. The world's political and

economic landscape is evolving more quickly than ever and every change has implications for agricultural markets and dairy producers. Their lobbying efforts focused on the Iowa Biofuels Access Bill, a top priority [...] [Read the full article](#). Morning Ag Clips, Wed Jul 22, 2026 3:11 AM CT

7. Iowa Crop Progress and Condition Report, July 13 to 19 The report is released weekly April through November. Topsoil moisture condition rated 7 percent very short, 26 percent short, 63 percent adequate, and 4 percent surplus. Soybean condition rated 79 percent good to excellent. Additionally, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship provides a weather summary each week during this [...] [Read the full article](#). Morning Ag Clips, Wed Jul 22, 2026 2:40 AM CT

8. Volunteering important for ag way of life Kim Ponterio of Melrose, Wisconsin runs the dairy side of Ponterio Holsteins, milking a herd of 70 Holsteins, while her husband Frank handles crops across their roughly 580 acres. Beyond the barn, Kim pours her time into the community, volunteering with the FFA Alumni, the 4-H program, and the Jackson County Fair, where she currently sits on the fair board. Every year the family hosts the John Cain Memorial Tractor Ride, drawing about 45 tractors, and Kim even pulls a parade float and works an FFA shake stand for the town's Fourth of July celebration. As she puts it, sometimes just having a nice cow in the barn is what gets you out there the next day, a reminder that giving back keeps the whole ag way of life rolling. [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Wed Jul 22, 2026 1:00 AM CT

9. Navigating Tough Economic Times: INFB to Host Farm Business & Diversification Event Indiana Farm Bureau is opening registration for a new Farm Business and Diversification Conference aimed at helping farmers find extra income streams during these tough economic times. Vice President Kendell Culp says the goal is to keep family farms going for future generations, noting that you cannot keep doing the same things and expect different outcomes. Breakout sessions will cover alternative income, digital marketing, insurance and liability, and livestock contract finishing, with Purdue's Patrick Nycz leading a talk on launching new food products and Caroline Patrick of Indiana Grown moderating a direct-to-consumer panel. The event runs Thursday, Sept. 10, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET at the Hamilton County Fairgrounds, free for members and just \$50 for others, with sign up at [infb.org/events](#). [Read the full article](#). Hoosier Ag Today, Tue Jul 21, 2026 7:49 PM CT

10. USB names Knupp as new CEO The United Soybean Board has tapped Courtney Knupp, an Iowa farm girl who still grows soybeans on the family land, to take over as chief executive starting October 1. She steps in after Lucas Lentsch resigned in February, with Darryl Chatman holding the seat as interim CEO in the meantime. Knupp brings nearly two decades of trade and market experience, including a stint where U.S. pork exports climbed to \$8.6 billion and past work boosting the value of soybean and soybean meal exports. For farmers, the appointment matters because Knupp will steer how your checkoff dollars are spent to grow markets and deliver value back to the farm gate in a tough global marketplace. [Read the full article](#). Agri-Pulse, Tue Jul 21, 2026 4:46 PM CT

Cal's Receipt

Cal's Receipt is the running 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). Append-only, and every dollar cites its source. You will find it on your farm Dashboard, on the Farm Services desk. Open the Dashboard from the button at the bottom of this Brief.

Today in Farm Safety

Stay out of a cow's blind spot directly behind her, and never turn your back on a bull. Most livestock-handling injuries are crushing and kicks in tight spaces. Move calmly, give yourself an exit, and respect a protective mother around newborns. Source: National Ag Safety Database; University of Minnesota Extension.

Cal

Local Obituaries

No local obituaries for your area in today's papers.

The Coffee Shop

Today in Farm History, Wisconsin statehood 1848

On May 29, 1848, Wisconsin became the 30th state. Dairy did not dominate immediately, wheat was first, but by 1899 Wisconsin led the nation in butter and cheese, a position it has held most years since. Source: Wisconsin Historical Society; USDA NASS dairy series.

Cal's Quiz

When was the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, parent of every modern Revenue Protection policy, created?

- (a) 1862
- (b) 1916
- (c) 1938
- (d) 1972

Answer at the bottom of the Brief.

Cal's Joke of the Day

Why did the farmer salt his driveway in October? Because the weatherman said it was going to be a normal winter, and the farmer's last 47 normal winters all started early.

The MI Farm AI Desk

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

Quiz Answer

(c) February 16, 1938. The program covered just wheat at first; today Revenue Protection covers over 130 crops and protects 90% of U.S. row-crop acreage. Source: USDA Risk Management Agency program history.

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.

The MI Farm Brief is the independent daily farm intelligence brief that earns zero when you buy inputs. Cal "Corn-Bread" Halvorsen is the editorial persona of the MI Farm AI desk, the AI-orchestrated production team that produces this Brief every working morning. The Monthly Receipt is signed by the Founder, MI Farm AI. Honest. Independent. Loyal. Transparent. The HILT Covenant.