

The Mi Farm Brief #032

Sunday July 5, 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)

Sunday, July 5, 2026. Filed by The Mi Farm AI Desk.

Weather, Owatonna, MN

Today: High **83F**. Patchy Fog then Slight Chance Showers And Thunderstorms.

Tonight: Low **63F**. Patchy Fog.

What this means for today: Patchy fog before 8am, then a slight chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly sunny, with a high near 83. East northeast wind 0 to 5 mph. Chance of precipitation is 20%. New rainfall amounts between a tenth and quarter of an inch possible.

Source: NOAA National Weather Service point forecast for Owatonna, MN, pulled this morning.

Hour by Hour, the day ahead

Hour	Temp	Rain	Wind	Sky
4 AM	65F	7%	0 mph	Patchy Fog
5 AM	65F	8%	0 mph	Patchy Fog
6 AM	64F	9%	0 mph	Patchy Fog
7 AM	66F	12%	0 mph	Patchy Fog
8 AM	69F	11%	0 mph	Partly Sunny
9 AM	71F	11%	0 mph	Mostly Sunny
10 AM	75F	11%	E 5 mph	Mostly Sunny
11 AM	77F	9%	E 5 mph	Mostly Sunny
12 PM	79F	15%	E 5 mph	Slight Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
1 PM	80F	16%	E 5 mph	Slight Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
2 PM	81F	16%	E 5 mph	Slight Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
3 PM	81F	16%	E 5 mph	Slight Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
4 PM	81F	22%	E 5 mph	Slight Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
5 PM	83F	20%	E 5 mph	Slight Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
6 PM	82F	18%	E 5 mph	Slight Chance Showers And Thunderstorms
7 PM	81F	4%	E 5 mph	Partly Cloudy
8 PM	79F	3%	E 5 mph	Partly Cloudy
9 PM	74F	2%	E 5 mph	Mostly Clear
10 PM	71F	1%	E 5 mph	Mostly Clear

Hour	Temp	Rain	Wind	Sky
11 PM	70F	2%	ESE 5 mph	Mostly Clear
12 AM	69F	1%	ESE 5 mph	Mostly Clear

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

Grain and Livestock, corn, soybeans, wheat, cattle

Corn (Jul 2026)	\$4.2450/bu +0.0350
Corn (Dec 2026)	\$4.4075/bu -0.0150
Soy (Jul 2026)	\$11.3175/bu +0.0550
Soy (Nov 2026)	\$11.4675/bu -0.0250
Wheat (Jul 2026)	\$5.9150/bu -0.0050
Live Cattle (CME)	\$239.02/cwt -1.2%
Lean Hogs (CME)	\$98.60/cwt +5.6%

Source: Chicago Board of Trade.

Cal's Market Read

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

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 Iowa Farmer Today: How cracks in soil impact moisture loss. Honest truth, the tape does not hand us one clean reason today, so take this as our best read, not gospel.

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, Thursday'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	53,162 +0.8%
S&P; 500	7,557 +0.0%
Nasdaq	29,902 to 0.9%
Russell 2000	3,024 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 10 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.
- Standing reminder: 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: 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.
- Reminder, still on your list: Corn is moving through V5-V8 on seasonal normals, the rapid-growth, nitrogen-demand window. If you split-applied N, this is the sidedress window; confirm your stage with a field check.

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 6 cents going into the day. Watch the cash bid at your elevator.
- On the wire: How cracks in soil impact moisture loss (see Cal's News Desk below).

From Cal's News Desk

The 9 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. How cracks in soil impact moisture loss

When it comes to implementing conservation practices on the farm, farmers consider both the economic impact of those practices as well as how...

[Read the full article.](#) Iowa Farmer Today, Sat Jul 4, 2026 8:30 PM CT

2. FFAR Research to Advance More Effective Control of New World Screwworm

A \$300,000 ROAR grant from FFAR, biotech firm Agragene, and NC State is funding a fresh weapon against the flesh eating New World screwworm, a pest whose larvae eat living tissue and can kill untreated livestock. Since the 1950s, control has relied on flooding the wild with males sterilized by radiation, but that radiation weakens the flies and forces crews to release far more of them to get the job done. Dr. Maxwell Scott and his team are now using CRISPR gene editing to breed males that are born sterile and possibly more fit, skipping the cost and liabilities of gamma irradiation entirely. The stakes are steep, since a single Texas outbreak could cost \$1.8 billion in dead animals, vet bills, and labor, so FFAR's Dr. Miriam Martin LeValley says every possible option needs to be on the table to keep producers ahead of this threat.

[Read the full article.](#) Morning Ag Clips, Sat Jul 4, 2026 7:53 PM CT

3. Newly Discovered Corn Trait May Improve Crop Drought Tolerance

Corn breeders may soon have a new tool for fighting drought, thanks to a Penn State study published in Crop Science that pinpoints a trait the researchers call the "stretch phenotype." Plants carrying it grow longer, smoother water-conducting xylem cells with fewer internal barriers, which lets water flow faster while also driving deeper, faster-growing roots that reach moisture other plants cannot. Senior author Jonathan Lynch, who compares the long cells to long, smooth pipes that move water more freely than short, barrier-filled ones, says his team confirmed the payoff of better yields under drought through computer models, greenhouse plants, and field trials in Pennsylvania and Chile. They even found DNA markers tied to the trait, meaning it is partly inherited and could be bred into future hybrids, a real advantage as drought is projected to worsen with climate change.

[Read the full article](#). Morning Ag Clips, Sat Jul 4, 2026 7:39 PM CT

4. One Oak Forest Blog Delivers Daily Value to Your Inbox

Versatileer, a lifestyle blog based in Oak Forest, pulls deals, coupons, product reviews, giveaways, and recipes into a single spot so folks stop hunting across dozens of websites for savings. The site covers a wide range, from home product reviews and budget-friendly recipes to photography tips and a freebies section that screens out fake offers and hidden costs. It also runs a blogger opportunities section connecting writers with book tours and collaborations, and it stays active across Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, and TikTok. For anyone watching every dollar in a tight economy, the pitch is simple, one bookmark at versatileer.com instead of scattered searches, which means fewer missed deals before they expire.

[Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Sat Jul 4, 2026 4:16 PM CT

5. Observe now, engage later

Outdoors writer Jerry Davis says the lazy, hazy stretch of midsummer is nature's best observation window, since crops and fruit are still green, hunting seasons are closed, and the fishing is so-so at best. He points out that Chicken of the Woods mushrooms are showing up early this year, but warns you to have an expert confirm any find because poisonous look-alikes are out there. Along the roadsides you can spot tall Michigan lilies in bloom and pairs of spotted fawns hiding in the corn leaves, all easy to see and photograph from a vehicle, boat, or on foot. Davis, who can be reached at sivadjam@mhtc.net or 608 924 1112, closes with an editor's note tying the season to the country's 250th anniversary and the immigrant ancestors who came here looking for better lives.

[Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Sat Jul 4, 2026 1:30 PM CT

6. Dutch farmers make a home in northwest Iowa

Dutch immigrants put down roots in Orange City and the surrounding northwest Iowa farm country, building a community that still honors its heritage more than a century later. Each spring the town throws its Tulip Time Festival, a tradition of costumes, parades, and traditional dancing that dates back to at least 1941. The story lands now because the United States is marking its 250th anniversary, and Midwest towns are celebrating both the nation and the immigrant families who helped settle it. For a farmer here, it is a reminder that the fields you work and the small towns nearby were shaped by folks who crossed an ocean to farm this same ground.

[Read the full article](#). Iowa Farmer Today, Sat Jul 4, 2026 8:00 AM CT

7. Trump promises to deliver America 250 speech despite inclement weather: 'I will be there'

"Storms bring luck to whatever the occasion," Trump said on Truth Social. Eastern Time after the National Weather Service issued a severe thunderstorm warning hours earlier. "A little rain will never diminish our pride, our patriotism, or our celebration of the greatest nation in the history of the world." Trump compared Saturday's situation to the UFC Freedom 250 fights that occurred last month at the White House. Who cares???" Trump also noted many "great veterans" are in attendance for America 250 and said "I'm not going to let some rain stop our 250th."

[Read the full article](#). Washington Examiner, Sat Jul 4, 2026 9:04 PM CT

8. The growing dangers of record heat waves like the one engulfing July 4th celebrations

Give now to help PBS News start our new fiscal year strong. The National Weather Service said today's temperatures are extremely dangerous. And I want to clarify the drinking water is important, not because the act of drinking water cools you off, but because if you're dehydrated, you can't sweat, and sweating is how our body cools you off. Amna Nawaz serves as co-anchor and co-managing editor of PBS News Hour.

[Read the full article](#). PBS NewsHour, Fri Jul 3, 2026 5:55 PM CT

9. Ukraine exported almost 37.5 mln tons of grain in the MY 2025/26

Ukraine has shipped out nearly 37.5 million tons of grain and pulses so far in the 2025/26 marketing year, according to the country's Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food. That total, measured as of July 1, is down about 3.17 million tons, or 7.7 percent, from the same point a year earlier. Corn remains the workhorse of Ukraine's export trade at 21.28 million tons, though even that slipped 3.1 percent, while wheat came in at 14.13 million tons, off 10.1 percent. The steepest drops hit the smaller crops, with barley down 34.4 percent to 1.52 million tons and rye nearly wiped out at a 98.6 percent decline. Ukraine also sent abroad about 62,100 tons of flour, the equivalent of roughly 82,800 tons of grain, down 12.6 percent from last year. For an Iowa farmer, these falling numbers from a major competitor matter because tighter Ukrainian supply can shift world corn and wheat prices, and the figures come from UkrAgroConsult, a firm with nearly 30 years tracking these markets.

[Read the full article](#). UkrAgroConsult (via world wire), Sat Jul 4, 2026 6:19 AM 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

Keep a stocked first-aid kit and a charged phone within reach of where you are working, and tell someone your field plan for the day. When you farm alone, minutes matter after an injury, a simple check-in time and a known location can save your life. Source: National Ag Safety Database; AgriSafe Network.

Cal

The Coffee Shop

Today in Farm History, Morrill Land-Grant Act 1862

On July 2, 1862, Lincoln signed the Morrill Act, which created the land-grant university system. Every state got federal land to fund a public college teaching agriculture and the mechanical arts. Iowa State University (1858, designated land-grant 1864) was one of the first. The land-grant network is the backbone of every modern Extension Service office. Source: USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Cal's Quiz

The 1916 Federal Aid Road Act provided the first federal matching funds for state highways. How much over its first five years?

- (a) \$7.5 million
- (b) \$75 million
- (c) \$750 million
- (d) \$7.5 billion

Answer at the bottom of the Brief.

Cal's Joke of the Day

A young scout walked the corn for the agronomist. He said, "I counted plants per acre." The farmer said, "What did you find?" He said, "You're 1,200 above target." The farmer said, "Good. Now go count something the corn doesn't already know."

The Mi Farm AI Desk

[[CAL-SIGNATURE]]

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

Quiz Answer

(b) \$75 million. Better farm-to-market roads meant Midwest grain reached the elevator in trucks instead of horse-drawn wagons by the 1920s. Source: Federal Highway Administration historical archive; USDA history office.

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.