

The MI Farm Brief #039

Monday July 13, 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)

Monday, July 13, 2026. Filed by The MI Farm AI Desk.

Weather, Owatonna, MN

Today: High **89F**. Sunny.

Tonight: Low **66F**. Clear.

What this means for today: Sunny, with a high near 89. Southwest wind 5 to 10 mph.

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	66F	0%	SSW 6 mph	Clear
5 AM	67F	0%	SW 5 mph	Clear
6 AM	66F	0%	SW 5 mph	Sunny
7 AM	67F	0%	SW 5 mph	Sunny
8 AM	71F	0%	SW 5 mph	Sunny
9 AM	75F	0%	WSW 10 mph	Sunny
10 AM	78F	0%	WSW 10 mph	Sunny
11 AM	81F	0%	WSW 10 mph	Sunny
12 PM	83F	0%	WSW 10 mph	Sunny
1 PM	85F	0%	WSW 10 mph	Sunny
2 PM	86F	0%	SW 10 mph	Sunny
3 PM	88F	0%	SW 10 mph	Sunny
4 PM	88F	0%	SW 10 mph	Sunny
5 PM	89F	0%	SSW 10 mph	Sunny
6 PM	87F	0%	SSW 10 mph	Clear
7 PM	86F	0%	SSW 5 mph	Clear
8 PM	84F	0%	SSW 5 mph	Clear
9 PM	79F	0%	S 5 mph	Clear
10 PM	75F	0%	SSW 5 mph	Clear
11 PM	74F	0%	SSW 5 mph	Clear
12 AM	72F	0%	SSW 5 mph	Clear

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

Grain and Livestock, corn, soybeans, wheat, cattle

Corn (Jul 2026)	\$4.3800/bu +0.1025
Corn (Dec 2026)	\$4.6525/bu +0.0425
Soy (Jul 2026)	\$12.0500/bu +0.0850
Soy (Nov 2026)	\$11.9675/bu +0.0600
Wheat (Jul 2026)	\$6.3000/bu -0.0200
Live Cattle (CME)	\$235.20/cwt -0.0%
Lean Hogs (CME)	\$94.78/cwt +0.5%

Source: Chicago Board of Trade.

Cal's Market Read

Overnight, corn added about 10 cents; beans added about 8 cents; and wheat slipped about 2 cents.

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

Here is our read on why corn and beans firmed while wheat eased overnight, and honestly the news does not point to one clean cause. With no USDA report on the calendar, our best assessment is weather doing the talking, since the Ohio Country Journal forecast shows heat and humidity building into the mid 90s across that state this week with little rain. The Tri-State Neighbor note on a possible record El Nino in 2027 may also have traders thinking ahead on growing season risk.

Stocks point higher into the open, S&P; futures up about 0.2 percent. A firmer tape eases the borrowing and input-cost mood your lender watches, though it does not move your cash bid by itself.

Cal

Wall Street, Friday's close

Dow Jones	52,637 +0.3%
S&P; 500	7,575 +0.4%
Nasdaq	26,282 +0.3%
Russell 2000	2,978 to 0.5%

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 2 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: Scout soybeans for aphids, the 250-per-plant treatment threshold drives the spray decision. Check corn ears for fill and tip-back.
- Reminder: Corn is filling grain (R3-R5 on seasonal normals) and beans are setting pods, the yield is being built now. Late-season disease and moisture stress matter most here.

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 10 cents, beans up about 8 cents going into the day. Wheat down about 2 cents. Watch the cash bid at your elevator.
- On the wire: MFU Coffee Shop Has Two Foods on New Fair Foods List (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. MFU Coffee Shop Has Two Foods on New Fair Foods List The Minnesota Farmers Union Coffee Shop earned two spots on the 2026 Minnesota State Fair's list of 36 new foods, and both lean hard on local farm ingredients. The Apple Donut Ham Grinder stacks deep-fried, cinnamon-sugared First Kiss apple rings from Pleasant Valley Orchard with uncured ham from Hidden Stream Farm, arugula, hot honey and herb-whipped ricotta on a hoagie, while the Banana Butterscotch Barnraiser brings a church-basement potluck vibe topped with Stony Creek Dairy whipped cream. MFU President Gary Wertish says the goal is showcasing Minnesota flavors through fellow union members, and the shop at 1635 Dan Patch Ave. runs 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. all 12 days, managed by the union's own Farmers Kitchen + Bar in Minneapolis. It is a nice reminder that farmer-owned businesses can turn Iowa's neighboring state fair, running Aug. 27 to Sept. 7, into a showcase for the folks who actually grow the food, a tradition MFU has kept since 1953. [Read the full article](#). Morning Ag Clips, Mon Jul 13, 2026 4:43 AM CT

2. Record El Nino possible in 2027 Climate scientists are warning that 2027 could bring a record setting El Nino, a Pacific Ocean warming pattern that shapes growing season weather across the Corn Belt. The forecast comes from data tracked by Berkeley Earth, an independent nonprofit that gathers and shares open climate and air quality records for anyone to check. Their latest numbers show that May temperatures already rank 2026 among the warmest years ever measured, adding fuel to the concern. For a farmer planning ahead, a strong El Nino can mean big shifts in rainfall and heat during planting and harvest, so this is worth watching closely. [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Mon Jul 13, 2026 1:00 AM CT

3. Washington Week Ahead: Graham's death weighs on Senate South Carolina Republican Lindsey Graham, a 23 year Senate veteran and staunch ethanol backer, died Saturday evening from a brief, sudden illness, drawing tributes from Trump, Senator Adam Schiff, and world leaders like Zelenskyy and Netanyahu. His passing, along with the hospitalization of Kentucky's Mitch McConnell, thins an already slim GOP Senate margin just as major farm policy hangs in the balance. This week corn, soybean, and biofuel groups are flying in to Washington to push a bill allowing year round national sales of E15, with Majority Leader John Thune working to get it to a floor vote and Trump wanting it tacked onto a military funding package. That same supplemental fight could deliver roughly 11 billion dollars in aid to farmers facing high costs, so with a five week recess starting August 8 and midterms on November 3, the coming days may decide whether relief arrives before next season. [Read the full article](#). Agri-Pulse, Sun Jul 12, 2026 5:34 PM CT

4. 'Jurassic Park' actor Sam Neill dies at 78 Sam Neill, the New Zealand raised actor born in Northern Ireland in 1947, has died at 78 with his family at his side, cancer free at the end despite years of treatment. Though he acted for more than five decades, from his 1977 breakout in "Sleeping Dogs" to villain turns in "Omen III" and later parts in "Peaky Blinders," "The Tudors," and even the "Thor" movies, the world knew him best as Dr. Alan Grant in Steven Spielberg's 1993 "Jurassic Park," a role he reprised across three films and once called "an old comfortable pair of boots." He was honored as an Officer of the Order of the British Empire in 1991, a moment he shared with his dying father, and was knighted in the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2022. In 2023 he revealed he was battling stage 3 blood cancer, speaking openly about the "dark moments" of chemotherapy while saying they left him grateful for every day and for his friends. [Read the full article](#). ABC News, Mon Jul 13, 2026 3:06 AM CT

5. Indiana Master Farmer Awards Celebrate Agricultural Excellence and Conservation Leaders Indiana's top farming honor was handed out last week in West Lafayette, presented by Indiana Prairie Farmer and Purdue

University Extension. Knox County's Susan Brocksmyth, president of the Indiana Corn Marketing Council and a dean at Vincennes University, joined a family legacy that includes her grandfather in 1968, her father-in-law in 1996, and her husband in 2004, all while running a no-till, cover-crop operation. Soil stewardship was the banquet's big theme, with Hamilton County's Rodney and Natasha Rulon sharing conservation lessons and Honorary Master Farmer Barry Fisher of Putnam County, a 39-year USDA veteran, arguing that conserving resources is simply smart business and the true path to sustainability. Also honored were Posey County dairy farmers Dale and Lisa Koester and Lawrence County cattle producers Stan and Ann Armstrong, rounding out a class that ties farm success directly to protecting the land for future generations. [Read the full article](#). Hoosier Ag Today, Sun Jul 12, 2026 7:20 PM CT

6. Purdue Extension Returns to the 2026 Indiana State Fair with Interactive Agriculture, 4-H and Family Fun

Purdue Extension is heading back to the Indiana State Fair, which runs 17 days from August 7 through August 23 under the theme "Always a Hit" and stays closed on Mondays. Angie Abbott, director of Purdue Extension, says the north side Extension Building will host rotating exhibits on farm succession planning, forestry, animal sciences, gardening tips from Master Gardener volunteers, and 4-H career readiness. Livestock draws big crowds, so Animal Town will show pigs, cattle, sheep, goats, horses, llamas, rabbits and poultry, with Purdue Animal Sciences ambassadors on hand daily and vet students caring for the 4-H animals. There is free Conagra popcorn each afternoon from 1 to 5 p.m., topped with student made flavors like Hammer Down Dill and All-American Caramel Apple, plus a trip back to the 1800s at Pioneer Village with antique tractors and fiddler and liar's contests. [Read the full article](#). Hoosier Ag Today, Sun Jul 12, 2026 7:10 PM CT

7. Ohio Ag Weather and Forecast, July 13, 2026 Heat and humidity take over Ohio this week, with highs climbing from the upper 80s to mid 90s Monday through Friday and heat indices pushing into the low triple digits, though timely breezes should take some edge off. The state stays rain free until at least Saturday midday, when pop up heat thunderstorms fire late Saturday and again Sunday, but coverage runs only about 60%, so some fields could miss out. The bigger event arrives Monday the 20th with strong, possibly severe storms lingering into early Tuesday, dropping a combined .25 to 1.5 inches on 80% coverage. Another round of strong to severe weather is flagged for the night of Saturday the 25th into Sunday the 26th, with more heat driven storm chances the week of the 27th and, importantly, no long term dry concerns on the horizon. [Read the full article](#). Ohio Country Journal, Sun Jul 12, 2026 6:10 PM CT

8. Ohio Ag Net Podcast, Ep. 452, Data Center Impact Analysis Underway Ohio lawmakers, before breaking for the summer, launched a study to measure how data centers are affecting rural communities, and Evan Callicoat, director of state policy with Ohio Farm Bureau, breaks down what that could mean on the latest Ohio Ag Net Podcast powered by Ohio Corn and Wheat. Callicoat also digs into recent legislative action on property taxes and E15, two issues that hit close to home for anyone farming and watching their bottom line. In the second half, Dusty Sonnenberg takes the Field Leader Roadshow to Van Wert County to sit down with Mike and Kendra of Heffelfinger Farms, a family operation with roots stretching all the way back to 1852. They talk about how agriculture in Van Wert County has changed over the generations and what they see coming down the road for the future of their farm. [Read the full article](#). Ohio Country Journal, Sun Jul 12, 2026 2:45 PM CT

9. Season on the horizon in southern Illinois Southern Illinois is gearing up for peach season, with the state churning out more than 7,000 tons in a typical year across its central and southern farms. Peak picking usually lands between mid and late summer, so the sweetest fruit is right around the corner. It is a reminder that summer heat pays off in more than just row crops, as orchards across the region ready their harvest. For anyone who enjoys a fresh peach, now is the time to watch for that first ripe batch coming off Illinois trees. [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Sun Jul 12, 2026 12:00 PM CT

10. ISU Fruit and Vegetable Field Day is July 29 Iowa State University Extension is inviting growers to its 2026 Fruit and Vegetable Field Day on Wednesday, July 29, from 2 to 5 p.m. at the ISU Horticulture Research Station in Ames. Visitors can walk through live research on peppers, tomatoes, apples, organic pest management, and even drones used in horticulture crops, with a free meal served afterward. Department chair Ajay Nair says the afternoon is built for growers, extension agents, and consumers to swap ideas on pests, soil fertility, yield, and quality, all backed by the USDA and partners like Practical Farmers of Iowa. Registration costs nothing but organizers want you

signed up online before July 24 for an accurate food count, and you can reach Chloe Henscheid at 515 232 4786 with questions. [Read the full article](#). Morning Ag Clips, Mon Jul 13, 2026 4:54 AM 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

Before you reach into any jammed combine, baler, or chopper, shut the engine off and take the key. Idling power can re-engage in a heartbeat, header and pickup injuries happen when someone clears a plug with the machine still live. Engine off, key in your pocket, then clear it. Source: National Ag Safety Database; ROPS and PTO safety, OSHA.

Cal

Local Obituaries

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

The Coffee Shop

Today in Farm History, Eli Whitney interchangeable parts 1798

In 1798, Eli Whitney won a U.S. government contract for 10,000 muskets built with interchangeable parts. The principle, identical parts made by machine, assembled by less-skilled labor, became the foundation of the McCormick reaper factory (1847), the Deere plow works (1855), and every farm-equipment factory since. Source: Smithsonian National Museum of American History; U.S. Patent Office.

Cal's Quiz

When the AAA was passed in 1933, what was Iowa's average corn price per bushel?

- (a) \$0.10
- (b) \$0.31
- (c) \$1.20
- (d) \$2.50

Answer at the bottom of the Brief.

Cal's Joke of the Day

A farmer's wife came with him to mend fence. He said, "You don't have to." She said, "I know. But I want to see how many times you say the word 'almost' before lunch."

The MI Farm AI Desk

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

Quiz Answer

(b) \$0.31 per bushel. After the AAA programs lifted prices, by 1937 the Iowa average was \$0.81 to 161% higher in five years. Source: USDA NASS Iowa cash-price historical series.

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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