

The MI Farm Brief #134

Monday July 13, 2026, Cal "Corn-Bread" Halvorsen

MI Farm AI

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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	69F	0%	SSW 5 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)	\$11.9650/bu +0.0575
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 overnight while wheat eased back a couple cents. Honestly the facts on our desk do not point to one clean cause, since no USDA report is on the calendar and the day's headlines lean toward fair food and field days. The two likeliest drivers we can name are the hot, humid stretch in the Ohio forecast from Ohio Country Journal pushing highs into the 90s, and longer term weather worry from the possible record El Nino in 2027 flagged by Tri-State Neighbor. Wheat simply did not share that weather bid.

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: Watch for the corn VT/R1 tassel-silk window for fungicide, and scout soybeans entering R1-R3 for white mold risk in thick, wet canopies.

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 made the 2026 Minnesota State Fair New Fair Food list with two crowd pleasers, the Apple Donut Ham Grinder and the Banana Butterscotch Barnraiser, both among the 36 items chosen this year. The grinder stacks battered and deep fried First Kiss apple rings from Pleasant Valley Orchard with uncured ham from Hidden Stream Farm, arugula, hot honey and herb whipped ricotta on a toasted hoagie, while the Barnraiser is crowned with whipped cream from Stony Creek Dairy. MFU President Gary Wertish says the goal is to showcase Minnesota flavors and support Farmers Union members, and the shop, run by the MFU owned Farmers Kitchen and Bar, has served fairgoers since 1953 and open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. all 12 days. The fair runs Aug. 27 to Sept. 7 in St. Paul, so if you are heading east this summer, the Snelling Entrance stop at 1635 Dan Patch Ave. is worth a taste. [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 flagging the chance of a record setting El Nino arriving in 2027, a shift that could swing weather patterns across the Corn Belt. Berkeley Earth, an independent non-profit that publishes open climate and air quality data, is among the groups tracking the warming trend and informing the global conversation. Early readings show May temperatures already put 2026 on pace to rank among the warmest years ever measured. For anyone planning planting, irrigation, or grain marketing, a strong El Nino could reshape rainfall and yields, so it is worth watching how forecasters refine these odds. [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Mon Jul 13, 2026 1:00 AM CT

3. 'Jurassic Park' actor Sam Neill dies at 78 Beloved screen actor Sam Neill has died at 78, his family confirmed in a Monday statement saying he was surrounded by loved ones, passed with dignity, and remained cancer free at the end. Born Nigel John Dermot Neill in Northern Ireland in 1947, he moved to New Zealand at age 7, discovered acting at the University of Canterbury, and broke through with the 1977 thriller "Sleeping Dogs" before his career defining turn as paleontologist Dr. Alan Grant in Steven Spielberg's 1993 hit "Jurassic Park," a role he later called as comfortable as an old pair of boots and reprised across two more films. Beyond the dinosaurs he built a remarkable range, playing Damien Thorn in "Omen III," the wizard in "Merlin," Cardinal Wolsey in "The Tudors," and roles in "Event Horizon," the "Thor" movies, and "Peaky Blinders," earning an OBE in 1991 that he proudly shared with his dying father and a knighthood in 2022. His death matters because it closes the book on a humble, widely admired talent who publicly battled stage 3 blood cancer starting in 2023, spoke openly about the dark moments and gratitude it brought him, and left behind a memoir titled "Did I Ever Tell You This?" [Read the full article](#). ABC News, Mon Jul 13, 2026 3:06 AM CT

4. ISU Fruit and Vegetable Field Day is July 29 Iowa State University Extension is opening its 2026 Fruit and Vegetable Field Day to growers on Wednesday, July 29, from 2 to 5 p.m. at the ISU Horticulture Research Station in Ames, and it costs nothing to attend. Visitors can walk through live research on peppers, tomatoes, apples, organic pest control, and even drones flying over horticultural crops, with a free meal served afterward. Department chair Ajay Nair says the afternoon is built for trading real world advice on pests, soil fertility, yield, and quality among faculty, growers, and consumers alike. Backed by the USDA and partners like Practical Farmers of Iowa, the event asks folks to register online before July 24 for an accurate food count, and questions go to Chloe Henscheid at 515, 232, 4786. [Read the full article](#). Morning Ag Clips, Mon Jul 13, 2026 4:54 AM CT

5. Indiana Master Farmer Awards Celebrate Agricultural Excellence and Conservation Leaders Indiana honored its newest Master Farmers last week in West Lafayette, a prestigious award 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, called it humbling to join a family legacy that includes her grandfather in 1968, her father-in-law in 1996, and her husband in 2004. Conservation was the big theme, with no-till and cover crop leaders like Hamilton County's Rodney and Natasha Rulon warning that soil and farmland are not unlimited resources we can take for granted. The banquet also honored Posey County dairy farmers Dale and Lisa Koester, Lawrence County cattle producers Stan and Ann Armstrong, and Honorary Master Farmer Barry Fisher, who spent nearly 40 years at USDA promoting soil health and insists that conservation is the true path to both economic and environmental sustainability. [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 Aug. 7 through Aug. 23 this year under the theme "Always a Hit" and is closed on Mondays. Director Angie Abbott says the Purdue Extension Building on the north side of the grounds will offer rotating exhibits on farming, natural resources, healthy living, plus expert talks on forestry, animal sciences and farm succession planning. Livestock stays a top draw through Animal Town, where Purdue Animal Sciences ambassadors answer questions daily and veterinary students care for the 4-H animals, while Master Gardener volunteers hand out plant advice. There is even free Conagra popcorn from 1 to 5 p.m. each afternoon, topped with student-made Hammer Down Dill or All-American Caramel Apple flavors, plus a trip back to the 1800s at Pioneer Village with antique tractors and fiddler 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 A hot, humid stretch is settling over Ohio, with highs climbing into the upper 80s to mid 90s from Tuesday through Friday and heat indices touching the lower triple digits, though timely breezes should take a little of the edge off. Fields stay rain free until at least Saturday midday, when heat driven pop up thunderstorms fire up Saturday and Sunday evenings, but coverage runs only around 60%, so some spots may miss out. The bigger soaker arrives Monday the 20th into early Tuesday, dropping .25 to 1.5 inches across roughly 80% coverage with a chance of embedded severe storms. Looking further out, another round of strong to severe weather threatens the night of the 25th into the 26th and more heat based storms return the week of the 27th, and forecasters see no major long term dry concerns. [Read the full article](#). Ohio Country Journal, Sun Jul 12, 2026 6:10 PM CT

8. Washington Week Ahead: Graham's death weighs on Senate Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, a 23 year Senate veteran and strong ethanol backer who once told an Iowa Ag Summit crowd that every gallon of ethanol made here is one less bought from people who hate your guts, died Saturday evening from a brief and sudden illness, drawing tributes from Trump, Senator Adam Schiff, and world leaders like Zelenskyy and Netanyahu. His passing, paired with the hospitalization of Kentucky's Mitch McConnell, thins an already narrow GOP Senate margin just as major farm decisions come due. This week corn, soybean, and renewable fuel groups are flying in to Washington to push for year round national sales of E15, with Majority Leader Thune working to get a vote and Trump urging that E15 be folded into a military supplemental funding bill. That same supplemental could carry roughly \$11 billion in extra aid for farmers squeezed by high production costs, and backers are racing to move it before the Senate breaks for a five week recess on August 8. [Read the full article](#). Agri-Pulse, Sun Jul 12, 2026 5:34 PM CT

9. Ohio Ag Net Podcast, Ep. 452, Data Center Impact Analysis Underway Ohio lawmakers, before breaking for summer, set up a study to measure how sprawling data centers affect rural communities, and Evan Callicot of Ohio Farm Bureau breaks down what that means alongside fresh action on property taxes and E15 fuel. His update on Episode 452 of the Ohio Ag Net Podcast, powered by Ohio Corn and Wheat, gives farmers a read on policy fights that could hit land values and market access. The show then rides along with Dusty Sonnenberg on the Field Leader Roadshow to Van Wert County, where Mike and Kendra Heffelfinger open up their family operation that traces all the way back to 1852. They talk about how farming in the county has shifted over the generations and what they see coming next for keeping a nearly 175 year old operation strong. [Read the full article](#). Ohio Country Journal, Sun Jul 12, 2026 2:45 PM CT

10. Season on the horizon in southern Illinois Peach season is arriving across central and southern Illinois, where growers turn out more than 7,000 tons of the fruit in a typical year. The sweetest window on Illinois farms usually falls between mid and late summer, so the best picking is just ahead. For a fruit that thrives in the state's warmer southern ground, timing the harvest is everything when it comes to flavor and quality. If you enjoy fresh produce straight off the farm, this story is a tasty reminder that summer's signature crop is ready to hit roadside stands and markets. [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Sun Jul 12, 2026 12:00 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

Farmers have one of the highest skin cancer rates of any job from years of sun. Wear a wide-brim hat, long sleeves when you can, and sunscreen on the neck, ears, and forearms. A yearly skin check catches the early ones. Source: National Ag Safety Database; Marshfield Clinic agricultural medicine.

Cal

Local Obituaries

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

The Coffee Shop

Today in Farm History, First grain elevator 1842 / 1856

Joseph Dart's steam-powered grain elevator opened in Buffalo in 1842, and by 1856 elevators with mechanical scales had spread to Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Louis. The elevator turned grain from a sacked, hand-shoveled commodity into a flowing river that filled rail cars at dollars per minute. Source: Smithsonian National Museum of American History; Chicago Historical Society.

Cal's Quiz

John Froelich's 1892 gasoline tractor became the Waterloo Boy. Which company bought Waterloo Boy in 1918?

- (a) Massey Ferguson
- (b) John Deere
- (c) International Harvester
- (d) Caterpillar

Answer at the bottom of the Brief.

Cal's Joke of the Day

The neighbor finished harvest two days before the farmer. The farmer said, "He won." His wife said, "Won what?" He said, "The right to nap two days earlier. That's a real prize."

The MI Farm AI Desk

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

Quiz Answer

(b) John Deere. Deere acquired the Waterloo Boy Tractor Company in 1918, which is how the Deere green-and-yellow brand became synonymous with the row-crop tractor. The original Froelich tractor is in the Smithsonian. Source: Smithsonian National Museum of American History.

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