

The MI Farm Brief #136

Wednesday July 15, 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 15, 2026. Filed by The MI Farm AI Desk.

Weather, Owatonna, MN

Today: High **90F**. Sunny.

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

What this means for today: Sunny, with a high near 90. Heat index values as high as 96. West wind 0 to 5 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	68F	0%	SW 5 mph	Mostly Clear
5 AM	68F	0%	0 mph	Mostly Clear
6 AM	67F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
7 AM	69F	0%	WSW 5 mph	Sunny
8 AM	72F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
9 AM	76F	0%	WNW 5 mph	Sunny
10 AM	82F	0%	WNW 5 mph	Sunny
11 AM	84F	0%	NW 5 mph	Sunny
12 PM	85F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
1 PM	88F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
2 PM	89F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
3 PM	89F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
4 PM	90F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
5 PM	90F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
6 PM	90F	0%	0 mph	Mostly Clear
7 PM	89F	0%	0 mph	Partly Cloudy
8 PM	85F	0%	0 mph	Mostly Clear
9 PM	80F	0%	0 mph	Mostly Clear
10 PM	77F	0%	0 mph	Mostly Clear
11 PM	76F	0%	0 mph	Mostly Clear
12 AM	75F	0%	0 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)	\$4.3375/bu -0.0400
Corn (Dec 2026)	\$4.6625/bu +0.0575
Soy (Jul 2026)	\$12.0725/bu +0.0525
Soy (Nov 2026)	\$11.9750/bu +0.0650
Wheat (Jul 2026)	\$6.3125/bu +0.0425
Live Cattle (CME)	\$231.43/cwt -1.4%
Lean Hogs (CME)	\$95.10/cwt +0.3%

Source: Chicago Board of Trade.

Cal's Market Read

Overnight, corn slipped about 4 cents; beans added about 5 cents; and wheat added about 4 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. Cutting the other way, demand still reads firm per Morning Ag Clips: Understanding On-Farm Wind Energy Options. 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, yesterday's close

Dow Jones	52,499 to 0.3%
S&P; 500	7,515 to 0.8%
Nasdaq	25,873 to 1.6%
Russell 2000	2,953 to 0.8%

Decision Delivered

Your decisions for today and the week ahead:

- Paperwork: The fall ARC and PLC and Dairy Margin Coverage election window opens in late summer. That is in 17 days, so prep now, pull last year's yields and base acres so you can run the payment scenarios before you elect.
- Reminder, still on your list: Hot, dry stretches raise spider-mite pressure on field edges. Scout the south and west borders of soybeans and corn.
- Reminder for this week: 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 down about 4 cents, beans up about 5 cents going into the day. Wheat up about 4 cents. Watch the cash bid at your elevator.
- On the wire: Fake AI video invents University of Minnesota cover crop research (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. Fake AI video invents University of Minnesota cover crop research A slick 49 minute YouTube video from a page called Soil and Centuries claims the University of Minnesota ran a six year study testing 41 different cover crop mixes, but Extension crops educator Liz Stahl says the whole thing is fabricated AI garbage with no real research behind it. Stahl learned of it this spring from a conservation district worker, checked with the faculty member it named, and confirmed he had nothing to do with it and had no idea who made the video. Despite reports and comments from her and colleagues calling it fake, the video has tripled in viewership, the promised data links never arrive, and the same page hosts 67 other clearly AI generated videos. Her warning matters for anyone weighing soil health decisions, watch for perfect narrators, dead citations, and stock photos, and instead trust your local land grant Extension through real field days, webinars, and verified channels. [Read the full article](#). AgWeek, Tue Jul 14, 2026 5:30 PM CT

2. Earliest Senate farm bill markup would be next week, Boozman says The Senate Agriculture Committee could begin work on the new five year farm bill as soon as next week, but Chairman John Boozman of Arkansas says it hinges on Senator Mitch McConnell returning from the hospital after a mid June fall, since the panel splits just 12 Republicans to 11 Democrats and cannot spare a single absence. Boozman is also haggling with Minnesota Democrat Amy Klobuchar over whether to delay a new rule from last year's One Big Beautiful Bill Act that, for the first time ever, forces states to cover 5% to 15% of food stamp benefit costs based on their error rates, plus a 50% jump in administrative costs hitting this October 1. He admits a deal may not even be possible yet, noting the national SNAP error rate only dipped slightly from 10.9% to 10.6% between 2024 and 2025. This matters because the farm bill sets the rules and safety nets that shape your crop and commodity programs, and every week of delay pushes back the certainty you need for planning. [Read the full article](#). Agri-Pulse, Tue Jul 14, 2026 4:09 PM CT

3. Lean Hogs Lean hog futures moved in mixed directions, with nearby contracts climbing 50 cents to \$1.70 while the deferred months slipped 7 to 30 cents, according to Austin Schroeder writing for Barchart. Pork export sales for the week ending July 2 dropped sharply to 17,700 tonnes, well below the recent four week average of 25,900 tonnes. That softer export demand helps explain the pressure weighing on the later delivery contracts. For hog and grain producers alike, these numbers matter because weaker pork sales abroad can ripple back into feed demand and market prices here at home. [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Tue Jul 14, 2026 4:27 PM CT

4. The unconventional career of attorney general nominee Todd Blanche We need 500 donors to help us close it. I very much believe that the jury should have found President Trump not guilty. Today, a grand jury sitting in the Eastern District of North Carolina returned an indictment against James Comey on two counts. Jonah Anderson is an Associate Producer at the PBS NewsHour. [Read the full article](#). PBS NewsHour, Tue Jul 14, 2026 5:25 PM CT

5. Kagan, Barrett push Supreme Court budget with boosted security in rare testimony Justices Elena Kagan and Amy Coney Barrett made a rare joint appearance before Congress on Tuesday, asking lawmakers to boost the Supreme Court's budget to cover rising security costs. The two women, appointed by presidents from opposing parties, warned that threats aimed at justices and their families keep climbing. They argued the extra funding is needed to keep the court and its members safe as the danger grows. It matters because it shows how personal safety concerns are now driving spending decisions at the nation's highest court, a sign of just how heated the climate around it has become. [Read the full article](#). The Hill, Tue Jul 14, 2026 5:21 PM CT

6. Understanding On-Farm Wind Energy Options Farr's research at NLR's National Wind Technology Center focuses on developing resources to help local governments, farmers, small rural businesses, utilities, and others to

make informed decisions about distributed energy resources. This webinar should provide participants with a solid foundation on which to begin exploring this topic." Participants are encouraged to ask questions of the presenters. JOHNSTON, Iowa Iowa Corn is proud to sponsor the Pay Dirt Seminars during the 2022 Farm Progress Show in Boone, Iowa, on Aug. On Thursday, tune in for the bi-weekly dairy market news and analysis. [Read the full article.](#) Morning Ag Clips, Wed Jul 15, 2026 4:58 AM CT

7. Wisconsin Modifies Import Requirements from States with Active NWS NWS is a parasitic fly whose larvae feed on living tissue, and early detection is critical to prevent severe, sometimes fatal, infections. Under current regulations, with very few exceptions, a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) must accompany animals moving into the State of Wisconsin. Animals originating from an infested zone may not enter Wisconsin unless the importer receives a DATCP approved permit at least 48 hours prior to movement, and the CVI includes statements confirming the animals' origin, a visual inspection within five days of movement showing no evidence of NWS, and details of any treatment administered. To report animals with unexplained wounds or symptoms consistent with NWS, veterinarians should contact DATCP at (608) 2244872 (business hours) or (800) 9430003 (after hours and weekends). [Read the full article.](#) Morning Ag Clips, Wed Jul 15, 2026 4:41 AM CT

8. Dairy celebrates dairy The Peterson family of Creamery Creek Farms near Bangor, Wisconsin welcomed neighbors to the La Crosse County Dairy Breakfast, an event hosted with help from the St. Joseph's Ridge Lions Club and featuring a petting zoo, cheese samples, and up close looks at cows. Louisa Peterson said the weather keeps them on their toes but their main goal stays growing high quality feed for the herd, which spans about 550 cows in a double-10 parlor plus another 1,000 milked at a robotic dairy a mile away. Local youth like Grace Giraud and Zoe Mlsna greeted visitors while retired Agri-View salesman Daryl Wermedal chatted up his podcast called Farm Tales and Cow Pies. It is a warm reminder that dairy country still gathers to celebrate the families and animals behind the milk, and the story even teases a puzzle about crop damage far stranger than the usual deer. [Read the full article.](#) Tri-State Neighbor, Wed Jul 15, 2026 1:00 AM CT

9. Inside the Farm Bill: Indiana Farm Bureau Talks Prop 12, Broadband, and Bipartisanship Congress is still hammering out a slimmed down Farm Bill, since roughly 80 percent of a normal bill already passed inside the One Big Beautiful Bill, leaving this version to cover the remaining 20 percent of programs farmers count on. Indiana Farm Bureau's Brantley Seifers says the leftover pieces still matter a lot, including research money for land grant schools like Purdue, rural broadband dollars, early childcare funds, and a fix to California's Proposition 12. That Prop 12 fix, which pork producers and veterinarians argue actually makes conditions less safe for sows, made it into the House version but got left out of Senate Ag Chair John Boozman's draft because he says he lacks the 60 votes to pass it. With California importing over 98 percent of its pork and pushing compliance costs onto Midwest hog farmers, Seifers calls fixing Prop 12 the top priority and hopes a House and Senate conference can add it back, so give the Indiana Ag Policy Podcast a listen for more on that plus USMCA and year round E15. [Read the full article.](#) Hoosier Ag Today, Tue Jul 14, 2026 8:20 PM CT

10. More Than Just Trees: Why Your Woodland Property Needs a Professional Forester Indiana consulting forester Perry Seitzinger says that woodland is far from idle ground, noting the state's hardwood industry brings in \$10 billion a year, more than row crops and livestock combined. The trouble, he warns, is that most landowners take a hands off approach and cannot name the species, age, or value of the trees they own, so they often wait until a timber buyer shows up before thinking about a plan. Unlike corn or beans, timber is a 100 year crop with no annual paycheck and no chance for a do over, meaning a bad harvest or an emerald ash borer outbreak can cost your children and grandchildren for decades. The payoff for treating your back 40 like a real crop is real money, and hiring a consulting forester, who represents you and never buys your timber, can lower your taxes, draw competing bids, and turn a well managed woodlot into a financial safety net when grain margins get tight. [Read the full article.](#) Hoosier Ag Today, Tue Jul 14, 2026 8:15 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

Wear a helmet on the ATV and side-by-side, and do not carry a passenger on a single-rider machine. ATV rollovers and ejections are a leading cause of farm head injuries. Match the machine size to the rider, and slow down on hills and turns. Source: Consumer Product Safety Commission; National Ag Safety Database.

Cal

Local Obituaries

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

The Coffee Shop

Today in Farm History, University of Minnesota chartered 1851

On February 25, 1851, the territorial legislature chartered the University of Minnesota. It was designated the state's land-grant institution under the Morrill Act in 1868 and built one of the nation's first farm campuses at St. Paul. Source: University of Minnesota archives; Minnesota Historical Society.

Cal's Quiz

Iowa's average corn yield in 1933 was about ____ bushels per acre. What's the closest number?

- (a) 18
- (b) 36
- (c) 72
- (d) 144

Answer at the bottom of the Brief.

Cal's Joke of the Day

Why does the farmer love his Versatile? Because she pulls everything he hooks to her without complaining, and nothing else on the farm has done that since 1989.

The MI Farm AI Desk

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

Quiz Answer

(b) 36 bushels per acre. The 2024 Iowa average was 205 to 5.7 times more on the same dirt. Hybrid corn (rolled out 1933 through 1955) is the single biggest reason. Source: USDA NASS Iowa corn yield 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.

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.