

The MI Farm Brief #144

Friday July 24, 2026, Cal "Corn-Bread" Halvorsen

MI Farm AI

Prepared 2026-07-24 5:26 AM Central Time

Generated by Mark's Claude AI

For internal review

The MI Farm AI Brief #144

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

Friday, July 24, 2026. Filed by The MI Farm AI Desk.

Weather, Steele County, MN

Today: High **79F**. Mostly Sunny.

Tonight: Low **65F**. Isolated Rain Showers.

What this means for today: Mostly sunny, with a high near 79. South wind 10 to 15 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	63F	16%	S 5 mph	Isolated Rain Showers
5 AM	62F	11%	S 5 mph	Mostly Cloudy
6 AM	62F	11%	S 10 mph	Mostly Cloudy
7 AM	63F	8%	S 10 mph	Partly Sunny
8 AM	65F	4%	S 10 mph	Partly Sunny
9 AM	68F	1%	S 10 mph	Partly Sunny
10 AM	70F	1%	S 10 mph	Mostly Sunny
11 AM	72F	1%	S 10 mph	Mostly Sunny
12 PM	75F	1%	S 10 mph	Mostly Sunny
1 PM	76F	1%	S 15 mph	Mostly Sunny
2 PM	77F	1%	S 15 mph	Mostly Sunny
3 PM	77F	1%	S 15 mph	Mostly Sunny
4 PM	78F	1%	S 15 mph	Mostly Sunny
5 PM	78F	1%	S 15 mph	Mostly Sunny
6 PM	78F	1%	S 15 mph	Partly Cloudy
7 PM	76F	0%	S 15 mph	Partly Cloudy
8 PM	75F	0%	S 15 mph	Partly Cloudy
9 PM	72F	0%	S 15 mph	Mostly Cloudy
10 PM	70F	0%	S 15 mph	Mostly Cloudy
11 PM	69F	0%	S 10 mph	Mostly Cloudy
12 AM	68F	1%	S 10 mph	Mostly Cloudy

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

Spray Window

Spray window is MARGINAL today. Wind at your nearest weather station is about 6 mph right now, gusting 6 (the hour-by-hour table above is the NWS forecast, which can read lower). If you go, check your product label first, keep the boom low and the speed down, and watch your gusts and any ground-level inversion.

Grain and Livestock, corn, soybeans, wheat, cattle

Futures board (front month): corn Dec 2026 \$4.8950/bu (+0.2550, +5.50%); soybeans Nov 2026 \$12.4975/bu (+0.1225, +0.99%). Chicago board, as of 2026 to 07 to 24.

Corn (Dec 2026)	\$4.8950/bu +0.0200
Soy (Nov 2026)	\$12.4975/bu +0.0600
Live Cattle (CME)	\$225.40/cwt +1.0%
Lean Hogs (CME)	\$102.15/cwt +0.7%

Source: Chicago Board of Trade.

Cal's Market Read

Overnight, corn added about 2 cents; and beans added about 6 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 Hoosier Ag Today: House Passes \$12 Billion Farm Aid Package, But Senate Roadblocks Lie Ahead. Honest truth, the tape does not hand us one clean reason today, so take this as our best read, not gospel.

Stocks point higher into the open, S&P; futures up about 0.4 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, yesterday's close

Dow Jones	51,712 to 1.0%
S&P; 500	7,408 to 1.2%
Nasdaq	25,138 to 2.2%
Russell 2000	2,940 to 0.7%

Decision Delivered

Your decisions for today and the week ahead:

- Reminder, still on your list: 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 2 cents, beans up about 6 cents going into the day. Watch the cash bid at your elevator.
- On the wire: Bushmills Ethanol fined for air permit violations (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. Bushmills Ethanol fined for air permit violations After reviewing air pollution tests that the company conducted on in August 2025, MPCA staff determined the facility emitted levels of particulate matter less than ten microns, particulate matter less than 2.5 microns, and volatile organic compounds that exceeded the facility's air permit. Soybean growers relieved over end to Minnesota's 'Clean Cars Rule' 1h ago Deere 'right to repair' settlement is a start but not enough, Flanagan and legislative candidates say 12h ago Ag economist reminds that farms can't live on optimism alone 12h ago In addition to paying the fine, Bushmills Ethanol agreed to test again for excess PM10, PM2.5, and VOC emissions. Since 2019, the MPCA has issued 8,419 enforcement actions amounting to more than \$24 million in penalties. When calculating penalties, the MPCA considers a number of factors, including the seriousness of the violation, the potential for harm to human health or the environment, history of noncompliance, and the economic benefit the company gained by failing to comply with environmental laws. [Read the full article](#). AgWeek, Thu Jul 23, 2026 4:54 PM CT

2. Soybean growers relieved over end to Minnesota's 'Clean Cars Rule' On June 30, the state of Minnesota withdrew the entire Clean Cars Rule. "So we've been fighting emissions for decades. Another aspect that growers are fighting back against is the misconception that producing more biofuels equates to more land entering production. "We just want to make sure it benefits Minnesota as a whole, not to blindly follow another state's standard." The process began in May when Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison submitted a letter to initiate the dismissal of the case. [Read the full article](#). AgWeek, Thu Jul 23, 2026 4:52 PM CT

3. House Passes \$12 Billion Farm Aid Package, But Senate Roadblocks Lie Ahead House of Representatives to narrowly approve a \$95 billion budget reconciliation package containing \$12 billion in emergency agricultural assistance. Specialty Crop Recovery: Beyond the grain belt, the funding addresses acute natural disasters. Despite strong backing from the American Farm Bureau Federation and House Agriculture Committee leaders, the reconciliation package faces severe headwinds in the upper chamber. We have to work on year-round E15, and we have to work on helping farmers deal with catastrophic natural disasters like the wildfires in California, the freeze in Florida," Newton said. [Read the full article](#). Hoosier Ag Today, Thu Jul 23, 2026 8:15 PM CT

4. Planting green may call for herbicide adjustment The University of Delaware team applies herbicides over roll-crimped cover crops at their study site. Dense roll-crimped cover crops block herbicides from reaching the soil. Cover crops and soil residual herbicides can make a powerful weed control duo, but only if those herbicides actually reach the soil. Soils that are exposed to prolonged drought often develop desiccation cracks, which impact soil properties and exacerbate moisture loss through... [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Fri Jul 24, 2026 1:00 AM CT

5. Forage fundamentals explained In addition, forages also provide environmental and soil health benefits, including support for key principles of regenerative agriculture such as minimizing soil disturbance, keeping soil covered, maintaining a living root system at all times and increasing crop diversity. Soils that are exposed to prolonged drought often develop desiccation cracks, which impact soil properties and exacerbate moisture loss through... [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Fri Jul 24, 2026 1:00 AM CT

6. Opinion: Trump made the right call on fertilizer, now finish the job It was the right call, and farmers heading into fall application season should welcome it. Before the duties, in 2019 and 2020, Morocco supplied 72 percent of U.S. By September 2021, retail MAP hit \$800 per ton, a level not seen since 2009 as inventories of fertilizer hit record lows. senators warned Commerce in 2023 that the duties had "exposed farmers to the risk of inadequate supply into the future." [Read the full article](#). Agri-Pulse, Thu Jul 23, 2026 8:45 PM CT

7. News Wrap: Trump announces new tariffs on dozens of countries Notice: Transcripts are machine and human generated and lightly edited for accuracy. Instead, he was given two life terms, plus an additional 40 years, the longest sentence the judge on the case says he has ever handed down. The move had drawn criticism from press freedom advocates, who accused the administration of trying to uncover journalists' confidential sources. The S&P; 500 also ended sharply lower. [Read the full article](#). PBS NewsHour, Thu Jul 23, 2026 5:50 PM CT

8. Ohio State Master Gardener Volunteers Bring Expert Advice to Ohio State Fair Those everyday questions become an opportunity for The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES) to share one of its greatest strengths: turning university research into practical advice through Ohio State University Extension and its Master Gardener Volunteer program. "We just want to help them have a successful experience in the landscape and garden." Located in the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Natural Resources Park, the Ask-a-Master Gardener Volunteer booth sits beside the Geo Walk garden maintained by Franklin County Master Gardener Volunteers. Throughout the past two years, nurseries in Virginia and surrounding states have observed an uptick in wilt and severe dieback on redbud, maple, and dogwood Virginia's state tree. Industry campaigns and herbicide [...] [Read the full article](#). Morning Ag Clips, Fri Jul 24, 2026 2:35 AM CT

9. Haze, Hogs, and Harvest: An East Central Indiana Crop Progress Update Farmer Matthew Chapman provides Hoosier Ag Today with a Crop Update from Henry County in East Central Indiana. They look very similar in the mornings. We raise the wheat so we have a nice, dry place to apply our fertilizer from our hog barns here in the summer when the conditions are right." In these difficult economic times for grain producers, Chapman says having those hog barns has been a blessing. Like most years, the fields that are well-drained and have lot of field tile will shine while others might be zeroes. [Read the full article](#). Hoosier Ag Today, Thu Jul 23, 2026 8:20 PM CT

10. Sugarbeet and Dry Bean Harvest Equipment Clinic Brand-specific breakout sessions will allow attendees to get the latest updates and focused discussion on the equipment they choose. Valerio Hoyos-Villegas, Assistant Professor; Dr. Michigan State University Extension will host the Vegetable and Field Crop Production Update at the Saginaw Valley Research and Education Center, 3775 S Reese Rd, Frankenmuth, MI 48734, on Tuesday, Feb. The event kicks off at 9 a.m. [Read the full article](#). Morning Ag Clips, Fri Jul 24, 2026 2:57 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

Out-of-condition grain forms crusts and bridges that collapse without warning. Never walk on top of stored grain to break a crust, you can drop through into a void. Break crusts from outside the bin with a pole, and run aeration to keep grain in condition. Source: Purdue Agricultural Safety and Health; OSHA grain handling standard.

Cal

Local Obituaries

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

The Coffee Shop

Today in Farm History, Iowa Corn Yield Test 1907

In 1907, Iowa State University began the Iowa Corn Yield Test, the longest-running public hybrid corn comparison in America. By 1933 it had tested 47 hybrids; by 2024, over 25,000. Every modern seed-genetics decision in Iowa

traces back to this 1907 trial. Source: Iowa State University Extension archives.

Cal's Quiz

Wheat stem rust (1953 to 1955 outbreak) destroyed what share of the U.S. spring wheat crop?

- (a) 10%
- (b) 25%
- (c) 40%
- (d) 70%

Answer at the bottom of the Brief.

Cal's Joke of the Day

An IH 1066 sold at the farm auction for \$18,000. The farmer said, "That's three times what I paid for mine in 1976." His wife said, "Inflation." He said, "Affection. Inflation is what the banker calls affection."

The MI Farm AI Desk

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

Quiz Answer

(c) 40%. The outbreak triggered Norman Borlaug's rust-resistant wheat breeding program in Mexico, the work that eventually won him the 1970 Nobel Peace Prize. USDA's first U.S. bulletin on wheat rust came in 1894. Source: USDA Agricultural Research Service 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.