

The MI Farm Brief #145

Saturday July 25, 2026, Cal "Corn-Bread" Halvorsen

MI Farm AI

Prepared 2026-07-25 6:40 AM Central Time

Generated by Mark's Claude AI

For internal review

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

Saturday, July 25, 2026. Filed by The MI Farm AI Desk.

Weather, Steele County, MN

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

Tonight: Low **73F**. Partly Cloudy.

What this means for today: Partly sunny, with a high near 89. Heat index values as high as 99. Southwest wind 5 to 10 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	68F	0%	SSW 9 mph	Cloudy
5 AM	68F	0%	SSW 7 mph	Cloudy
6 AM	68F	1%	SSW 10 mph	Cloudy
7 AM	68F	1%	SSW 10 mph	Cloudy
8 AM	71F	2%	SSW 10 mph	Mostly Cloudy
9 AM	74F	2%	SSW 10 mph	Mostly Cloudy
10 AM	77F	1%	SW 10 mph	Partly Sunny
11 AM	80F	0%	SW 10 mph	Mostly Sunny
12 PM	82F	1%	SW 10 mph	Mostly Sunny
1 PM	84F	0%	WSW 10 mph	Mostly Sunny
2 PM	86F	0%	WSW 10 mph	Sunny
3 PM	88F	0%	WSW 10 mph	Sunny
4 PM	89F	0%	WSW 5 mph	Sunny
5 PM	89F	0%	WSW 5 mph	Sunny
6 PM	89F	0%	SSW 5 mph	Mostly Clear
7 PM	88F	0%	SSW 5 mph	Mostly Clear
8 PM	86F	0%	S 5 mph	Mostly Clear
9 PM	81F	0%	SSE 5 mph	Mostly Clear
10 PM	78F	0%	S 5 mph	Mostly Clear
11 PM	77F	0%	S 5 mph	Partly Cloudy
12 AM	76F	0%	S 5 mph	Partly 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 7 mph right now, gusting 7 (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

Friday's close. Markets closed for the weekend. These are the most recent settled prices; the boards reopen the next trading day.

Futures board (front month): corn Dec 2026 \$4.6425/bu (+0.0025, +0.05%); soybeans Nov 2026 \$12.4800/bu (+0.1050, +0.85%). Chicago board, as of 2026 to 07 to 24.

Corn (Dec 2026)	\$4.8750/bu 0.0000
Soy (Nov 2026)	\$12.5350/bu +0.0975
Live Cattle (CME)	\$227.07/cwt +0.7%
Lean Hogs (CME)	\$102.85/cwt +0.7%

Source: Chicago Board of Trade.

Cal's Market Read

At Friday's close, corn steady; and beans added about 10 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 AgWeek: Moisture-deficit concerns continue to add up across the upper Midwest. 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 0.1 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	51,947 +0.5%
S&P; 500	7,412 +0.0%
Nasdaq	24,976 to 0.6%
Russell 2000	2,930 to 0.3%

Decision Delivered

Your decisions for today and the week ahead:

- Reminder for this week: Hot, dry stretches raise spider-mite pressure on field edges. Scout the south and west borders of soybeans and corn.

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 steady, beans up about 10 cents going into the day. Watch the cash bid at your elevator.
- On the wire: AgweekTV Full Show: Oilseed boom, crops and heat, swine education, state fair ag ed (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. AgweekTV Full Show: Oilseed boom, crops and heat, swine education, state fair ag ed we'll see why canola and sunflower acres are up. Livestock producers need to keep animals cool in extreme heat and humidity. Stopping woody encroachment. A Minnesota farm celebrates 150 years. [Read the full article](#). AgWeek, Sat Jul 25, 2026 5:30 AM CT

2. Moisture-deficit concerns continue to add up across the upper Midwest That means drought concerns in the region will continue. It'll bring dangerous heat and humidity, but outside of isolated storms, conditions look dry for much of July. Jul 4 By AgweekTV Weather Weather pattern shifts as calendar switches to July StormTRACKER meteorologist Lydia Blume explains how June's cooler weather pattern will shift to heat heading into July. Jun 20 By AgweekTV Weather Mostly cool and dry conditions likely to persist into late June StormTRACKER meteorologist Lydia Blume looks at recent rainfalls, drought conditions and what the forecast for the next two weeks looks like in terms of temperature and precipitation. [Read the full article](#). AgWeek, Sat Jul 25, 2026 5:30 AM CT

3. USDA announces August reopening of Arizona port for cattle imports from Mexico Beginning August 24th, the department says it will open the Douglas, Arizona port to cattle trade. "Are they going to be fat cattle?" And again, additional flight dispersal coming on the end of this year." Ag Secretary Brooke Rollins says following the reopening of the Douglas, Arizona port of entry, operational steps will be implemented simultaneously for subsequent openings at the Santa Teresa, New Mexico and Columbus, New Mexico ports. USDA says the reopening of the southern ports is contingent on Mexico's adherence to the Join Action Plan. [Read the full article](#). Brownfield Ag News, Fri Jul 24, 2026 9:09 PM CT

4. An Outdoorsman's Journal That means more trail for future Ice Age Trail hikers. Moving rocks large and small to and from the trail is difficult but important work. An outdoor-adventures writer since 1989, he enjoys hobby farming, adventure and anything outdoors. Visiting an American-chestnut tree can still be a celebration even though it's not what it would have been 125 years ago. [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Sat Jul 25, 2026 1:00 AM CT

5. USDA to reopen southern border cattle trade The department will open the Douglas, Ariz., port on Aug. "The closure of the Southern ports of entry for the last year has been a tough but necessary action to control the spread of NWS in Mexico and protect the American livestock industry. The plan includes coordinating with Mexico to track and develop a risk-based trapping plan, as well as support Mexico's hiring of over 500 surge staff for trapping and animal movement control. "Importing cattle from Mexico allows beef packers to better meet consumer demand given the tight supply of US cattle." [Read the full article](#). Agri-Pulse, Fri Jul 24, 2026 9:16 PM CT

6. Ag groups react favorably to Section 301 tariff exemptions Trade Representative concluded its quick Section 301 investigation Thursday into allegations that 60 countries have not properly enforced prohibitions against importation of products made using forced labor. seed sector remains a committed partner in combating forced labor, and in supporting the innovation pipeline that empowers American farmers to lead the world in agricultural exports," Andy LaVigne, ASTA's president and CEO, said in a statement. jobs, manufacturing, and the economy," William "Bill" Murray, NCA's president and CEO, said in a statement. The tariffs also remove tariffs on UK whiskies; however, that exemption doesn't extend to all imported spirits and wines. [Read the full article](#). Agri-Pulse, Fri Jul 24, 2026 3:47 PM CT

7. Soybeans rise on weather concerns as wheat dips Forecasts into early August for large parts of the region are hot and dry, potentially stressing the crop. Corn was mixed, while closing out the week in positive territory. France's AgriMer says 38% of that crop is in good to excellent shape, a dip of 2% on the week and significantly lower than last year because of hot, dry weather. IKAR now has Russia's 2026 wheat crop at 90 million tons with an export potential of 44.5 million tons. [Read the full article](#). Brownfield Ag News, Fri Jul 24, 2026 3:45 PM CT

8. Democrats poised to nominate Troy Jackson in must-win Maine Senate race Hundreds of Democrats are gathering in Bangor on Saturday morning for a state convention to pick their Senate nominee after the primary winner, Graham Platner, ended his campaign earlier this month after a sexual assault allegation, which he denied. It's the first time Collins, from Aroostook County, will be facing an opponent who also hails from the same sprawling area. Ahead of the convention, Sen. Sahil Kapur Sahil Kapur is a senior national political reporter for NBC News. [Read the full article](#). NBC News, Sat Jul 25, 2026 4:00 AM CT

9. Governor Gianforte Cuts Ribbon at Multi-Use Ag Facility "In Montana, agriculture is more than just our number one industry, it's a part of our way of life. The Analytical Lab provides testing and analytical services to analyze feed, fertilizer, pesticides, groundwater, and other samples used by producers, researchers, and regulatory programs across the state. Nebraska Cattlemen Annual Convention policy committees completed their work on Dec. This event has been held for over 45 years and continues to be the leading information, technology and research outlet for cow/calf producers [...]" [Read the full article](#). Morning Ag Clips, Fri Jul 24, 2026 3:57 PM CT

10. Data and Drones Helping Farmers Squeeze More From Every Acre Deepak Joshi, a precision agriculture specialist at Kansas State University, said yield data collected by combine harvesters is one of the most powerful tools on today's farms. That longterm view supports more precise input decisions. "Spray drones are not here to replace the ground rig," he said. This study was published June 6 in Environmental Evidence by a USDA Agricultural Research Service scientist and his Swiss colleagues. [Read the full article](#). Morning Ag Clips, Fri Jul 24, 2026 2:58 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

Never search for a hydraulic leak with your bare hand. Pinhole leaks spray fluid hard enough to inject it under the skin, a true surgical emergency even when it looks like a small cut. Relieve the pressure first, then hunt the leak with a piece of cardboard, not a finger. Source: National Ag Safety Database; Penn State Extension.

Cal

Local Obituaries

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

The Coffee Shop

Today in Farm History, Soil Bank Act 1956 (precedent set 1936)

On May 28, 1956, President Eisenhower signed the Agricultural Act creating the Soil Bank, the direct ancestor of today's Conservation Reserve Program. The 1956 program paid farmers to idle 28.7 million acres at its peak. The legal mechanism traces back to the 1936 Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act. Source: USDA Farm Service Agency program history.

Cal's Quiz

Who was named the first Commissioner of Agriculture on May 15, 1862?

- (a) Isaac Newton
- (b) Norman Jay Colman
- (c) Henry A. Wallace
- (d) Justin Smith Morrill

Answer at the bottom of the Brief.

Cal's Joke of the Day

The drone took a picture of the corn maze from above. The farmer's wife said, "It looks like a tractor." He said, "That was the design." She said, "You designed it?" He said, "With your help. You held the GPS. You always do."

The MI Farm AI Desk

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

Quiz Answer

(a) Isaac Newton (a Pennsylvania dairy farmer, not the physicist). Lincoln named him on the same day he created the USDA. Newton served until his death in 1867. Source: 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.