

# **The MI Farm Brief #146**

Sunday July 26, 2026, Cal "Corn-Bread" Halvorsen

MI Farm AI

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*Generated by Mark's Claude AI*

*For internal review*

# The MI Farm AI Brief #146

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

Sunday, July 26, 2026. Filed by The MI Farm AI Desk.

## Weather, Steele County, MN

**Today:** High **93F**. Patchy Fog then Partly Sunny.

**Tonight:** Low **74F**. Areas Of Fog.

What this means for today: Areas of fog before 8am. Mostly sunny, with a high near 93. Heat index values as high as 109. South 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  | 75F  | 7%   | 0 mph      | Patchy Fog    |
| 5 AM  | 74F  | 5%   | SE 5 mph   | Patchy Fog    |
| 6 AM  | 73F  | 4%   | S 5 mph    | Patchy Fog    |
| 7 AM  | 73F  | 5%   | S 5 mph    | Patchy Fog    |
| 8 AM  | 76F  | 4%   | S 5 mph    | Partly Sunny  |
| 9 AM  | 80F  | 3%   | S 5 mph    | Partly Sunny  |
| 10 AM | 83F  | 3%   | S 5 mph    | Partly Sunny  |
| 11 AM | 85F  | 2%   | S 5 mph    | Partly Sunny  |
| 12 PM | 87F  | 2%   | S 5 mph    | Partly Sunny  |
| 1 PM  | 89F  | 1%   | S 10 mph   | Partly Sunny  |
| 2 PM  | 90F  | 2%   | SSW 10 mph | Partly Sunny  |
| 3 PM  | 91F  | 2%   | SSW 10 mph | Partly Sunny  |
| 4 PM  | 91F  | 5%   | SSW 10 mph | Mostly Sunny  |
| 5 PM  | 92F  | 1%   | SSW 10 mph | Mostly Sunny  |
| 6 PM  | 91F  | 2%   | S 10 mph   | Partly Cloudy |
| 7 PM  | 90F  | 9%   | S 5 mph    | Mostly Clear  |
| 8 PM  | 87F  | 5%   | S 10 mph   | Mostly Clear  |
| 9 PM  | 84F  | 5%   | S 10 mph   | Mostly Clear  |
| 10 PM | 82F  | 7%   | S 10 mph   | Mostly Clear  |
| 11 PM | 81F  | 7%   | S 10 mph   | Mostly Clear  |
| 12 AM | 79F  | 9%   | S 10 mph   | Mostly Clear  |

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)   | \$4.8725/bu -0.0025  |
| Soy (Nov 2026)    | \$12.5350/bu +0.0975 |
| Live Cattle (CME) | \$222.50/cwt -1.3%   |
| Lean Hogs (CME)   | \$89.03/cwt -12.8%   |

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 beans added about ten cents at Friday's close while corn held steady. Our best assessment points to two likely drivers, the moisture deficit concerns still adding up across the upper Midwest per AgWeek, and Ukraine rewriting its grain export protection plan per UkrAgroConsult, both of which can nudge bean bids. With no USDA report on the calendar, we would not read too much into one quiet session.

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, Friday'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:**

- Standing 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 steady, beans up about 10 cents going into the day. Watch the cash bid at your elevator.
- On the wire: Moisture-deficit concerns continue to add up across the upper Midwest (see Cal's News Desk below).

## From Cal's News Desk

The 9 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. 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

**2. Bugs, beetles, boletes tolerate heat** Bean flowers self-pollinate before opening, as evidenced by tiny bean pods forming. Squirrels sploot, plants wilt, corn and crabgrass make do with a special photosynthesis path, deer find backyard shade trees, birds bathe, rattlesnakes thermoregulate and hogs wallow. Garden pole beans, however, abort their flowers when the heat is too much for pollen. 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 1:30 PM CT

**3. Pest and disease shifts make management more difficult** Warmer winters have made it possible for some pests to survive the cold season and spread faster in the Midwest. Warm and inconsistent weather patterns are leading to increased pest pressure for farmers in the Midwest. Email notifications are only sent once a day, and only if there are new matching items. [Read the full article](#). Iowa Farmer Today, Sat Jul 25, 2026 6:55 AM CT

**4. 1 dead, several injured after vehicle drives into crowd at Berlin LGBTQ celebration** During Berlin's Christopher Street Day, one of Europe's largest LGBTQ celebrations, a white vehicle plowed into people on a footpath in Tiergarten Park shortly before 10 p.m. local time. One person was killed and 17 others were injured, several of them with life threatening wounds. Berlin Police told ABC News that a manhunt is underway, with an officer saying on the police account on X that they are intensively searching for possible suspects. Hundreds of thousands had gathered for the event, and authorities called off the rest of the night's festivities after the attack, leaving the driver still at large. [Read the full article](#). ABC News, Sat Jul 25, 2026 6:26 PM CT

**5. USDA Export Sales Report July 16, 2026: Wheat, Corn, Soybeans, Cotton, and Livestock, News and Statistics** agricultural export sales showed mixed results across commodities during the week of July 10 to 16. Soybean exports of 298,700 metric tons fell 34 percent from the previous week and 27 percent from the four-week average. Whole cattle hide net sales for 2026 reached 321,300 pieces, up 10 percent from the previous week and 21 percent from the four-week average, led by China and South Korea. The analysis is designed to support strategic planning, market entry, portfolio prioritization, and risk management in the grain landscape in the United States. The model captures both cyclical and structural factors and reflects known policy and technology shifts in the United States. Yes, it highlights demand hotspots, trade routes, pricing trends, and competitive context. [Read the full article](#). IndexBox (via world wire), Sat Jul 25, 2026 8:32 AM CT

**6. Barn Boards and Baling Wire** Donald Jossart, who farms near Sugar Bush and Luxembourg in Brown County, Wisconsin, phoned in after reading one of the columns and shared what the writer calls one of the most remarkable lost and found stories he has ever heard. Jossart's real reason for calling was to recommend a book he thought worth passing along. That book is "Shining Moments: Visions of the Holy in Ordinary Lives," written by John Sumwalt, a retired pastor who grew up as the son of dairy farmers. Readers who want the book or want to reach Sumwalt can

email johnsumwalt@gmail.com, call 414 to 339 to 0676, or write to W172 N7735, #932, Menomonee Falls, WI 53051. [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Sun Jul 26, 2026 1:00 AM CT

**7. Roadside stands hit seasonal prime time** Cal Orr tallies sales for a customer at the Double S Produce stand in northwest Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Peaches (left) were brought up from Missouri, but the rest of the produce comes from a Muscatine farm. Summer is halfway gone, but some favorite produce items recently became available at roadside stands across Iowa, Illinois and Missouri. Email notifications are only sent once a day, and only if there are new matching items. [Read the full article](#). Iowa Farmer Today, Sat Jul 25, 2026 6:50 AM CT

**8. AgweekTV Full Show: Oilseed boom, crops and heat, swine education, state fair ag ed** North Dakota is seeing a boom in bright yellow fields this season as canola and sunflower acres climb, and this week's AgweekTV show digs into what is driving that shift. The broadcast also checks on how crops are holding up under the extreme heat, with StormTRACKER meteorologist Lydia Blume warning that dangerous heat and moisture deficits will keep drought worries growing across the upper Midwest. In a lighter turn, a German exchange student shares how American swine production differs from hog farming back in her homeland. The show closes at the North Dakota State Fair, where a new program is teaching kids about agriculture, proving the fair is about more than just rides and fun. [Read the full article](#). AgWeek, Sat Jul 25, 2026 5:30 AM CT

**9. Ukraine updates grain export protection plan Zelenskyy** In his July 24 evening address, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced that Ukraine is rewriting its plan to protect grain exports, a move that matters for global crop supplies and prices that reach Iowa. The decision came out of Friday meetings with Commander in Chief Mykhailo Drapatyi, Acting Defense Minister Yevhen Khmara, and Prime Minister Serhii Koretskyi, who together mapped out steps to better shield Ukraine's cities, southern regions, and infrastructure. Zelenskyy said Koretskyi is preparing economic and infrastructure alternatives and will push to diversify the country's export and import operations. He called for asymmetric solutions such as securing fuel supplies, opening new export routes, and building support programs for Ukrainian producers, all in cooperation with neighboring countries and Brussels. The President named air defense as the top priority and pressed international partners to deliver on their commitments without delay, while urging Ukraine's diplomats to move faster. He closed by stressing that more people in partner countries need to understand Russia's ongoing attacks on civilians and Moscow's efforts to prolong the war. [Read the full article](#). UkrAgroConsult (via world wire), Sat Jul 25, 2026 7:59 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

Keep kids off and away from running equipment. A second rider on a tractor or in a loader bucket is a leading cause of farm child deaths. Set a clear off-limits zone around augers, PTO shafts, and the grain wagon, and never let a child ride unless there is a proper instructor seat. Source: National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety.

Cal

## Local Obituaries

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

## The Coffee Shop

## Today in Farm History, Hybrid corn adoption complete 1939

By 1939, 76% of Iowa corn acres were planted to hybrid seed, up from less than 1% in 1933. The state average yield rose from 36 bu/ac in 1933 to 50 bu/ac in 1939, the fastest six-year yield gain in U.S. corn history to that point. Henry Wallace's Pioneer hybrids led the adoption curve. Source: USDA NASS Iowa corn historical series; Iowa State University Extension archives.

## Cal's Quiz

How long was the John Deere Model D tractor in production (the longest run for any U.S. farm tractor model)?

- (a) 10 years
- (b) 20 years
- (c) 30 years
- (d) 50 years

Answer at the bottom of the Brief.

## Cal's Joke of the Day

The Oliver 1855 was the only green tractor that wasn't a Deere. The farmer said, "She's a different shade of green." His grandson said, "Why does that matter?" The farmer said, "It matters because the Deere men can't quite tell what to think of her. That's the joke."

## The MI Farm AI Desk

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

## Quiz Answer

**(c)** 30 years, 1923 to 1953. About 160,000 Model Ds were built at Waterloo, Iowa, and you can still find them running at antique tractor shows today. Source: Deere & Company corporate archive; Smithsonian National Museum of American 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.*