

The MI Farm Brief #153

Sunday August 2, 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)

Sunday, August 2, 2026. Filed by The MI Farm AI Desk.

Weather, Steele County, MN

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

Tonight: Low **59F**. Mostly Clear.

What this means for today: Sunny, with a high near 79. East northeast wind 0 to 5 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	56F	0%	N 0 mph	n/a
5 AM	56F	0%	N 0 mph	Fog/Mist
6 AM	61F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
7 AM	62F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
8 AM	63F	0%	ENE 5 mph	Sunny
9 AM	67F	0%	ENE 5 mph	Sunny
10 AM	71F	0%	ENE 5 mph	Sunny
11 AM	73F	0%	ENE 5 mph	Sunny
12 PM	76F	0%	ENE 5 mph	Sunny
1 PM	77F	0%	NE 5 mph	Sunny
2 PM	78F	0%	ENE 5 mph	Sunny
3 PM	79F	0%	ENE 5 mph	Sunny
4 PM	79F	0%	E 5 mph	Sunny
5 PM	79F	0%	E 5 mph	Sunny
6 PM	78F	0%	ESE 5 mph	Mostly Clear
7 PM	77F	0%	SE 5 mph	Mostly Clear
8 PM	73F	0%	SE 5 mph	Clear
9 PM	69F	0%	SE 5 mph	Clear
10 PM	66F	0%	SE 5 mph	Clear
11 PM	65F	0%	SE 5 mph	Clear
12 AM	63F	0%	SSE 5 mph	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 8 mph right now, gusting 8 (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 \$4.6400/bu (+0.1825, +4.09%); soybeans Nov 2026 \$11.8750/bu (+0.1025, +0.87%). Chicago board, as of 2026 to 07 to 31.

Corn (Dec 2026)	\$4.6400/bu -0.0450
Soy (Nov 2026)	\$11.8750/bu -0.0125
Live Cattle (CME)	\$227.25/cwt -1.7%
Lean Hogs (CME)	\$84.85/cwt -13.8%

Source: Chicago Board of Trade.

Cal's Market Read

At Friday's close, corn slipped about 4 cents; and beans slipped about 1 cents.

Recent trend, over the last 5 sessions, corn has eased and beans have eased. 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 Tri-State Neighbor: Durum prices continue to hold in trading range. 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 0.3 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	52,485 +0.5%
S&P; 500	7,490 +0.7%
Nasdaq	25,374 +1.0%
Russell 2000	2,931 to 0.5%

Decision Delivered

Your decisions for today and the week ahead:

- Reminder for this week: Scout soybeans for aphids, the 250-per-plant treatment threshold drives the spray decision. Check corn ears for fill and tip-back.

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 down about 1 cents going into the day. Watch the cash bid at your elevator.
- On the wire: Durum prices continue to hold in trading range (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. Durum prices continue to hold in trading range And while spring wheat prices have been able to rally somewhat because of recent weather conditions, durum has not followed. Email notifications are only sent once a day, and only if there are new matching items. [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Sun Aug 2, 2026 6:00 AM CT

2. 'Land Rich, Cash Poor' Author Says Conservation Ag is a Financial Advantage It dives into the big economic challenges facing farmers today. We've got a lot of farms that are caught. Get full access NOW to the most comprehensive, powerful and easy-to-use online resource for no-tillage practices. Provide expert analysis and decision support to increase productivity and profitability. [Read the full article](#). No-Till Farmer, Sun Aug 2, 2026 12:00 AM CT

3. Using Precision Data to Bridge the Gap Between Soil Health and Crop Economics Companies are now paying real premiums for low-carbon grain, with global brands chasing Scope 3 targets and biofuel makers cashing in on credits like the 45Z Clean Fuel Production Credit, but you only collect if you can prove exactly what your ground did. The catch is that old programs use zip code regional averages, which shortchange careful no-till and cover crop operations and leave money on the table. Arva's CropForce platform fixes that by feeding your actual machine data, variable rate applications, and management logs into an AI engine that builds an audit ready record of your specific acres, then handles enrollment, payment, measurement, and verification for you. Since 2023 Arva says it has helped farmers regenerate over 4.4 million acres across nine countries and cut 3.4 million metric tonnes of CO2e, turning soil stewardship into a second paycheck. [Read the full article](#). No-Till Farmer, Sat Aug 1, 2026 7:00 AM CT

4. At least 3 killed, 2 injured in Idaho shooting; suspect dead 1, 2026, 7:07 PM EDT / Updated Aug. The identity of the suspect and a possible motive were part of the investigation, Hicks said. A nearby Chick-fil-A said it was closing Saturday as a precaution. We are working with the Twin Falls Police Department to assist in the on-going investigation." Dennis Romero Dennis Romero is a breaking news reporter for NBC News Digital. [Read the full article](#). NBC News, Sat Aug 1, 2026 6:07 PM CT

5. U.S. agrees to pause attacks on Iran subject to 'rapidly' making deal, Trump says "We have just been asked by Iran, and other Middle Eastern Countries, to hold off any attack in that the perimeters of a deal has been agreed to," Trump said in a post on Truth Social. officials described as "heavy" strikes. military confirmed it had executed a "heavy wave of strikes" on Iran, hours after Fox News reported that the president in a phone call had vowed to "beat the f., -g s., out of" the country. Dennis Romero Dennis Romero is a breaking news reporter for NBC News Digital. [Read the full article](#). NBC News, Sat Aug 1, 2026 3:37 PM CT

6. Russian grain lobby warns Black Sea attacks threaten wheat exports, spark famine Russia's main grain lobby, the Union of Grain Exporters and Producers, warned Friday that drone strikes on Black Sea ships and ports could soon halt wheat exports and spark famine in the world's poorest countries. Both sides have escalated attacks on grain terminals and cargo vessels, with a Ukrainian strike reportedly causing significant damage to a major export terminal at Russia's port of Taman. Russia's Defence Ministry said its forces hit 31 Ukraine linked ships in one week, while Ukraine's UAC union says Russian strikes near Odesa are choking its own harvest exports. The Russian union projects a shortfall of 30 to 35 million metric tons, about 15 percent of global wheat trade, a gap it claims no other supplier can fill. It forecasts wheat prices climbing to \$340 to \$370 per ton, possibly past \$400, driving food inflation on a scale like the COVID era, with the Middle East and Africa hit hardest. With the UN brokered grain corridor now

collapsed and talk of a possible air ceasefire, this fight between the world's top wheat exporter and a leading grain rival could ripple straight into global prices that matter to every corn and soybean grower. [Read the full article](#). Turkiye Today (via world wire), Sat Aug 1, 2026 10:32 AM CT

7. Grain exports from Russia's Black Sea ports could nearly come to a halt due to drone attacks Ukrainian drone strikes on commercial ships and port facilities have ramped up through July, and Russia's grain exporters now warn the whole Black Sea export route could grind to a stop. A hit on the port of Taman badly damaged one of Russia's major grain terminals, according to a Reuters market source. The Russian Union of Grain Exporters and Producers figures wheat shipments could drop by 30 to 35 million tons this season, about 15 percent of all global wheat trade, and says other countries cannot make up that gap. If the disruption drags on, FOB wheat prices could climb to \$340 to \$370 per ton and possibly top \$400, which could spark another round of world food inflation. Middle Eastern and African nations that lean heavily on Black Sea grain would feel the worst of it. Meanwhile Ukrainian farm groups say Russian strikes on Greater Odesa ports are choking their own exports right in the middle of peak harvest, so this fight is squeezing grain supply from both sides at once. [Read the full article](#). UkrAgroConsult (via world wire), Sat Aug 1, 2026 9:23 AM CT

8. Barn Boards and Baling Wire Henry Aaron is still revered in Wisconsin. When I was a kid, I wanted to be a great baseball player like Henry Aaron. He is the author of "Shining Moments: Visions of the Holy in Ordinary Lives." Email johnsumwalt@gmail.com or call 414 to 339 to 0676 to reach him, or write to W172 N7735, #932, Menomonee Falls, WI 53051. In addition to working with his... [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Sun Aug 2, 2026 1:00 AM CT

9. Study shows health risks higher for rural residents The Morrow Plots on the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus mark 150 years in production this year the nation's oldest continuous... [Read the full article](#). Iowa Farmer Today, Sat Aug 1, 2026 6:55 AM CT

10. AgweekTV Full Show: Cattle pests, spring wheat conditions, right to repair, Grey Zabel The latest AgweekTV episode digs into a USDA decision to reopen some cattle imports from Mexico even as fresh New World Screwworm cases have producers on edge, part of a broader look at the pests bugging cattle herds this season. With a hot, dry summer baking the region, the show also checks on how the spring wheat crop is holding up as harvest closes in, and StormTRACKER meteorologist Lydia Blume warns the heat and dry stretch will likely hang on through early August even as shorter days hint fall is coming. Farmers notched a win in the right to repair fight over their own equipment, though some argue the deal falls short of true independence from the dealers. The episode wraps with a fun profile of NFL player Grey Zabel, who splits his time between the football field and working South Dakota farm fields, giving you plenty of reasons to catch the full show. [Read the full article](#). AgWeek, Sat Aug 1, 2026 5:30 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

Never step over a spinning power take-off (PTO) shaft. At 540 rpm it makes nine full turns a second, faster than you can pull away. Walk around the tractor, not over the shaft, and replace any missing PTO shield before you hook up. Source: National Ag Safety Database (NASD), Penn State Extension.

Cal

Local Obituaries

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

The Coffee Shop

Today in Farm History, Dust Bowl peak 1934

On May 11, 1934, a single dust storm carried 350 million tons of topsoil from the Great Plains to the East Coast, so much that dust fell on ships 300 miles off Boston. The Dust Bowl years (1930 to 1936) cut Great Plains farm income by 60%. The Soil Conservation Service (today NRCS) was founded in 1935 as a direct response. Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service history archive.

Cal's Quiz

The 1933 Tennessee Valley Authority Act brought electricity and flood control to how many Southern states?

- (a) Three
- (b) Five
- (c) Seven
- (d) Nine

Answer at the bottom of the Brief.

Cal's Joke of the Day

The banker said, "You should diversify your operation." The farmer said, "I already am. I've got corn, soybeans, and hope."

The MI Farm AI Desk

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

Quiz Answer

(c) Seven. FDR signed the TVA Act on May 18, 1933, and the dam system indirectly proved out the rural-electrification model that came to Midwest farms two years later under the REA. Source: USDA Rural Utilities Service history; TVA archives.

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.