

The MI Farm Brief #159

Saturday August 8, 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)

Saturday, August 8, 2026. Filed by The MI Farm AI Desk.

Weather, Steele County, MN

Today: High **78F**. Mostly Sunny.

Tonight: Low **63F**. Partly Cloudy then Chance Showers And Thunderstorms.

What this means for today: Mostly sunny, with a high near 78. Wind 0 to 6 mph through the day (see the hour by hour table below).

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	53F	0%	SW 3 mph	Clear
5 AM	52F	0%	SSW 6 mph	Clear
6 AM	55F	0%	W 5 mph	Sunny
7 AM	57F	0%	0 mph	Sunny
8 AM	61F	0%	0 mph	Mostly Sunny
9 AM	64F	0%	0 mph	Mostly Sunny
10 AM	68F	0%	0 mph	Mostly Sunny
11 AM	71F	0%	W 5 mph	Mostly Sunny
12 PM	73F	0%	WSW 5 mph	Mostly Sunny
1 PM	75F	0%	WSW 5 mph	Mostly Sunny
2 PM	76F	0%	WSW 5 mph	Mostly Sunny
3 PM	77F	0%	SW 5 mph	Mostly Sunny
4 PM	77F	0%	SSW 5 mph	Mostly Sunny
5 PM	77F	0%	S 5 mph	Mostly Sunny
6 PM	77F	0%	S 5 mph	Partly Cloudy
7 PM	76F	1%	S 5 mph	Partly Cloudy
8 PM	73F	2%	S 5 mph	Partly Cloudy
9 PM	70F	4%	S 5 mph	Partly Cloudy
10 PM	68F	8%	SSE 5 mph	Partly Cloudy
11 PM	67F	12%	S 5 mph	Partly Cloudy
12 AM	66F	17%	S 5 mph	Slight Chance Rain Showers

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

Spray Window

Based on this morning's wind forecast, the spray window looks open 4 AM to midnight (wind at or under 10 mph, the common label ceiling for glyphosate and fungicides; dicamba and 2,4-D allow up to 15). This is the day's plan locked in this morning, not a live reading. Always check your gusts, any ground level inversion, and your product's own wind limit before you start.

Wind this morning at your nearest weather station was about 8 mph.

Rain Window

We could not get a reading right on your field this morning. The nearest weather station (Owatonna MN, about 4 miles northeast) recorded 0.08 inches in the past 24 hours. Your own ground may differ, so check your gauge.

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 \$4.3900/bu (0.0000, 0.00%); soybeans Nov 2026 \$11.5650/bu (-0.0075, -0.06%). Chicago board, as of 2026 to 08 to 07.

Corn (Dec 2026)	\$4.3900/bu 0.0000
Soy (Nov 2026)	\$11.5650/bu -0.0075
Live Cattle (CME)	\$231.70/cwt +0.2%
Lean Hogs (CME)	\$95.50/cwt +0.0%

Source: Chicago Board of Trade.

Cal's Market Read

At Friday's close, corn steady; and beans steady.

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 AgWeek: Senate's farm bill stalled for now, largely over SNAP debate. 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 0.7 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	54,037 +0.3%
S&P; 500	7,758 +0.6%
Nasdaq	26,691 +1.3%
Russell 2000	3,034 +1.1%

Decision Delivered

Your decisions for today and the week ahead:

- 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 steady going into the day. Watch the cash bid at your elevator.
- On the wire: Senate's farm bill stalled for now, largely over SNAP debate (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. Senate's farm bill stalled for now, largely over SNAP debate The Senate Ag Committee just stalled its own "Farm Bill 2.0" during its first markup, with the fight centered on whether states should shoulder more of the SNAP food aid cost based on their benefit error rates. Chairman John Boozman, R-Ark., called it his best and final offer, while ranking member Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., voted no and argued that \$70 billion each was found for Iran and ICE but not for a simple two year delay that would let all states get their error rates in line, noting Minnesota sits at 12.6% against a 6% federal threshold and now faces a 15% state match. Despite the collapse, farmers won real gains that survived the vote, including a Thune amendment restoring mandatory Country of Origin Labeling for beef that passed 17 to nothing, plus higher farm loan limits and year round, nationwide E15 sales. Groups from the National Farmers Union to the Minnesota Farm Bureau blasted the delay as one family farms cannot afford after three years of waiting, but the bill is not dead and the committee is expected to try again soon. [Read the full article.](#) AgWeek, Fri Aug 7, 2026 4:00 PM CT

2. Boozman eyes mid-September farm bill vote, urges farmers to speak out Senate Agriculture Chairman John Boozman, an Arkansas Republican, wants to restart his committee's markup of Farm Bill 2.0 as soon as lawmakers return September 14, aiming for a bipartisan vote after the bill stalled this week. It failed to advance Thursday when Republicans Tommy Tuberville and a sick Mitch McConnell were absent and all Democrats, led by Minnesota's Amy Klobuchar, voted no. The fight centers on SNAP, where Boozman offers a one year delay on new state cost sharing tied to payment error rates, the national rate being 10.6 percent, while Klobuchar insists on a two year delay so all states get equal footing. This matters to farmers because the bill would update programs untouched since 2018, raise producer loan limits, allow year round sales of E15 ethanol, and restore country of origin labeling for beef, and Boozman warns time is running short to pass it this year. [Read the full article.](#) Agri-Pulse, Fri Aug 7, 2026 3:32 PM CT

3. 86 farm families recognized at Minnesota Farmfest University of Minnesota Extension honored 86 farm families, one from each county, during this year's Farmfest, continuing a tradition that has run for more than 20 years. Extension dean Bev Durgan said the award celebrates the leadership these families show in their communities through boards, 4-H, and Master Gardener programs, noting the state is home to close to 70,000 family farms. Durgan pointed out that Minnesota ranks No. 1 in turkey and sugarbeet production, sits second or third in hogs, and stands as a major exporter of soybeans and corn, so agriculture is a real driver of the state's economy. Families are nominated and chosen by their county extension committee, and Durgan said the diversity of the operations, from row crops and dairy to you-pick and direct market farms, is what keeps rural communities strong. You can view the full 2026 list at <https://extension.umn.edu/farm-families> or contact your local county Extension committee to nominate a family. [Read the full article.](#) AgWeek, Fri Aug 7, 2026 4:41 PM CT

4. Minnesota Ag in the Classroom marks four decades of growing agriculture literacy Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom is marking its 40th anniversary this year, a milestone for a program that set out to put farming back into school lessons. Foundation director Ann Marie Ward calls the impact remarkable, describing it as a team

movement uniting commodity groups, organizations, and individuals. She stresses the curriculum is built to align with state academic standards so teachers can weave in agriculture without extra busy work. Today the program reaches roughly 160,000 students across 88 percent of Minnesota public school districts, proving how far a simple classroom idea has grown. [Read the full article](#). Brownfield Ag News, Fri Aug 7, 2026 4:01 PM CT

5. Sugar industry seeks additional economic aid from Congress Sugar growers are pushing Washington for another round of disaster and economic aid to help them weather crop losses and shaky markets. Ryan Weston, who chairs the American Sugar Alliance and leads the Florida Sugarcane League, says USDA Deputy Secretary Stephen Vaden talked up more assistance at the recent Sugar Symposium and noted the government has delivered similar help quickly a couple of times before. The big question is the vehicle, whether that aid comes through budget reconciliation or a separate supplemental spending bill, with USDA saying it stands ready to act once Congress decides. Weston warns that plenty of farm legislation could hinge on a crowded, uncertain lame duck session this fall, so growers watching for relief may have to wait and see how the politics shake out. [Read the full article](#). Brownfield Ag News, Fri Aug 7, 2026 3:50 PM CT

6. Senate confirms Todd Blanche as attorney general after bruising fight Though confirmed along a party-line vote when he was nominated... [Read the full article](#). The Hill, Sat Aug 8, 2026 3:34 AM CT

7. Preserve fifth-generation farm with conservation In Jackson County, Iowa, a farmer named Brian Noonan is reshaping his family's 480 acre operation with conservation practices while working alongside USDA NRCS District Conservationist Lori Schnoor. The land carries deep roots, tracing back five generations to the 1830s when his Irish ancestors first bought 180 acres, so this is as much about heritage as it is about soil. One of his newest moves is a pollinator planting set next to his shelterbelt and cropland, giving monarch butterflies, bees and other helpful insects a place to thrive. It is a practical reminder that protecting a fifth generation farm can go hand in hand with building habitat that pays off across the whole field. [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Sat Aug 8, 2026 1:00 AM CT

8. Back Home Columnist Chris Hardie, who lives with his wife Sherry on his great-grandparents' Jackson County farm, admits that even an old sewer snake could not clear the cast iron floor drain clogged in his basement. He has always seen himself as a jack of all trades, willing to tackle any repair or project even when he has never done it before. Hardie is no stranger to hard work or recognition, having been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in 2001, served on the Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council, and led the Wisconsin Newspaper Association as past president. His book, "Back Home: Country Tales by the Seasons," available on Amazon, ties in his seasonal reflections, from stubborn plumbing to the way sweet corn and field corn signal a full calendar of outdoor events ahead. [Read the full article](#). Tri-State Neighbor, Sat Aug 8, 2026 1:00 AM CT

9. Junior Market Barrow results at the 2026 Ohio State Fair The 2026 Ohio State Fair crowned its Junior Market Barrow champions, with two Oklahoma judges, Jarrett Davis of Shawnee and Blake Goss of Leedey, making the final calls. Parker Elchinger of Henry County took Grand Champion honors with a Light Cross barrow, edging out a strong field. Victoria Gossard of Allen County earned Reserve Champion with her Berkshire, while Kinsley Swanson of Ashland County placed 3rd Overall with a Dark Cross. These results showcase the young Ohio hog producers rising through the ranks, a reminder of how the next generation is refining the breeding and showmanship skills that shape the whole livestock industry. [Read the full article](#). Ohio Country Journal, Fri Aug 7, 2026 9:12 PM CT

10. Senate confirms Smith as USDA rural development undersecretary The Senate has finally filled the rural development undersecretary post at USDA, empty since January 2025, by confirming Glen Smith, a Farm Credit Administration board member and former CEO who leads a vast mission area overseeing rural credit and communities. Sen. Chuck Grassley cheered the pick, calling Smith a product of rural Iowa who grew up in the southwest corner of the state and has spent his career serving fellow farmers. Iowa Ag Secretary Mike Naig, the Plant Based Products Council, and the FCA itself all praised his financial background and commitment to keeping rural America strong. For Iowa growers this matters because Smith will steer federal dollars and programs that shape rural infrastructure, credit stability, and the future of the plant based products industry that depends on farmers. [Read the full article](#). Agri-Pulse, Fri Aug 7, 2026 4:50 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

Farmers have one of the highest skin cancer rates of any job from years of sun. Wear a wide-brim hat, long sleeves when you can, and sunscreen on the neck, ears, and forearms. A yearly skin check catches the early ones. Source: National Ag Safety Database; Marshfield Clinic agricultural medicine.

Cal

Local Obituaries

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

The Coffee Shop

Today in Farm History, John Deere born 1804

On February 7, 1804, John Deere was born in Rutland, Vermont. He moved to Grand Detour, Illinois in 1836 and in 1837 built the first commercially successful self-scouring steel plow, the one that finally cut prairie sod without clogging. By 1855 his shop in Moline was making 10,000 plows a year. Source: Smithsonian National Museum of American History; Deere & Company archives.

Cal's Quiz

The University of Minnesota was chartered before Minnesota was even a state. What year?

- (a) 1851
- (b) 1858
- (c) 1862
- (d) 1868

Answer at the bottom of the Brief.

Cal's Joke of the Day

The coffee shop's last pot of the day. The farmer asked for a final cup. The waitress poured. He said, "That's how every day should end." She said, "That's how every day in this town does end. Most folks just don't notice."

The MI Farm AI Desk

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

Quiz Answer

(a) 1851. The territorial legislature chartered it seven years before statehood. It was designated the state's land-grant 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.

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