DANVILLE, Ind. – Joe Doub has one goal when it comes to the 1,000 bales of fiber hemp he’s stored at his farm since 2019: he wants to find a market for it.

As Doub has found, though, reaching that goal has been anything but easy.

The 2018 farm bill allowed for the commercial production of hemp and removed it from the controlled substances list. There are three types of hemp: grain for food products and cosmeceuticals; cannabinoids, including CBD and CBG; and fiber for textiles and industrial applications.

Doub and his son Andrew planted 180 acres of fiber hemp on their farm near Danville in spring 2019. They had contracted with Louisville, Ky.-based Sunstrand, LLC. The contract called for them to be paid per pound based on emergence and canopy; they were also to be paid per pound for storage. Doub has farmed about 140 acres.

“In January and February of 2019, the corn market was awful,” Joe Doub recalled. “We decided to go ahead and try hemp. There was a meeting in March (2019) at Franklin University. A crop adjuster went for storage. The Doubs harvested about 140 acres.

Doub said Sunstrand told him in late July or August 2019 he wouldn’t be paid. The company, which processed fiber from hemp and other plants, filed for bankruptcy in January 2020. It was founded in 2014.

He’s tried since then to sell his hemp without success. “We thought this was going to be the next salvation crop,” Doub explained. “But now, we can’t find a market. I just want to get this sold and out of here. There’s no market, no processing facilities. It has just been one nightmare after the other. I don’t want this to happen to anybody else.”

Doub said he’s in the hole about $100,000. He’s out the cost of fertilizer, equipment he had to purchase, cash rent and expenses related to hemp storage.

Don Robison, seed administrator for OISC, said the situation isn’t unique to Doub. “There is still plenty of 2019 and 2020 crop stored in barns and sheds in the state,” he said.

No one he’s contacted, including area departments of agriculture and state and federal legislators, has been able to help him achieve his goal of finding a market.

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Indiana farmers must pay fee to grow hemp in 2021

By Michele P. Mihaljevich
Indiana Correspondent

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. — Beginning this year, Hoosier residents who want to grow hemp in the state will be required to pay a fee. Last year, the state had about 270 licensed grower handlers, Fritz said. For 2021, Indiana had 81 licensed grower handlers as of press time.

Applicants also need to pass an FBI background check and register with the office.

The growing of hemp will be fully commercial in the state for the first time this year. In 2019 and 2020, Hoosier farmers could work with a university-employed researcher to grow hemp. This year, growers and handlers will not need to work with a researcher.

Last year, the state had about 270 licensed grower handlers, Fritz said. For 2021, Indiana had 81 licensed grower handlers as of press time.

“I personally don’t think we’re going to get close to 270 (in 2021),” she said. “I have (several) draft applications that someone has started but not finished. They may have stopped (the application process) because they didn’t want to do a background check or they didn’t want to pay a fee.”

Of the approved licenses for 2021, about 80 percent were returning growers and handlers and 20 percent were new to the program, she said. Applicants to be growers or handlers will be charged $750 annually; those wishing to do both will pay $1,500, Fritz said. Handlers are considered those who participate in the processing, drying or transportation of hemp. Growers and handlers must renew their licenses each year.

Hemp may be grown for several purposes – for seed, for cannabis plants (including CBD) and for fiber (for textiles) – Fritz said. Each classification has specific requirements for licensing, she added.

In general, those wanting to apply to grow or handle hemp must complete the background check within 60 days of registering. Applicants must not have a federal or state drug conviction within the last 10 years.

Potential applicants should visit the OISC website – www.oisc.purdue.edu – and click on the “hemp” tab at the top. The site includes news and updates about the state’s hemp program. Applicants should create an account. As a part of the application, they’ll need to answer questions about whether the applying entity is a company or individual, the license type (grower, handler or both) requested, the key participants (considered anyone applying to grow or handle hemp or state drug conviction within the last 10 years).

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Growing Hemp
FROM PAGE 2

with a supervisory role in dealing with the hemp), where they obtained their seed and where on their property hemp may be grown. Applicants should include any areas of their property where they might consider growing hemp because there is a fee for making changes to where hemp might be grown, Fritz said.

Updates regarding planting, harvesting and anything else related to hemp growth are to be reported through the OISC website, she said.

Growers who may still be storing hemp from 2019 or 2020 but who don’t intend to grow hemp in 2021 should fill out a storage agreement form for the OISC, said Don Robison, the office’s seed administrator. The one-page document asks for the person’s name, their former license number and the location where the hemp is stored. The agreement should prevent problems if a law enforcement agency sees the stored hemp while on the property, Robison said.
Michigan farming initiative hopes to turn city lots into gardens

PORT HURON, Mich. (AP) — A team of Blue Water Area locals are sowing the seeds of a Port Huron farming initiative, with plans to buy city lots to provide food and education to the community. The Port Huron Urban Farming Initiative is in the budding stages right now, currently seeking community support, volunteer labor and social media buzz, but it’s already growing around 100 plants in preparation for the thousands it will need.

“Look out, we’ve got a lot coming,” initiative member Heather Fagan told the Times Herald of Port Huron. Fagan, who is in charge of garden management and planning for the initiative, said the goal is to provide easy public access to healthy homegrown foods and provide education based on nutrition, food preparation and benefits of healthy eating.

Collectively we believe that knowledge is power, and by creating an avenue for everyone we can spread that knowledge and provide hope for a healthier life for people who feel that these things are out of their reach,” she said in a Facebook post.

The initiative is also about maintaining a space where it’s OK to ask for help. If someone is hungry, they can come to them and they will feed them, said Lisa Green, whose role involves getting people involved and interested in the initiative.

“We’re people that really love this community and want to see it thrive,” she said.

Julian Ruck, who owns First Church of Music LLC which is spearheading the initiative through a partnership, said it currently has about 100 tomato plants already growing in two indoor spaces. They plan to grow these for cutting for more plants so they start the season strong with hundreds of plants ready to go in the ground. “The snowball effect,” he said in a written message. “Started with some seeds...now we’re here!”

The initiative has a fenced private lot on Miller Street it will work through March, but its main lot will be at 1423 Lapeer Ave., Ruck said. They will use the property for a community garden, selling half of it to fund the business and donating the other half, he said.

The initiative organizing team will vote on a quarterly payout and how much to put back into the business. Ruck said they are all technically on payroll, but currently have no income. “I want us to make money at this,” he said, as monetary success will equate to philanthropic success. Ruck said the focus is buying city lots while they’re cheap and flipping them into permanent gardens, with hopes to buy more in the future.

James Freed, Port Huron city manager, said the city supports these efforts and wishes them well.

The initiative plans to work with local businesses through private subscriptions for produce and partnerships to garden on their property. The initiative will likely give away its produce at Sunday events at the lot but could also give to local nonprofits like the soup kitchen, Ruck said.

He said they will have a heightened responsibility to be sustainable and have good business practices. They want to teach people the skills and knowledge to garden so they can grow their own produce one day. “Ultimately we want people to do it for themselves,” Ruck said.

Shannon Raynard, co-owner of Moe’s Corner Deli in downtown Port Huron and another initiative member, said you don’t need a lot of space or talent to garden, just good soil and motivation. She has connections to other restaurants that may be interested in working with the initiative and they will establish more relationships once they have a yield and can offer produce, she said.

There’s still a lot to do, with soil testing and getting more materials, but they see the possibilities, she said. “I’ve never had such confidence in a project as I do now,” Raynard said.
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**6,035,000**

**1,910,000**

**357,000**

**167.00-188.00; 150-170 lbs 165.00-188.00; Utility and**

**110-120 lbs 112.50-157.50; Utility and 1-2 (medium flesh) 95.00-110.00; 1-2 no test.**

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**Feeder Lambs: Medium and Large 1-2:**

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USDA: Net farm income to decline in 2021

USDA forecasters are warning that net farm income will likely be down in 2021 from 2020. Forecasts believe net farm income will decline 8 percent as direct payments will be cut in half from 2019. These payments accounted for 40 percent of farm income in 2020. The USDA is projecting net farm income this year at $111 billion as commodity values are expected to remain critically low.

The United States is expected to produce a record soybean crop this year, which is why several crushers have halted meal sales. Ethanol producers hope to see elevated demand for fuel by then as the United States sees a return to more normal travel activity. The question now is if corn stocks shrink and futures will rally, will margins again turn negative? Given these possibilities, domestic usage of commodities may decline from current estimates.

The United States is not the only country showing worry over future commodity stocks. Several of the world’s leading grain and oilseed producers have placed restrictions on exports to help ensure adequate domestic reserves. This is also helping with food inflation. The commodity seeing this the most on is wheat, even though the world wheat supply remains adequate. The United States tends to use prices to ration demand rather than tariffs and quotas, but some economists believe this needs to change.

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Farm pays $144,000 to resolve violations

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — A factory farm in Kewaunee County has agreed to pay the state $144,000 to resolve pollution violations.

The state Department of Justice announced a judge approved the settlement with Rolling Hills Dairy Farm LLC.

The DOJ had alleged that the farm unlawfully allowed runoff from its feed storage area to enter a tributary of the East Twin River in 2017. The department also alleged that the farm refused to allow Department of Natural Resources staff to inspect the area, failed to submit information when the feed storage area was built to show runoff would be controlled and spread manure before heavy rain storms, leading to runoff.

In addition to the payment the settlement requires the farm to construct additional runoff controls.

From the PNW cost roughly 20 cents/bushel more than the Gulf, but freight is much less, especially to a buyer such as China. This is mainly from the shorter shipping time. As a result, some soybean suppliers to the PNW have posted stronger bids than those who ship to the Gulf.

The most interesting when it comes to soybean exports remains on China. China is still waiting to receive South American soybeans as the cost and time involved with switching purchases to the United States makes that unlikely to happen. China is showing more interest in soybeans for September forward though. Thoughts are the United States may have new crop soybean by then, especially with reports of early seeding to capture the current market inverse.

Trade is becoming increasingly concerned with the volume of unshipped U.S. corn sales on the books. There are currently 1.3 billion bu of corn sales that are unshipped. This is a record and compares to just 500 million bu a year ago. Given the wide price spread we are now seeing between the United States and other corn sources, mainly Argentina, cancellations of U.S. purchases are becoming more likely.

Of these outstanding sales, the most interest is on China. Of the unshipped U.S. corn sales nearly one-third is to China at 430 mbu. China has announced it will try to expand its domestic corn production this year, mainly by elevating plantings by 1.65 million acres. This will add an estimated 102 mbu of corn to China’s annual production. While this may not eliminate China’s need for imports, it will allow the country to be chooser in where it is sourced from.

More concerns are starting to be given the U.S. corn and soybean availability for later this marketing year. There are several models that indicate our current usage rate will deplete soybean reserves by summer which is why several crushers have halted meal sales. Ethanol producers hope to see elevated demand for fuel by then as the United States sees a return to more normal travel activity. The question now is if corn stocks shrink and futures will rally, will margins again turn negative? Given these possibilities, domestic usage of commodities may decline from current estimates.

The United States is not the only country showing worry over future commodity stocks. Several of the world’s leading grain and oilseed producers have placed restrictions on exports to help ensure adequate domestic reserves. This is also helping with food inflation. The commodity seeing this the most on is wheat, even though the world wheat supply remains adequate. The United States tends to use prices to ration demand rather than tariffs and quotas, but some economists believe this needs to change.

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Biden $1.9T coronavirus stimulus package includes $1B for Black farmers

By Doug Graves
Ohio Correspondent

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The $1.9 trillion coronavirus stimulus package brokered by President Joe Biden puts more than $1 billion toward “socially disadvantaged” farmers and related groups, including an equity commission, agricultural training and other assistance to advance racial justice in farming.

“Socially disadvantaged farmers are those who are part of a group that has been discriminated against because of their race or ethnicity,” said John Boyd, president of the National Black Farmers Association. “By denying or delaying Black farmers the same loans, subsidies and other payments made to white farmers, USDA engaged in systemic racism that led to a dramatic decline in the number of Black farmers. This is not in dispute. Sadly, this long legacy of discrimination is baked into USDA programs, including how payments to Black farmers like me continue to be calculated.”

Biden’s American Rescue Plan would also fund direct relief payments “equal to 120 percent of the outstanding indebtedness of each socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher as of Jan. 1, 2021, to pay off the loan directly or to the socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher.”

Black farmers accounted for approximately one-sixth (800,000) of farmers in 1920, but less than 2 percent (30,000) of farms were run by Black farmers in 2017, according to USDA data.

The agency has faced accusations of discrimination for years. The class-action Pigford lawsuit that the government settled in 1999 for $1.25 billion was supposed to help farmers who claimed they were unfairly denied loans and other government assistance.

“Just this past week, a pair of bills (Justice for Black Farmers Act and Emergency Relief for Farmers of Color Act) were put forth by Democratic senators, aiming to help Black farmers survive not only the coronavirus but to reconcile a long history of mistreatment and discrimination as well.”

Just this past week, a pair of bills (Justice for Black Farmers Act and Emergency Relief for Farmers of Color Act) were put forth by Democratic senators, aiming to help Black farmers survive not only the coronavirus but to reconcile a long history of mistreatment and discrimination as well.

The Justice for Black Farmers Act targets the biggest problems that have plagued Black Farmers – debt, land acquisition and access to credit. The act would create a new Equitable Land Access Service that would return land to Black farmers previously seized by the government while making land available to Black Americans who want to enter the industry. It would also create a new federal bank aimed at giving Black farmers and other farmers of color easier access to credit.

The Emergency Relief for Farmers of Color Act would provide $4 billion in direct payments to farmers of color and another $1 billion toward rooting out systemic racism within the USDA that some senators say have role in Black families of the ability to build and pass on generational wealth.

Black farms today make up just 1.7 percent of the nation’s two million farms, despite that fact that the number of Black farms has increased since the 1990s. Moreover, the 2017 data showed that Black farms were grossly below the average in most revenue-related categories, only receiving about half of the government payments that an average U.S. farm receives.

“Are we ‘proud, dignified people’? Boyd said. “Farming is our oldest occupation and here we are, facing extinction. So I’m glad that Congress is finally realizing Black farmers as an endangered species because that’s what we are.”

In Ohio, according to the USDA agricultural census released in 2017, there are 77,805 farms in Ohio’s 88 counties. Of those farms, just 183 are Black-owned farms in the state.

In southwest Ohio, Greene County has no Black-owned farms, out of a total 617. Neither does Clark County, with 742 total farms. Montgomery County lists nine Black-owned farming ventures, out of 792 overall.

“The loss of land holdings over time has been an issue for all farmers, but especially Black farmers,” said Terry Cosby, the Ohio head of the USDA’s Natural Resource Conservation department.

Cosby’s family has a farm in Mississippi that goes back four generations.

“My great-grandfather, when he was freed in South Carolina, moved to Mississippi, where he purchased a piece of land to farm. The importance of that purchase remained strong for the entire family for years. My dad always told me, ‘if you’ve got land, you’ve got somewhere you can go."

To this day, Cosby addresses audiences in Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati about urban farming initiatives. He said Black farmers have been hit hard as agriculture became the business of larger, more industrial farming ventures, and so-far enterprises that were able to supply bigger stores and chains.

Cosby cites disinterest in farming among younger generations due to the arduous nature of the work and all the costs of staying afloat, including property taxes, as reasons that farming has been hit hard as agriculture became the business of larger, more industrial farming techniques, and enterprises that were able to supply bigger stores and chains.

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Red Gold

said.

The other 1,800 acres at Birky Farms are used for producing commercial corn, soybeans and seed corn.

Birky, 49, said there's nothing in his bag of tricks for raising high quality tomatoes, aside from the usual hard work, paying attention to detail and staying on top of the crop until harvest. He also uses his fingers for cooperation from Mother Nature, the most important factor in all of farming. "There are some secrets. It's a lot of luck," Birky said.

Birky said he started growing tomatoes in 2001 to expand the farm and diversify the operation after given the opportunity to become a contract supplier for Red Gold. Under the Red Gold schedule, his plots are planted one week apart from each other starting in early May.

That allows harvesting when finished in one field to begin at another site where tomatoes are now ripe for picking.

Birky said a majority of his tomatoes are delivered in semi-trucks to a Red Gold plant about a three-hour drive to the south of Orestes.

Despite his relatively late start at raising tomatoes, Birky’s green thumb is not a coincidence given his bloodlines in farming date back to his ancestors in Germany. His house in Morgan Township is on a farm started by his grandfather, Lee Birky, and what’s now the home farm is on land his father, John, began acquiring to produce food in the 1980’s. His father still helps out on the farm.

Birky said he knew agriculture was in his veins practically since he was born. He especially liked taking care of the hogs his father raised until his focus changed strictly to row crops in the 1980’s. Birky also loved running the machinery.

“When I was a kid my punishment wasn’t going outside and drive the tractor or work in the hog barn. I had to stay inside,” he said.

Roger Gunning, director of agriculture for Red Gold, said the E.A. Reich Quality Achievement Award is also for professionalism, conservation and leadership in the industry.

He said Birky’s acts of leadership include representing Red Gold in Washington, D.C., traveling with company officials to California to further the understanding of the industry and being at the forefront in using new color sorting technology in his tomato harvest.

Birky has two sons and a daughter in their early 20’s. He’s not sure about their career paths yet but his children will have the farm to fall back on if agriculture is the direction they take. “We’ve given them in place to make that happen.” he said. “We’ll see what their dreams are and go from there.”

E.A. Reichert was once in charge of the company, which remains in the family.

His wife, Fran, and her father, Grover Hutcherson, started the firm in 1942 by purchasing and rebuilding an old canning factory that had been destroyed by three separate fires and a tornado in Orestes.

The first canned tomatoes rolling out of the plant were for the troops here and abroad in response the government’s request for citizens to help during World War II. “God has blessed us very much over the years and he gets credit for the crop that we had.” Birky said.
**3-month prison term for blending oats and beans**

SIoux CIty, Iowa (AP) — A former official at a large grain warehouse in Iowa was sentenced recently to three months in prison for his role in a scheme to blend lower value oats into soybeans and then sell the mixture as soybeans to unsuspecting buyers.

Calvin Diehl, 60, of Aberdeen, South Dakota, was also fined $7,500. He pleaded guilty in June to one count of conspiracy to defraud the United States, the U.S. attorney's office said in a news release.

Diehl was the assistant general manager at the Sioux Center grain cooperative. Prosecutors said individuals involved in the conspiracy also made false statements and executed false certificates to federal grain inspectors. They layered soybeans on top of oats in both storage bins and trucks to deceive inspectors and customers about the quality and quantity of the grain. They also made false entries and adjustments in reports provided to the company's bank.

After learning of the conspiracy, the Agriculture Department searched grain bins at warehouse sites in Iowa and South Dakota. It found that of the 87,996 bushels of grain at these locations, the bins actually contained only 34,354 bushels of soybeans, even though all had been certified as soybeans.

**Insect that can kill hemlock trees found in Michigan park**

HONOR, Mich. (AP) — A small insect that can kill hemlock trees by feeding on their sap has been detected at the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in northwestern Michigan. Earlier this month, surveyors found a hemlock woolly adelgid on one tree in the Platte River Campground in Honor, Michigan's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development said.

The popular campground is in northern Benzie County, southwest of Traverse City. The insects' feeding weakens needles, shoots and branches of the trees. Over time, tree growth slows and trees take on a grayish-green appearance. Without treatment, infested trees die within four to 10 years, state officials said.

Michigan has been combating hemlock woolly adelgid since 2006 and has current infestations in Allegan, Ottawa, Muskegon, Oceana and Mason counties. The insect was detected in October in Ludington State Park, about 70 miles south of Sleeping Bear Dunes. Hemlock woolly adelgid likely arrived in Michigan on infested nursery stock from northeastern states, officials said.

The tiny insects don't move far on their own, but they can be blown by wind or carried by birds or mammals that come into contact with an infested branch. Cars, boats or recreational vehicles parked beneath infested trees may also be able to transport the insects to new locations.
Apple Farm receives award from Kubota

Apple Farm Service is excited to announce that they have achieved the Elite Status with Kubota. This prestigious award is given to a small number of Kubota dealerships that provide the highest levels of service and dedication to their customers. According to the Kubota USA website, “Kubota’s Premier and Elite Dealer Certification Program is focused on building and managing best-in-class relationships with dealers to their customers.”

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Peterson Farms builds apartment complex for farm workers

By Kevin Walker
Michigan Correspondent

SHELBY TWP., Mich. – Peterson Farms, a large fruit processor on the west side of Michigan, has faced problems with having enough employee housing even as the company expands its operations.

Just over a year ago, Peterson Farms announced a plant expansion project that requires a multi-year capital investment of $22 million, but was expected to garner 50-70 new jobs for the rural community that surrounds it. Peterson Farms is already the largest employer in Oceana County, with up to 900 full-time and seasonal employees.

In order to deal with the lack of affordable housing for workers in this heavily tourist area, a few years ago the company decided to build a small housing complex, Oceana Acres Apartments, to place some of its seasonal and migrant workers. Some of the residents may receive a subsidy for their rent and Peterson Farms hopes that at some point it will be able to provide the ability for workers to own a home at the company’s campus.

A housing taskforce set up last year

Below: A bird’s eye view of Oceana Acres Apartments, a new apartment complex owned by Peterson’s Farms.
by the state highlighted Oceana Acres as a progressive example of a housing solution for farm workers, who often work at various locations throughout the year and may have trouble getting adequate housing for themselves and their families. The complex was approved in 2017 and built in 2018. Oceana Acres currently has 56 units, which are able to house up to 280 individuals. "Oceana County is an excellent place to live," said Richard Raffaelli, chief operating officer of Peterson Farms. "Creating a holistic work environment that supports individual growth follows Oceana Acres' history of helping others for the betterment of all residents."

According to a statement from the company, Oceana Acres residents are offered subsidized child care enrollment fees at the Oceana County Early Learning Center, which is a childcare center built through a partnership between Peterson Farms and Shelby public schools. The center has four age-specific classrooms for children ages 0 to 12. There are both two-bedroom and one-bedroom units at Oceana Acres. Besides providing apartments, the company offers residents a playground, a full-size soccer field, as well as a picnic area. The company also started a small library for residents who are free to borrow books, some for children, as well as adults, both fiction and nonfiction.

Farms, where they can make, every effort to help their employees and to meet their needs, said Craig Anderson, agriculture and farm safety manager at the Michigan Farm Bureau. "A lot of our housing is seasonally based, and it’s more typical for a tenant to want to stay in that housing beyond the season," Anderson said. "That’s understandable, because a lot of times the employer-provided housing is either free or at a reduced cost."

"Peterson's did a very wonderful job of investigating what did or did not work across the county," Anderson explained. "What’s different about Oceana Acres Apartments is that this is designed for year around occupancy; Peterson’s spent a lot of time and effort to do this right. They really need to be applauded for it. Peterson’s has laid the groundwork that hopefully others can see what they've done and use it as a model."

OCEMOS, Mich. — The Michigan Cattlemen’s Assoc. (MCA) is getting ready to hold its first all online Michigan Beef Expo and Virtual Trade Show.

"The show is being presented by Great Lakes Sire Service and is a sponsor of the event, whereas Breeders World is holding the sales for a fee. Cattlemen and women have the opportunity to purchase top quality seedstock in the online auctions hosted by Breeders World, according to George Quackenbush, MCA executive vice president. "Last year the sales were virtual because the restrictions were put into place several weeks before the Michigan Beef Expo," Quackenbush explained. "Planning for this began last August, but unfortunately there was no way to guarantee an in-person event, so the board decided late November to hold a virtual trade show."

Last year’s trade show was canceled altogether. The Michigan State University Pavilion – the usual venue for this event – is currently being used as a COVID-19 vaccination site. "As an organization we are doing our best with the hand we’ve been dealt," Quackenbush added, referring to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s now-yielding sweeping prohibitions in in-person gatherings of all kinds, first issued as executive orders and, later, as state health department orders after the state supreme court ruled her executive orders unconstitutional. "Breeders World has made it so we can do this online this year," Quackenbush added. "It’s providing an opportunity for these breeders to come together. It’s the largest event for the industry in Michigan. We try hard to make this a celebration for cattle breeders in the state of Michigan."

Cattle breeders from across the region will be offering their genetics (Beef Expo continued on page 13).
A recent survey concluded the number 1 reason farmers did not use attorneys was because they felt the attorney would not understand their operation. If you want an attorney that understands farming, some questions you can ask are:

- Do the attorneys typically handle farming cases?
- Is the attorney a member of an agriculture-related association?
- Does the attorney have a law degree in agriculture or equivalent experience?
- Have they been trained in agricultural law?

Mental health outreach for farmers is now expanding

By Stan Maddux
Indiana Correspondent

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. – The stress of farming has never, perhaps, been higher.

In response, a Purdue University program making sure farmers have access to mental health care has expanded to other states.

The Purdue Extension Farm Stress Team (PEFST) in late 2020 joined a 12-state initiative awarded a USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant. The funds are being used to create and expand stress management, mental health resources and services to agriculture producers in the North Central Region.

“PEFST will help farmers understand the most important factors of care the most important farment asset - you.”

The Purdue Stress Management Team believes the most important farm assets are farmers, farm families and farm employees, said Tonya Short, Purdue Extension Health and Human Sciences educator in Knox County.

“We are dedicated to helping take care of the most important farment asset - you.”

Short is also a farm stress team member.

According to Purdue officials, PEFST was formed in January 2019 by a group of 11 educators after they attended a Farm Stress Management workshop hosted by Michigan State University Extension.

Twenty educators are now trained in farm stress management and certified in mental health first aid which is taught by Purdue Extension Health and Human Services.

Since PEFST was formed, 1,550 people have been reached with more training and resources.

(Mental health continued on page 14)

In several online sales hosted by Breeders World, an online auction house based in Bellevue, Ohio. The 2021 sales will include an all-breed bull sale, a Simmental female sale and an all-breed female sale.

Catalogs featuring detailed descriptions, photos and video of each bull and female will be posted to the Bing Beef Expo site on March 15. Sales will be live for two weeks and will close on March 28. Direct links to all the sales can be found at www.micattlemen.org/michigan-beef-expo.

“Last year, the Michigan Beef Expo, hosted by Breeders World, grossed over $167,000,” said Michigan Beef Expo committee Chairman Brian Decker in a press release. “While we are unable to hold a traditional in-person Expo, we know this format offers a reliable marketing opportunity that delivers value to Michigan’s seedstock breeders and commercial cattlemen.”

The online trade show is a chance for cattlemen and women to interact with companies that provide products and services to the industry year after year. They can be found at www.micattlemen.org/michigan-beef-expo and within each of the cattle sale pages.

By Stan Maddux – Indiana Correspondent

(Health continued on page 14)

(Health continued on page 14)
than 50 in-person programs, Purdue officials said. Another 267 people have participated in four virtual programs nationally. According to Purdue officials, the mission is reaching farmers who don’t have convenient access to treatment or don’t pursue help for mental health because of the stigma associated with such care or lack of health insurance.

Doug Leman, executive director of Indiana Dairy Producers, worked closely with Purdue Extension to bring a farm stress workshop to his organization. Leman said he wanted to bring awareness to mental health on the farm and be open about how stress is affecting farmers and farm families.

He experienced overwhelming farm stress followed by depression and isolation when forced to sell his struggling dairy farm in 2010 after 40 years in the business.

“I understand how people can get to the point of depression because of the feeling of helplessness,” he said. “You feel like you’re on your own and that there’s nobody else that is going through what you’re going through. Now I realize that there are so many dealing with those things, too.”

By joining the 12-state initiative, PEFST is finding new ways to collaborate with state agriculture and health agencies. PEFST was also invited recently to help plan a new national suicide prevention hotline.

“Our team’s mission is to make sure farmers, farm families and rural needs are represented in new and expanding mental health resources,” Short said.

According to a poll by American Farm Bureau Federation, 66 percent of farmers and farm workers say the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted their mental health. The poll of 2,000 respondents also showed younger rural adults were more likely than older rural adults to say the pandemic has impacted their mental health a lot.

The number of farmers and farm workers believing social isolation impacts their mental health increased 22 percent from April 2019.

“My takeaway from this survey is that the need for support is real and we must not allow lack of access or a ‘too tough to need help’ mentality to stand in the way,” said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. “The pandemic added a mountain of stress to an already difficult year for farmers and they need to know that sometimes it’s OK not to be OK, that people care and that there’s hope and help.”
Mother and daughter to lead Indiana cattle drives

By Stan Maddux
Indiana Correspondent

INDIANAPOLIS – A mother and daughter won’t be on horses but they will be leading cattle drives together behind the scenes.

Jill Duncan is president-elect of the Indiana Beef Cattle Association (IBCA). Her 20-year-old daughter, Hattie, is president-elect of the Indiana Junior Beef Cattle Association (IJBCA).

“I feel like it’s going to be rewarding for both of us to be able to do these tasks at the same time,” said Duncan, 45, of Waupel, Wis. Duncan’s daughter is a senior at the University of Illinois majoring in animal nutrition.

Duncan said her primary goal as IBCA president in 2022 is helping spread word about sustainability in the livestock industry and making sure that ranching is “portrayed in a positive light. I’m excited most about being able to share our story,” she said.

She and her husband are from families whose roots in the livestock industry date back for generations. The Duncan livestock farm, about 30 miles south of Purdue University in West Lafayette, has about 130 head of primarily Hereford cattle raised for beef. She said the calves are auctioned off and finished elsewhere. The rest of the herd is kept for breeding and providing feeder meat once fed out.

Personal satisfaction for Duncan rests more with carrying on a family tradition.

Her father, Clark Sennett, and brother, Lance, are past presidents of the IBCA. Duncan has been involved with the group in various other capacities over the years, including serving as vice president of the IBCA executive committee last year. Presently, she’s also an adult junior advisor for the IJBCA.

She will continue to have a seat on the IBCA Executive Committee for two years as a past President once her one-year term as president expires.

Duncan doesn’t believe the industry is going to necessarily disappear over concerns like what impact cows might have on global warming. However, she feels shedding light on what’s being done environmentally can help keep the door open for future generations of ranchers.

For instance, her son, Ray, and nephew, Drew, both 17, could go that route because of their love for livestock.

“Any way you can want to go up and raise cattle, we hope that they can have that opportunity which is another reason why it’s important to promote and preserve this product,” she said.

Duncan also believes adapting to shifting currents is another key to the future.

“It’s just everything is evolving and changing and we just have to change with it. If 2020 taught us anything it’s been that. Not just with food, necessarily, but with life,” she said.

The IBCA president for 2021 is Chad Lamam, of Flora. Other officers approved to the executive committee were Jeff Sherfield, of Spencer, as vice president, and Andrew Stewart, of Greensburg, as treasurer.

Also serving on the panel are Dr. Jennie Hodgen, chairman of the promotions committee; Tim Schwab, immediate past chairman, and Neal Smith, immediate past president.

The IBCA also has as board of directors members of 10 area directors along with representatives from the dairy and veal sectors, allied industries and Purdue Extension. Board members also serve on the Indiana Beef Council to manage the collection and allocation of the Beef Checkoff.
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URBANA, Ill. - Deicing salts are essential to winter travel in Illinois and provide necessary safety in a landscape setting by melting dangerous ice on precipitous stairs, sidewalks, entryways and other areas of frequent foot traffic. However, damage from salt can be a major problem to many landscapes by negatively impacting plant health or sometimes outright killing plants from overexposure.

“Rock salt, or sodium chloride, is the most commonly used deicing agent,” said Ryan Pankau, University of Illinois Extension horticulture educator. “It is relatively inexpensive, very effective, and widely available.”

There are some drawbacks. It’s highly corrosive to vehicles and concrete and it’s mobile in the environment, which can ultimately end up impacting plant life in several ways.

Salts typically move in the environment, either as runoff in meltwater or as aerosol sprays dispersed by fast moving vehicles and wind. The greatest plant damage from salt usually occurs around major roadways as sprays accumulate on plant parts.

“Evergreen foliage is most at risk of damage from wafting sprays, which can sometimes move as far as several hundred feet from highways and other high speed thoroughfares; however, spray damage can occur along smaller roads and pathways, even sidewalks,” Pankau said.

Plants suffering damage from salt spray are easily identified since damage is concentrated on the road side of plants. In addition, the suspended substance often only reaches a specific height on affected plants, creating a distinct line where damaged foliage occurs.

A less common, but often more serious plant ailment can occur if salt-laden meltwater infiltrates the soil profile. In these cases, soil very near a source of salt, such as a heavily treated sidewalk or similar surface, can become saturated with salt water. The impact is often very concentrated in well defined drainage paths, Pankau said.

At times, it can create soil conditions unsuitable for root growth, but it can also be detrimental to beneficial soil biota, such as mycorrhizae. In addition, salts in soils actually absorb soil water that would otherwise be available to the plants.

“I am always quick to shovel new fallen snow since removal is much easier when it’s light and fluffy, as opposed to after the kids have tromped through the sidewalk,” Pankau said.

“Save the salt for the tiny patches of ice left after shoveling, and when you do apply it, apply a small amount and wait.”

Pre-application with a liquid form of deicer is considerably more efficient. Many states are reporting dramatic decreases in road salt use as highway departments turn to liquid deicers as an alternative to pre-treating the road. At the homeowner scale, some hot water and a small pressurized sprayer can be used to dissolve the salt and very efficiently apply it. Pankau said.

Be aware that salt is very corrosive to sprayer parts, so careful cleaning and rinsing after use can help prolong the sprayer life.

Alternatives to the traditional rock salt include calcium chloride which can melt ice at temperatures down to about -60°F. At high levels it can damage plants, but it is significantly less harmful to soils, Pankau said. Calcium magnesium acetate is another alternative that is biodegradable and causes no harm to plants and soil.
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WESTFIELD, Ind. — Farmers will have a new environmentally friendly product to use in their ongoing battle against Sudden Death Syndrome (SDS) in soybeans.

Direct Enterprises, Inc., a producer of seed treatment products, has launched CeraMax to the U.S. marketplace for the first time.

The EPA-registered CeraMax contains the active ingredient, Natamycin, a biological agent tapping into the natural defense mechanisms of the genetic makeup of soybean seeds early in the season to flourish and ward off infection.

“CeraMax is the tool today’s soybean producers need in the war against Sudden Death Syndrome, perhaps the single largest cause ofIELD in soybeans,” said Bill Hauber, co-founder and president of the Westfield-based company.

The commercial release of the product follows successful results from more than 50 field trials in 10 states.

According to Direct Enterprises, CeraMax was added to Acceleron Standard seed treatments and the results were compared to seeds treated only with Acceleron.

“Beans showed significantly lower SDS disease incidence and an average yield increase of 4.3 bushels per acre,” Hauber said.

According to the company, about 20,000 units of CeraMax will be placed throughout soybean producing areas hardest hit by SDS in recent years.

“We’ve seen that SDS has brought U.S. soybean farmers and this is effective, yield-enhancing alternative that is much better from an environmental stewardship standpoint,” said Dennis Thompson, co-founder and chief operating officer for Direct Enterprises. CeraMax is produced by Cerdadis, which is affiliated with Wageningen University & Research in The Netherlands.

“Farmers in the USA are under pressure by regulators and consumers to move to biological products, but they also wish to preserve their yield in doing so. Now, with CeraMax, farmers can achieve both,” said Willem Jan Meulemeester, CEO of Cerdadis.

He described the product as another example of the “green innovations technology” developed by his company to help reduce the use of chemical pesticides.

Direct Enterprises is a fast growing leader in providing custom-blended seed treatments and seed treatment equipment to the agriculture industry across the United States.

According to researchers at Purdue University, SDS first reported in Arkansas in the 1970s is now in nearly every state where soybeans are grown.

Despite its name, soybean plants typically infected during early vegetative stages of growth don’t necessarily right away. Symptoms don’t generally appear until late August when plants reach this mid to late reproductive cycle.

Darcy Telenko, field crop extension pathologist at Purdue’s University’s College of Agriculture, said SDS in Indiana on average has resulted in a 1.7 percent loss of soybean yield based on data collected from 1998 to 2014.

There was a 1.1 percent loss of yield from SDS during the same time period in the north central region of the state.

Telenko said she is among the field crop extension pathologists testing products against SDS since 2013 in a regional evaluation at more than a half dozen locations across the Midwest each year. So far, the research has not included the CeraMax product.

“At this point in time I (we) have not evaluated this product, but we are looking to include it in our future regional seed treatment evaluations for SDS management,” Temenko said.

She said an annual problem because the disease-causing fungus survives in the soil over the winter and can also live on corn debris, according to Purdue researchers. Soybeans plants are more susceptible to infection during cool and wet conditions in the spring.

Frequent rains during the reproductive stages allow an inoculum to move up the plant and into its leaves. Purdue researchers said.

## CeraMax is a new weapon in a fight against sudden death in soybeans  

**By Stan Maddux**

Indiana Correspondent

In order to qualify as a beginning farmer, the individual or entity must meet the eligibility requirements outlined for direct or guaranteed loans. Additionally, individuals and all entity members must have operated a farm for less than 10 years. Applicants must materially or substantially participate in the operation. For farm ownership purposes, the applicant must not own a farm greater than 30 percent of the land in the county at the time of application. All direct farm ownership applicants must have participated in the business operations of a farm for at least three years out of the last 10 years prior to the date the application is submitted to FSA. Substitutions for as much as 20 percent of the three years of experience may be made based on education, training, participation with a SCORE mentor and farm management experience as a hired hand. Your local FSA office is available to provide more details on acceptable substitutions.

If the applicant is an entity, all members must be related by blood or marriage and all entity members must be eligible beginning farmers. At least one of the members must have three years or more experience in the business operations of a farm prior to the date the application is submitted to FSA.

Direct loans are made to applicants by FSA. Guaranteed loans are made by lending institutions who arrange for FSA to guarantee the loan. FSA can guarantee up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. The FSA guarantee allows lenders to make agricultural credit available to producers who do not meet the lender’s normal underwriting criteria.

For more information on FSA’s loan programs and the beginning farmer guidelines, please contact your local FSA office or visit farmers.gov.
Therapeutic farm hopes to provide safe environment for children

By Celeste Baumgartner
Ohio Correspondent

HAMILTON, Ohio – When she was a kid Christa Carrero was bullied. It wasn’t fun. Her dad bought her a horse and that horse was instrumental in helping her. She realized how instrumental animals could be in healing children.

Below: Christa Carrero with Marquis visiting Marsh Willow, a dwarf lionhead rabbit. Carrero, who grew up on a dairy farm, has worked in rescue and foster care for 20 years. She and Isidro have five children. They have fostered 25 children in 20 years. She and Isidro have five children. They have fostered 25 children in their home for respite. She realized how instrumental animals could be in healing children. The farm offers an assortment of horses, alpacas, sheep, goats, rabbits, chickens, a dog and multiple cats.

“We at H.O.P.E.-full Pastures love children and have a heart for those who have endured childhood trauma, suffered loss, neglect, abandonment and abuse,” Carrero said. “We strive to create a safe, therapeutic environment to help vulnerable youth overcome fear, loss and trauma.”

Statistics prove that working with a therapy animal has resulted in behavioral improvement in children, she said. At the farm, they believe that the unspoken connection one can have with an animal can help aid in the healing process. The presence of animals themselves is soothing, and can more quickly build rapport between a therapist and a client.

“We offer a program called Our First Steps Program,” Carrero explained. “We provide 90-minute weekly sessions. Every child is matched with an advocate and during that session, they will have a chance for caring for and bonding with the animal, building trust. There might be a purposeful conversation. While the child is in session we have a family mentor who lends a listening ear to the parents and they are there to listen, to encourage.”

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Above: The farm provided respite for this little boy, who is enjoying the animals. He has since been adopted by his foster family. Below: Christa and Isidro Carrero with their four daughters and Carrero’s parents, Fred and Julie Zaenker, shown on the day the farm was launched. All are involved in farm activities.

Encouragement.

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Experiences raising sheep

In 1948, there was a comic strip called Li’l Abner which appeared in many newspapers about a hillbilly family who had a bunch of fictional bowling ball-shaped animals called Shmoos which provided eggs and milk for the family. They reproduced like crazy. This trait can also be attributed to sheep.

One can start off with a few sheep, keep the females to add to the flock and before you know it, in a few years your flock has doubled and tripled in size. That is what happened to me. With the current commercial price of lambs in the $2.50, $3.30 to $4.00 a pound liveweight, those returns are not bad for the potential sheep farmer. Just like the Shmoos, you can definitely put milk and eggs on the table.

I started raising sheep in 1984 when I purchased three bred ewes to keep my horse company. At the time, Dorset and Finn cross wool sheep were all the rage. Dorset for the stocky, muscular build, good milking, medium wool, and Finn for prolificacy and multiple births. The pure Finn, however, are a fine-boned slim build sheep lacking the musculature for meat that the commercial market wanted. I soon found that having multiple births of three-four at a time was NOT the way to go. Most birthings required a vet to come out and untangle them (which can be quite expensive) so I pulled away from using Finn on my crosses. A ewe that can have twins or singles on her own without YOU the shepherd having to deliver is the ideal. And she must have a good udder with adequate milk and the mothering ability to

(Sheep continued on page 4B)
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Scholarship opportunity for members of IBCA

INDIANAPOLIS — The Indiana Beef Cattle Association (IBCA) is pleased to announce the continuation of its scholarship opportunity.

To help students by providing financial assistance for a college education, the IBCA awarded $6000 in scholarships last year. Applicants must be an Indiana resident whose family is actively involved in the beef industry and are current members of the IBCA. In addition, applicants must be an existing secondary student in good standing or high school senior.

In order to be considered, students must complete an application and submit all required documentation. The application may be found on the Indiana Beef website www.indianabeef.org or by calling the IBCA office at (317) 293-2333. The application process will be open through March 31.

“We are honored to continue this scholarship, which reflects the Indiana beef community’s support for the young people who will make up the future of our industry,” says Chad Lanum, IBCA President. Applications will be reviewed, and the scholarship winner(s) announced no later than June 30, 2021.

Sheep

From Page 2B

care for her lambs so YOU don’t have to. She must not have large nipples like a dairy goat or the newborn lamb will have a difficult time grabbing on to the nipple in its weakened state as a newborn. I lost a few lambs in the past before I figured this out.

As I mentioned I started with wool sheep in my earlier years with sheep, I had Dorset, Rambouillet and Columbia wool sheep. I also experienced what it was like to have a dangerous ram during that period. Fast forward to the present and I now raise hair sheep, which are a huge improvement over my experiences raising wool sheep. More on that later.

Joyce Weaver is an shepherdess residing on her 57-acre sheep farm in west central Indiana. Contact info: lambjoyw@gmail.com.
Residents in Hinckley, Ohio, have long hung their hats on the annual arrival of their buzzards on March 15. On that date, the town of Hinckley breaks out in unbridled celebration much like their neighbors in Punxsutawney, Penn., do over the meteorological shenanigans of their groundhog. The events of the day at Hinckley include television crews, radio interviews and the obligatory all-day-long-pancake and sausage breakfast. To say they got excited is an understatement. I have news for the impatient predicting celebrants of Hinckley—we’ve already got some of your buzzards.

A couple sharp-eyed residents of the town have already posted sightings right here in the neighborhood. Wanda Moore, of St. Paul, Ind., reported last week, “Just wanted to let you know that this past Wednesday, I was driving SE down U.S. 421 near the little burg of St. Vincent’s and saw a lone buzzard fly over. Then today, as I was walking my little dog down 65/S0 just outside St. Paul, I saw another buzzard fly over. There was also a beautiful skunk dead on the road near Shelbyville on 421.”

Apparently the dead skunk was a deal clincher and a major attractant for the buzzards near St. Paul. The lone buzzard along with its kindred group, is usually found gliding overhead as soon as a warm front hits the Hoosier State. Buzzards are incapable of killing their own prey, and their beaks and talons are only good for dismantling thawed, rotting flesh. They come with the warm fronts and leave with the cold fronts as they are incapable of eating frozen carcasses.

Indiana roadways are a cornucopia of dead carcasses come the spring thaw. Many critters during the winter months fall victim to cars and trucks, and their refrigerated corpses line the ditches are a bountiful source for our sanitary engineers of the sky.

In past years, I have seen buzzards everywhere along the winter’s roadways: a combination of a warm front and a little sunshine to thaw the roadkill brings them winging overhead every time.

Buzzards are not the only winged critter cashing in on the corpses of winter. The red-tailed hawk will sometimes dine on carrion when meals are hard to come by.

Last week while driving on SR 244, I thought I saw a buzzard as a huge bird took flight from the side ditch. As it took wing, I could see the brilliant white head and realized it was a mature bald eagle. Yep... even our stately national bird will gnaw on a dead carcass when the going gets tough.

Increase in deer tested for CWD

A total of 893 wild deer in Indiana were tested for chronic wasting disease (CWD) through the end of the 2020-21 deer season, an increase from the 823 tested in 2019.

“While CWD has been found in the neighboring states of Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio, we have not detected CWD in Indiana to date,” said Mitch Marcus, DNR fish and wildlife health supervisor.

CWD is a neurological disease affecting white-tailed deer. The disease is always fatal to deer and is transmitted directly through body fluids, such as feces, saliva, blood and urine, or indirectly through the contamination of soil, plants and water.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there have been no cases of CWD in humans. In areas where CWD is known to be present, the CDC recommends hunters have deer tested before eating the meat.

Although DNR collects wild deer samples for CWD testing throughout the year, Moriah Boggs, Indiana DNR deer biologist, emphasized most deer health samples are collected from hunter-harvested deer during the fall.

“Thank you to DNR staff, participating deer hunters, deer processors and taxidermists for the success of our 2020 CWD surveillance efforts,” Boggs said earlier this month. “We have sampled 893 deer without your assistance and support.”

Any deer hunters who had their harvest sampled for CWD during the 2020-21 deer season can check sample results at reports.in.gov/cwd.

Information about 2021-22 CWD monitoring efforts during the deer hunting seasons will be available on the website later in the year.

Pataoka Lake hike into spring

Join Pataoka Lake’s interpretive naturalist on March 20 at 1 p.m. for a “Hike Into Spring,” a 4-mile guided walk along the property’s Fitness Trail. The trail is an extension of the paved bike trail with some small patches of gravel. One participant will win a 2021 Annual Entrance Pass at the end of the hike.

Participants should meet at the modern campground parking area and follow the path to the campground gatehouse. Face masks are required for the program because there may be portions of the trail where hikers are closer than 6 feet from each other.

Participation is limited. Advance registration is required and can be made by phone at 812-685-2447 or by emailing mmagary@dnr.in.gov and must be made by 2 p.m. March 18.

The entrance fee of $7 per vehicle for Indiana residents and $9 for out-of-state residents is required for the Newton Stewart State Recreation Area, located north of Wickliffe, Ind., on State Road 164. For more information about the program and other interpretive events, call the Nature Center at 812-685-2447.

Pataoka Lake (Pataoka Lake Park) is at 3084 N. Dillard Road, Birdseye, Ind., 47513.

Readers can contact the author by writing to this publication, or e-mail to jackspaulding@hughes.net. Spaulding’s books, “The Best of Spaulding Outdoors,” and his latest, “The Coon Hunter And The Kid,” are available from Amazon.com.
Small game can add flavor to the table when cooked properly

Small game such as rabbit and squirrel is surprisingly nutritious and if it is cooked properly can be a tasty addition to the dinner table, according to Abbi Sampson, MA, RD, LD. Sampson is a Health and Human Sciences Educator with Purdue Extension-Putnam County. This week Cook Simple Tips suggests some easy recipes for small game. Enjoy and until next time, simply cook.

Southern Baked Rabbit

Ingredients
- 2 rabbits
- 4 Tbs. vinegar
- Salt, pepper and butter
- 2 onions, minced fine
- 1 Tbs. flour
- 2 Tbs. minced ham
- 1 garlic clove, minced fine
- 1 sprig thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 sprigs parsley
- 1 cup chopped mushrooms

Skin and clean the rabbits, then cut in pieces at the joints. Cover with cold water, add some of the vinegar and let stand overnight. When ready to cook, drain and dry well. Rub the meat with salt, pepper and butter, place in a heavy baking pan, and place in a 400 degree oven for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, chop the onions fine and put in an iron skillet with 4 Tbs. melted butter. Brown lightly, add the flour and brown well. Add remaining ingredients, let simmer a few minutes, then add about 2 cups boiling water. Cook, stirring until smooth. Pour over the rabbits, return to the oven, bake 2 to 3 hours, basting frequently. Serve with cornbread.

Source: Cy Littlebee’s Guide to Cooking Fish & Game

Squirrel or Rabbit Fricassee

Ingredients
- 4 squirrels
- 2 cups flour
- 1-2 tablespoons Cajun seasoning oil for frying
- 2 large onions, chopped fine
- 8 teaspoons chicken broth
- 6 cups chicken broth or consomme
- 4 bay leaves

Serves: 4

Directions
1. Cut squirrel into serving pieces. (3 pieces/animal, 2 thighs, 1 back section (rib) and section) and rub the seasoning into the meat.
2. Roll meat in the flour and fry until brown in hot oil in a large heavy skillet and then place browned meat pieces in a large glass casserole dish.
3. Add onion and remaining flour to left over oil in pan. When onion and flour are brown, add chicken broth or consomme to make gravy.
4. Pour the gravy over the meat pieces in the casserole dish, enough to just cover the meat.
5. Add lemon juice and bay leaves and bake at 300°F for 2 to 2.5 hours (until meat is tender).
Serve over rice or whipped potatoes. (continued on page 17B)

Marinade can be perfect solution for great small game taste

By Susan Mykrantz
Ohio Correspondent

GREENCASTLE, Ind. — Small game such as squirrel and squirrel is surprisingly nutritious and it is cooked properly it can be a tasty addition to the dinner table, according to Abbi Sampson, MA, RD, LD. Sampson is a Health and Human Sciences Educator with Purdue Extension-Simpson County. She has developed a series of four webinars on safely handling and cooking wild game. Food safety and food quality start in the field, according to Sampson. Farmers should consider using non-lead bullets or slugs. Otherwise, they should be careful to remove the meat around the wound channel because lead can get left in the meat and a large amount of lead can be fatal to children and pregnant women. Second, hunters should be diligent about properly field dressing the rabbit or squirrel and cooling the meat as soon as possible.

“You want to have a sharp knife and water or hand wipers with you in the field to keep your hands and knife clean,” she said.

Cook needs to be cautious of foodborne pathogens with any type of meat, but it is extremely critical with wild game, according to Sampson.

“Before cooking, we need to consider foodborne bacteria such as salmonella and e.coli,” said Sampson. “Those bacteria grow between 40 and 135 degrees and they grow more rapidly between 72 and 125 degrees.”

Sampson said there are four keys to preventing foodborne bacteria. Wash your hands, clean, and sanitize work surfaces frequently. She said it is important to keep hands and work surfaces clean, especially when you are working with wild game is critical because you don’t want to leave bacteria other surfaces.

Separate raw meat from other perishable foods. Don’t use meat in torn or broken packages because it may not be sealed properly. Cook the meat to the right temperature and invest in and use a good meat thermometer.

“When it comes to controlling bacteria growth, a good thermometer is essential,” she said.

Cooking methods are important because rabbits and squirrels typically do not have very tender carcasses. Sampson said cooks can tenderize the meat by using a meat mallet to pound the meat and make it tender, they can use a marinade, or they can heavily salt the meat, and rinse it off before putting it on the grill or for using it in a recipe. Cooks can also set the meat in a pan on the counter for 15 to 20 minutes to help loosen the proteins and make it more tender.

“Soaking the meat helps break up the tendons and removes the gamey flavors,” she said. “You can add spices and create a unique flavor. Another option is to wrap the meat in fat or something like chicken skin to give the meat a more flavorful and flavor and keep it from getting too dry.”

“When you use a marinade, make sure you are using a high grade like liquid vinegar, lemon juice, tomato juice, or wine,” said Sampson. “The simplest way to create a marinade is to use one tablespoon of salt per quart of water or 1 cup vinegar per quart of water and refrigerate the meat for about an hour.”

Sampson cautioned against marinating the meat for more than 24 hours because it can break down the muscle fiber and the meat will become mushy. She recommends marinating the meat for 8 to 24 hours before broiling or grilling the meat. Discard the marinade after removing the meat.

“When you cook squirrel or rabbit, the secret is to cook it low and slow,” said Sampson. “So you want to use slower cooking methods, such as braising, and moist heat to help break down the muscle fibers and make the meat more tender.”

Braising is a technique done by Browning the meat on all sides in a heavy utensil. A small amount of water is added and then the meat is cooked until tender at a low temperature. Sampson said the easiest way to braise meat is to start with a heavy skillet on medium-high heat draped with enough
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Bethany Botts and her husband, Jeremy, are outreach directors at the farm. It’s one of the most genuine and peaceful places she’s ever been, she said. “In just a few short sessions you see a difference in the kids,” Bethany said. “They come in and they’re maybe really wound up or excited. They’re not sure what to expect. About their third or fourth session, you see kind of peace settle in and they are excited to come back for the next week.”

One little girl, when she first visited, would not talk to or look at Botts. The more Botts was around her, the more she sensed that Botts was a safe person. “One time she looked across the table and blew a kiss at me,” Botts said. “It melted my heart. Another time we were outside and we needed to get carrots for one of the horses. She grabbed my hand without saying anything and looked up at me and smiled. Her story is so sad and tragic that when she grabbed my hand, it was like she trusted me.”

Sponsorships and donations support the farm. The services it offers are free, Carrero said. “So we rely on the sponsorships, help and that little tug on the heart that you want to be able to offer these services without charge,” she explained. “To be part of the healing process in the life of a child … and animals, it is incredible to watch that bond that is being built between the animal and the child.”

For information visit https://www.hopefullpastures.org.

Above: H.O.P.E.-full Pastures offers 90-minute weekly sessions. Every child is matched with an advocate and during that session, they will have a chance for caring for the animal. While the child is in session a family mentor lends a listening ear to the parents and is there to listen, to pray with them, to guide them.

Below: A farm visitor has fun feeding the chickens. H.O.P.E.-full Pastures strives to create a safe, therapeutic environment to help vulnerable youth overcome fear, loss and trauma.

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**TELL THEM YOU SAW THEIR AD IN**

**Farm World**
Directions
1. In a Dutch oven or similar braising pan, melt butter and olive oil over medium heat. Add sliced onions and brown on all sides. Add onions into pan and increase heat to medium-high. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions are translucent and golden brown.

2. Reduce the heat to low and a large stock pot or Dutch oven. Add the meat back in the pan and increase the heat, bringing the cooking liquid up to a gentle simmer. Continue to cook until the meat is tender, about 2-3 hours.

3. Remove the saucepan lid and place the meat on a plate. Add the sauce and any remaining liquid to the pan, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and let the sauce simmer until it has reduced to a thick consistency, about 15-20 minutes.

4. Reduce the cooking liquid to a nice thick sauce (about 5 minutes). The mixture can be served on toast as an appetizer or over a bed of white rice as a main course.

Source: Cornell University Cooperative Extension Service

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FORAGE HARVESTER, 1R, 540 PTO, pull type, low hrs; NH 3PN Corn Head, CIH 8655, round, w/controls; NH 5050, square, twine tie, one owner; NH 22000 bales; NH BR780, round, twine tie, kicker, bale alarm, one own; 5300 hrs, power quad; 1990 JD 4555, frnt fenders, 3 hyds, 15 sp pow

NH 8260, cab, 18x6 ps w/LH shuttle, 4RR, 4210 hrs; Deutz Allis 9190, 8630, 6000 hrs, 3pt, PTO, duals, runs great; White 4-180 Field Boss, rear duals, 4 hyds, power shift w/skip shift, just off the farm; 1992 CIH 2WD, top & tilt; MF 135 Tractor, gas, 2WD, one owner; All

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World MM G900, gas, completely restored; 1960 AC Root, sharp; Miller 2 Bar, 12’; no welds; Schaffer 12’, sm blds. Sunflower 16’, centerfold; Kewanee 1020, 21’. rolling basket; GP 3000, 30’, turbo-till, NT, rockflex, lights, rolling bskts; openers, drag chains, clean; MF 33, 17 run, grass, lift cyl, agitator in seed 7.5-20 tires; CIH 5100, 21x7, grass, press, sharp; IH 6200, 15’, lift cyl, 15’, NT, dolly wheel, pull-type, folding markers, new gauge wheels; No-tills; (12) JD 7000 No-tills; (12) Yetter Adjust Row Cleaners; (16) JD vac, markers, heavy duty DP; JD 7200, 6R-30”, dry fert, nt, vac, sharp!; JD 7200, 6R, dry fert, rebuilt, JD 1760, 8RW, liquid fert, hyd fold, vac; JD 1750, 6R-30”, dry fert, sin

Conveyor, w/110 hp elec motor; 16’ Little Red Bale Elevator; MF #41 Feed Wagon, dolly wheel, tandem axle; Badger PTO Pit Pump; 16’ Hay

CIH 5400, 20’, 15” rows; JD 1530, 16 run, 15”, rolls, hyd deck plates, field tracker.
The USDA announced the February Federal order Class III benchmark milk price at $1.175 per hundredweight (cwt.), down 29 cents from January and $1.25 below February 2020. Additionally, the USDA said that the 24 Class III futures putted a March price at $1.64, April $1.67, May $1.68, June $1.66; July; $1.25; August, $1.28; September, $1.21; October, $1.12; November, $1.08; and December at $1.17. The February Class IV price is $1.39 per cwt., down 31 cents from January, S.01 below a year ago, and the lowest Class IV price since September 2020.

In politics, the House passed a $1.9 trillion stimulus bill on Feb. 27, sending it on to the Senate for passage. HighGround Dairy said Congress is expected to approve the bill for the president’s signature by March 14, when current jobless benefits expire. The package includes funds for additional stimulus checks and extends the enhanced and expanded unemployment benefits through August. The 15 percent increase in food stamp benefits will be extended through September.

Global dairy traders triggered some sharp selling Tuesday in the morning’s Global Dairy Trade auction’s weighted average skyrocketed 15 percent, biggest increase since September 2020 but still short of the exceptional consecutive session of gain. All products offered were in the black except buttermilk powder which was off 0.3 percent. The average winning price was $4.231 U.S., up from $3.746 on Feb. 16. Gains were again led by whole milk powder, up 41 percent, following a 4.3 percent rise last time. Skim milk powder was up 3.5 percent, after inching up 0.3 percent on Feb. 16. GDT butter was up 13.7 percent, after a 2 percent gain last time, and anhydrous milk fat was up 7.4 percent, following a 1.1 percent gain. GDT Cheddar was up 13.7 percent, after a 2.4 percent gain.

StoneX Group says the GDT 80 percent butterfat milk price equates to $1.4976 per pound, down 1.57 percent from last week, 20 cents from the last event and compares to $1.7087 per pound U.S., up 3.0 percent above a year ago. Year over year, this was a 0.8 percent gain, down 1.5 percent from December but 5.7 percent above a year ago. Cheddar, the cheese traded daily at the CME, closed at $3.376 million pounds, up 0.1 percent from December and 18.4 million pounds or a bearish 5.7 percent above a year ago.

Churns produced 206.9 million pounds of butter, a record for January, up 0.3 percent from December. December’s January milk feed ratio at 1.98, down from 2.18 in December, down from 2.42 in January 2020 and the lowest since May 2020’s 1.77.

The index is based on the current milk price in relationship to feed prices for a ration consisting of 51 percent corn, 8 percent soybeans and 41 percent alfalfa hay, thus one pound of milk could only purchase 1.08 pounds of dairy feed that of an blend in January. (continued on page 15B)
Start your tomatoes now under lights; they will be ready for May

At dawn the chorus begins. I awake early, and from my bed I listen to the announcement of spring, and count the number of bird songs I can hear. — Eliot Porter

Astronomical Information
The Great Groundhog Moon wanes throughout the period preceding the Robin Mating Chorus. Moon on March 13 at 5:21 a.m. Rising in the morning and setting in the evening this moon passes overhead throughout the day, telling the robins to sing, and encouraging creatures to be most active, especially as the cold front approaches near March 14. Lunar apogee, the moon’s position farthest from Earth, occurs at 12:00 a.m. on March 18.

Mars moves retrograde from Aries to Taurus in March, and it continues to be the red Evening Star in the western sky. Another red object in Taurus is Aldebaran, the brightest star of the Hyades constellation within Taurus. On the evening of March 22, Mars and Aldebaran will appear to be almost side by side in the far west. Aldebaran will be the twinkling red object.

On March 14, Daylight Saving Time begins at 2 a.m. Set clocks ahead one hour.

Weather Trends
March’s second quarter brings a major pivot in the year’s weather patterns as the rate of Spring’s advance quickens. Odds for milder weather increase with every sunrise, and chances for an afternoon above 50 degrees rising to 40 percent by the end of the week.

Frost strikes the early garden 60 percent of all the nights, however, and there is still a five to ten percent chance each day this week for a high only in the 20s. The end of March’s second week, especially the 9th through the 14th (and with new moon on the 13th) brings an increased chance for extreme weather. Tornadoes struck Ohio during this period in 1917 and 1986, floods in 1907 and 1964. Deep cold invaded the Ohio Valley in 1946 and 1984.

Zeitgebers
(Events in Nature that Tell the Time of Year)
Water striders appear on the ponds and sloughs, and woody bear caterpillars come out from winter hibernation.

Red-tailed hawks, the horned grebe, the common anise, all types of gulls, and black ducks migrate.

Horseradish leaves stretch out to an inch or two, and rhubarb is up to four or five inches. Horseradish buds unravel on the lower branches.

Bleeding hearts push their heads from the ground as day lily leaves reach to the top of your boots, and snow trillium blossoms appear in the bottomlands.

The full spring robin chorus begins before sunrise. Male red-winged blackbirds sing in the sun, as females join them in their nesting areas.


The migration period for Canadian geese peaks. Ducks arrive from the South. Fish become more active as the water gradually warms in the sun.

Countdown to Spring
• One week to the first wave of blooming woodland wildflowers and the very first cabbage white butterflies
• Two weeks until golden forsythia blooms in town and skunk cabbage sends out its first leaves in the wetlands
• Three weeks until the blooming of Middle Spring wildflowers in the woods
• Four weeks until American toads sing their mating songs in the night.
• Five weeks until the Great Dandelion and Violet Bloom begins
• Six weeks until azaleas and snowball viburnums and dogwoods bloom
• Seven weeks until iris and daylilies and daisies come into flower
• Eight weeks until the beginning of clover bloom in yards and pastures
• Nine weeks until the first orange day lily flowers
• Ten weeks until roses bloom in town and thistles bud in the fields

Mind and Body
The S.A.D. Index, which measures seasonal stress on a scale from 1 to 100, rises as the moon darkens, reaching a high 68 on March 12 and 13. It then falls into the gentle 40s by St. Patrick’s Day, March 17. For full S.A.D. statistics, consult Poor Will’s Almanack for 2021.

In the Field and Garden
This is a great lunar time for setting out pansies, cabbages, kale, collards and Brussels sprouts, and for seeding lettuce and spinach, too. It never hurts to put a few corn and tomato seeds directly into the ground in the middle of March. You never know when the spring will develop into the warmest on record. If you make a few feet of experimental plantings every few days, you will probably be the one with the earliest of everything, no matter what the weather is.

Transplant shade and fruit trees, shrubs, grape vines, strawberries, raspberries, and roses while the ground temperature remains in the 40s and 50s. Complete all field planting preparations.

Your mares may come into heat as the day’s length nears twelve hours. Be sure they are up to date on their (continued on page 14B)
vaccinations. Check for bot eggs.

When the Great Dandelion Bloom is over, expect beets to swarm within two or three hours.

New Year’s celebrations for immigrants from Cambodia, Thailand and Laos begin in a month. Earmark your lamps and kids for this marker now.

Set flats of pansies and hardy vegetables out of doors on milder days to harden them for late March or early April planting.

Warm weather crops such as tomatoes and peppers could be ready to set out on the first of May if you start them this week under lights.

On St. Patrick’s Day (March 17), tradition suggests you plant peas and potatos as conditions permit. This is also the time to watch for termites to swarm near old barns and outbuildings.

Almanack Classics

The Lost Chicken and Dumplings
By Eugene Hicks, Willard, Ohio

My sister, Berta, and Aron Shephard got married in Prestonsburg, Ky., our hometown. Mom planned a big wedding for them. She hired her big fat hen, and she made a big kettle of chicken and dumplings.

There were a lot of people there that day for the wedding. Mom had the table set with a big lace tablecloth, and everything looked pretty. Then Mom said, “You all come to the table.”

When everybody had come, Mom looked around and said to Dad: “There’s two missing, my brother William and his wife, Leda May.”

Dad found them in the living room and asked, “Why aren’t you two at the table?”

“Oh,” one of them said, “we aren’t hungry right now. You all eat, and we’ll eat later.”

“All right then,” Dad said, “I’ll be plenty left when you get hungry.”

Mom looked around and Dad sat down; then Mom said, “Something’s missing. Oh, I know,” she said, “it’s the chicken and dumplings. Oh I can’t believe I could miss putting the chicken and dumplings on the table!”

We got up and walked to the cool stove. Mom said to Dad: “The chicken and dumplings are gone! Who on Earth would take them.”

Dad walked into the living room.

William and his wife were sitting back in the corner with spoons just stuffing their mouths full of chicken.

Was sad he made draw back his fists to hit his mom’s brother, but mom grabbed Dad’s hand and said, “Come on, let’s finish eating,” and he said to both of them, “I don’t want either of you to ever put foot on my land again.”

Then Mom’s brother said, “We were only playing a joke on the newlyweds!”

But they left and didn’t come back to our house for a long time. When they did come back, though, Dad and William shook hands, and from then on they were good friends. Happy ending.

Poor Will Needs Your Stories!

Poor Will pays $48 for unusual and true farm, garden, animal and other love stories used in this column. Send yours to Poor Will’s Almanack at the address below.

Answers To Last Week’s Scrambler IQ

In order to estimate your Scrambler IQ, award yourself 15 points for each word unscrambled, adding a 50-point bonus for getting all of them correct. If you find a typo, add another 15 points to your IQ.

1. ABER (10)
   EREB
   BANE
   YEARN
   ARE
   TIER

2. EADHR (9)
   EAHRD
   HADRE
   RAHD
   HADER

3. RIMA (7)
   AMIR
   IRMA
   AMRI

4. MIN (5)
   NIM
   MNI
   NIM

5. REVE (4)
   EREV
   EREV
   VEEER

6. REILVAC (4)
   LAVIRE
   REAVIL
   LAVIRI

7. EARFAPESS (3)
   FAREAP
   FAREPS
   PAFFER

8. ETER (3)
   TERE
   ERT
   ERT

9. EREEEV (2)
   EEEER
   RREEE
   EEREER

This Week’s Rhyming Scrambler

SSEMS
SSEGHD
XCSSEE
ESSENS
EPRCSS
ESSEC
SESSNGN
WEKNSN
SHSSHPPFOEE
GERSERS

Poor Will’s Almanack for 2021 (with the S.A.D. Index) Is Still Available! For your autographed copy, send $20.00 enclosed in shipping and handling to Poor Will. P.O. Box 431, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387.

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Poor Will
Acting on climate change will be a slow process

“We’ll always have Paris,” one of the greatest lines in all of Hollywood movies came at the climax of the classic film Casablanca. The main character Rick tells his former lover Ilsa, “We’ll always have Paris” referring to their brief romance in the eye of World War II — a courtship that ended abruptly with the Nazi invasion of France. Today, the phrase refers to Paris as part of his environmental policy, and, just a few years later, President Trump drew the U.S. from the Accord. NowPresident Biden has said the U.S. will again participate in the Paris Accord and promised the U.S. will go even further in carbon reduction than called for in the original agreement. The cost for carbon-free electricity production in the U.S. by 2035 and net-zero carbon emissions from the U.S. by 2050. Critics of the plan say it would wreck the U.S. economy and significantly increase the cost of basic goods for most people. However, a recent study by Purdue’s Department of Agricultural Economics concluded the financial impact would not be catastrophic. The study predicted that food prices would rise 1.1% and non-food prices 1.8%. Yet, these reductions would require significant changes in Midwest agriculture and energy production.

At present, most of the electricity in the Midwest is produced by coal and fossil fuel. The President’s expectations that this will drop to zero in the next 13 years seems laughable. The power issues that California and Texas have had in the past year indicate their wind, solar, and hydroelectric systems still need work. It is one thing to call for an overhaul of the electric production system, and it is quite another to make it happen.

Making agriculture carbon-neutral is the top farm policy objective of the Biden administration. Both the Senate and House Ag committees have identified this as their top priority. Ag leaders have pointed out that farmers are not the problem but the solution. Agriculture only

(continued on page 178)
MARCH 31

Truitt

From Page 16B

represents 10% of total greenhouse gas emissions according to the EPA. Cover crops, soil conservation, and other practices can reduce this even more. Soil is a great place to sequester the productive soil in the U.S. In order to get farmers involved in this effort, it will be vital that any program be voluntary and also provide an economic incentive to participate. As these new policies and programs evolve, it will be necessary that agriculture be at the table and help craft the solution. Major changes in electrical costs and transportation regulations may also have an impact on a farmer’s ability to address climate change practices.

The Paris agreement may impact U.S. agriculture in another way. Both the U.S. and China signed the agreement, yet China has done little to address the issue. The Trump administration promised to release his blueprint in a 5 year plan outlining their emissions reduction efforts. President Biden has promised to release his blueprint in April.

Climate change efforts need to be carefully watched by agriculture because there are so many ways it can be impacted by what is done or not done. Christiana Figueres, one of the authors of the 2015 Paris deal, recently told the AP that "most of these countries don't really care about saving the planet…only if it serves their best interest." So, despite the hand wringing and doomsday projections in the media, change and actual progress may be slow. Yet, remember, we’ll always have Paris.

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From Page 16B

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How well do you know your cowboy cooking lingo?

Cowboys have always had their own vocabulary. A good hint if they are talking in code so that only another cowboy can understand what they're saying. For example, the cook on a cowboy crew is a pot cooker or cookie. The chuck wagon where he prepares the grub is his crumb castle and when he rings his dinner bell, cowboys put on the nosebag.

To determine just how well you speak cowboy here is a little multiple-choice test to find out if you're a real cowboy or one of the dropper persuasion. (Answers are at the end.)

1. “Boggy top” is a) pine nuts with goat cheese, b) portobello mushrooms on a beerwurst roll with balsamic vinegar dressing, c) taco cods with mutton enchiladas, d) pie with no crust.

2. “Bear sign” is a) fried coleslaw, b) donuts, c) a white bread bologna sandwich, d) pepperoni pizza without anchovies.

3. “Spotted dog” is a) Dalmatian on fry bread, b) dry dirt sock soup, c) garlic rattlebake hash, d) suet pudding.

4. “Cackleberries” are a) eggs, b) cowcumbers (pickles), c) peanut M & Ms, d) raspberries.

5. “Cow salve” is a) double espresso, b) half decaf with mocha, c) guacamole, d) butter, e) vente almond frappuccino with a hint of cinnamon.

6. “Saddle horn” is a) biscuits hard enough to break the teeth on a rat, b) Fig Newtons, c) arugula salad with saddle soap dressing, d) cooked carrots in beet sauce.

7. “Chuckwagon chickens” is a) haggis, b) pea soup under glass, c) salt pork dipped in flour and fried, d) barbecued pristine chicken.

8. “County attorney” is a) beans that talk behind your back, b) rutabaga nestled in a bed of mixed greens, c) son of a gun stew, d) oatmeal with raisins.

9. “Splatterdabs” are a) fish sticks with chutney, b) pork and beans, c) feed maze cheese balls, d) pancakes.

10. “Lick” is a) molasses, b) an ice cream cone, c) ham and cheese on white bread, d) watermelon infused with vodka.

11. “Desperation cake” is a) fried Hostess Twinkies®, b) cake made with white or milk, c) refrigerated Christmas fruitcake, d) wedding cake.

12. “Neck oil” or “bug juice” is a) canker sores, b) too much soy sauce, c) it tastes like scalded water, d) lemon and honey.

13. “Rocky Mountain oysters” are a) moose balls, b) sleep eyeballs, c) butter biscuits, d) oysters from Colorado.

14. “Kansas City fish” is a) chipped tunas on toast, b) fried pork, c) chicken gizzards, d) rack of woodchuck.

15. “Whitetail strawberries” are a) onions, b) beans usually cooked in dishwater, c) cabbage, d) prunes.

16. “Call slobber” is a) Cool Whip, b) butter (also known as axle grease), c) leftovers, d) merengue.

Answers: (1) a, (2) b, (3) c, (4) a, (5) b, (6) b, (7) c, (8) b, (9) a, (10) a, (11) b, (12) c, (13) a, (14) b, (15) b, (16) d.

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Government will support ethanol industry in lawsuit

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — The federal government announced it will support the ethanol industry in a lawsuit over biofuel waivers granted to oil refineries under President Donald Trump’s administration.

The Environmental Protection Agency said it is reversing course and will support a January 2020 decision by the Denver-based 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in a lawsuit filed by the Renewable Fuels Association and farm groups. The lawsuit is headed to arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court this spring.

Federal law requires refiners to blend billions of gallons of biofuels in the nation’s gasoline supply or buy credits from refineries that do the blending. Refiners can seek waivers if they can show that meeting the ethanol quotas would create a financial hardship for their companies.

The appeals court concluded the EPA improperly granted exemptions to refineries that didn’t qualify. The court said that refineries should be granted waivers only as extensions, but most refineries seeking exemptions had not continuously received them year after year. The decision effectively limited the EPA’s ability to grant most exemptions. Two refineries appealed the decision to the Supreme Court. Trump, who poll shows had overwhelming support among Midwestern farmers, had promised to back policies that helped agriculture, but his EPA approved sharp increases in the waivers, aiding oil refiners and reducing demand for corn-based ethanol.

Roughly 40% of U.S. corn is used to produce ethanol. The EPA under Trump issued 85 retroactive small refinery exemptions for the 2016-2018 compliance years, undercutting the renewable fuel volumes by a total of 4 billion gallons, according to the Renewable Fuels Association.

Roughly a month after President Joe Biden took office, his EPA reversed the federal government’s stand, saying the EPA agrees with the appeals court that the exemption was intended to operate as a temporary measure.

“The change reflects the agency’s considered assessment that the Tenth Circuit’s reasoning better reflects the statutory text and structure, as well as Congress’s intent in establishing the RFS program,” the EPA said in a statement.

Biofuels and farm advocates applauded the decision.

“This announcement marks a giant step forward by the new administration to restore the integrity of the Renewable Fuel Standard and honor the statutory intent of the program,” said Renewable Fuels Association President Geoff Cooper.

Iowa Republican politicians, who were loyal supporters of Trump but struggled to defend his administration’s ethanol policy, also supported the Biden administration move.

“This is a step to provide much-needed certainty to ethanol and biodiesel producers,” Sen. Joni Ernst said.

Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds called the decision an “encouraging sign” from the Biden administration.

“Iowa farms would create a financial hardship for their companies. The appeals court concluded the EPA improperly granted exemptions to refineries that didn’t qualify. The court said that refineries should be granted waivers only as extensions, but most refineries seeking exemptions had not continuously received them year after year. The decision effectively limited the EPA’s ability to grant most exemptions. Two refineries appealed the decision to the Supreme Court. Trump, who poll shows had overwhelming support among Midwestern farmers, had promised to back policies that helped agriculture, but his EPA approved sharp increases in the waivers, aiding oil refiners and reducing demand for corn-based ethanol.

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Iowa Republican politicians, who were loyal supporters of Trump but struggled to defend his administration’s ethanol policy, also supported the Biden administration move.

“This is a step to provide much-needed certainty to ethanol and biodiesel producers,” Sen. Joni Ernst said.

Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds called the decision an “encouraging sign” from the Biden administration.

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