

MICHIGAN CORN

BETWEEN THE ROWS

The Joint Magazine of the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan and the Michigan Corn Growers Association



CMPM Building Global Markets for Corn

SUMMER 2020

MICHIGAN CORN

BETWEEN THE ROWS

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Governor Whitmer Announces Corn Marketing Program of Michigan 2020 Board Appointments

In March, Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced the 2020 board appointments to the board of the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan.



Matthew M. Holysz, of Vicksburg, is the owner of his family's corn and soybean farm. Mr. Holysz is reappointed to represent District 3 growers for a term commencing March 6, 2020 and expiring March 5, 2023.



David M. Rupprecht, of Vassar, is the vice president of A. Zwerk & Sons Inc. Mr. Rupprecht is appointed to represent District 7 growers for a term commencing March 6, 2020 and expiring March 5, 2023. He succeeds Tom Durand whose term expires March 5, 2020.



Ned L. Wyse, of Camden, is the owner of his family's corn and soybean farm. Mr. Wyse is reappointed to represent District 2 growers for a term commencing March 6, 2020 and expiring March 5, 2023.



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CONTACT INFO

Refer questions to Claire White
at 517-668-2676 or cwhite@micorn.org

**For more information, visit
www.micorn.org**

DATES, TOPICS & LOCATIONS

Session 1

Agronomy

January 5 - 7, 2021 • Lansing

Session 2

Technology

February 2 - 4, 2021 • Lansing

Session 3

Farm Management

March 9 - 11, 2021 • Lansing

Session 4

You Pick

June 22 - 24, 2021 • Lansing

Session 5

National Corn Growers Association

July 2021 • Washington, DC

Session 6 (Optional)

International Tour

2022 • Location TBD

Registration fee: \$300 - optional session is extra, lodging and meals provided.



CORN MARKETING PROGRAM
CMPM
OF MICHIGAN

Advocating for Corn in the New Abnormal

In the world of American politics, focus often comes down to states that could be won by either national party. Politically speaking, these swing states are color blind and could swing the balance of power in Washington, D.C.

Not that it's news to any of you, but Michigan happens to be one of those states.

I'm from Iowa, another swing state, and as I see it, battleground states have advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantages are you're bombarded with candidate advertisements alleging crimes against their opponent that would have made Jimmy Hoffa blush. If there is a silver lining in the very dark cloud that is COVID-19, it's that political campaigning has slowed during the lockdown. Rest assured, that break from the political rhetoric is only temporary.

As the spring turns to summer and states start reopening their economies, political campaigns will reemerge from the COVID rain delay and sharpen their focus on battleground states like Michigan. You matter right now. That's the advantage states like yours and mine have.

So how do you leverage that to benefit corn growers? Standing out among all the other interests has never been easy, but it'll be even trickier this year. The 2020 election will almost certainly be remembered as one of the more unusual cycles in U.S. electoral history. COVID-19 is making sure of that.



Campaigns and governments are operating virtually these days. Crowd gatherings are either discouraged or downright unlawful in some places. To account for these logistical challenges, campaign playbooks are being rewritten daily. But that doesn't mean there won't be opportunities to connect.

One benefit of the pandemic is that it's narrowed the conversation to two things: rebuilding our economy and protecting our health. Corn farmers are impacted on both fronts.

Corn prices have fallen across the United States. According to our recent analysis, cash corn prices declined by 16 percent on average from the first of the year to May. The decline was even more pronounced in Michigan, which saw a 22 percent drop. All told, we project a \$50 per acre average revenue decline for the 2019 corn crop with losses anticipated to be higher for the 2020 crop as two of corn's largest uses, livestock feed and ethanol, have been especially impacted by COVID.

To better illustrate how COVID has impacted corn farmers, look no further than the ethanol plants that have been compelled to dramatically reduce their production. Fixing the loss of corn demand and addressing the job losses created by this powerfully destructive force should be at the top of any candidate's list of priorities to rebuild the economy.

You shouldn't assume that it is. The scale of this crisis is truly unimaginable, touching every single sector of the economy. As noted earlier, all these interests will be positioning themselves appropriately once the campaigns restart.

The good news? The credibility and authenticity of the farmer voice is a proven strength that will allow us to stand out and remain relevant in this highly unusual election cycle. Your voice counts and needs to be heard in this process.

Showing up to vote on election day is one simple way to engage in the process. Actively participating in a campaign is another. Whatever you choose to do, let's make sure this advantage we have as battleground states is used to benefit our fellow corn growers.

Lastly, and to be clear, we are a fiercely non-partisan organization. We're for working with policymakers that support corn, whatever their affiliation, even those that pull for the Wolverines, or, in my case, the Hawkeyes.

Best of luck this season.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Ross".

Kevin Ross
Iowa Farmer, NCGA President

We Need You To Host Your Legislator For A Ride Along In The Combine!

Every year during harvest, the Michigan Corn Growers Association (MCGA) invites legislators to ride along in the combine with a local farmer. These events are an opportunity to build a one-on-one relationship with your legislator and educate them about farming, agriculture and the issues that are important to you!

"Having that personal relationship with our legislators is so important when it comes to agricultural policy," said Jim Zook, executive director of the MCGA. "Any chance our

farmers have to talk to their legislators about what they do and why they do it will ultimately benefit our industry moving forward."

The MCGA is looking for farmer volunteers who would be willing to host a legislator at their farm during this year's harvest. To volunteer, call Penni Sweeney at (517) 668-2676 or send us an email at corninfo@micorn.com. If we have a legislator in your area that would like to do a ride along, we'll be in contact to set up a time and date!





MCGA Gets Creative During Uncertain Times

The last few months have been a challenging time for all of us. While we've had to change the way we do some things and get creative with tactics, MCGA has continued to ensure your voice is heard on critical policy issues. A few of the highlights of our most recent work include:

- Hosting a series of Zoom conversations with state leaders in the legislature and MDARD Director Gary McDowell.
- Sending a questionnaire out to every person running for the state or federal legislature in Michigan to assist our PAC in making endorsements based on the best interests of corn farmers.
- Advocating at the federal level to make sure that farmers and agriculture weren't left out of the assistance aimed at rebuilding our economy.
- Corresponded with every Michigan legislator to keep corn growers concerns at the forefront as a drastically reduced new budget is crafted for our state.
- Advocated for the expansion of broadband in Michigan. We are pleased that the USDA provided Michigan with a grant to assist with the expansion.

In addition, our state and federal lobbyists have been working on our behalf to keep our legislative presence strong during this time. This includes:

- Connecting Michigan Corn directly to legislative and state leaders to educate them on what the industry needs to keep running during the pandemic.
- Advocating for appropriate designations throughout the Stay at Home order for essential workers to remain on the job.
- Supporting access to PPE that allows agriculture businesses to safely operate and protect the health of workers, so they stay healthy and on the job.
- Calling on leaders to prioritize funding for state programs that are needed to ensure Michigan producers have the licensing and certifications in place to ship their products.

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U.S. Grains Council Builds Global Markets with 2019 Successes

The Corn Marketing Program of Michigan and the Michigan Corn Growers Association both work in partnership with the U.S. Grains Council (USGC) to expand trade of corn, ethanol and DDGS across the world. USGC recently released its 2019 Annual Report, which outlines some of the key successes we've had over the past year. We're highlighting a few of those programs here. Visit grains.org/2019-annual-report for more!

Latin American Boot Camps Empower Grain Buyers

The U.S. Grains Council (USGC) conducted intensive workshops in Central America in 2019 on grain contracting and risk management as part of work to develop

more effective buyers of U.S. corn in the growing region.

The first workshop series in May 2019 focused on the specific contracts used for trading coarse grains and co-products. The boot camps took place in San Salvador, El Salvador; Panama City, Panama; Bogota, Colombia; and Medellin, Colombia. Overall, 130 importers and end-users from 13 countries participated.

These boot camps were well-timed to address delays Latin American importers experienced in 2019. Some customers brought copies of their current international grain contracts to discuss issues or problems as well as to discover missed opportunities.

A second workshop in Panama in September 2019 tackled the topic of risk management to help grain buyers better grasp hedging

strategies and fundamentals affecting the price of U.S. corn. The boot camp included 23 participants from South America and 35 participants from Central America, representing 10 countries in total. They hailed from some of the most relevant players in the feed, poultry and livestock industries in Latin America – both buyers and high-level management and financial officials.

The group was participative, and some approached Council staff at the end of the session to request additional information about implementing the hedging practices discussed in their companies.

Central America is a growing region for U.S. corn exports, thanks to geographic proximity and the access provided by the Dominican Republic-Central America FTA (CAFTA-DR). U.S. corn exports to CAFTA-DR countries

WHERE IS U.S. CORN GOING?

Top U.S. Export Customers In Marketing Year 2018/2019



U.S. GRAINS COUNCIL
www.grains.org

Source: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service's Global Agriculture Trading System report for marketing year Sept. 1, 2018, to Aug. 31, 2019.
*Corn is sold based on contract and at varying rates, therefore top rankings for tonnage do not align with rankings for value.

Dollar Amount

1	MEXICO	\$2.99	BILLION
2	JAPAN	\$2.48	BILLION
3	COLOMBIA	\$815	MILLION
4	SOUTH KOREA	\$704	MILLION
5	CANADA	\$400	MILLION
	Taiwan	\$375	million
	Peru	\$333	million
	Guatemala	\$212	million
	Costa Rica	\$152	million
	Saudi Arabia	\$141	million

Metric Tons*

MEXICO	16,104,484
JAPAN	13,166,922
COLOMBIA	4,762,442
SOUTH KOREA	3,745,647
CANADA	2,423,786
Peru	1,988,226
Taiwan	1,987,531
Guatemala	1,215,811
Costa Rica	885,102
Saudi Arabia	793,156

have increased more than three-fold since the agreement went into effect in 2006.

In the 2018/2019 marketing year, Guatemala purchased more than one million metric tons (39.4 bushels per metric ton) of U.S. corn, ranking as the eighth largest buyer and representing a 70 percent increase since CAFTA-DR entered into force. Exports of U.S. corn to Costa Rica and El Salvador have also increased substantially during the same time period – up 55 percent and 42 percent, respectively.

MEASA Buyers Conference Spurs Sales

More than 100 of the largest grain and feedstock importers from the Middle East, Africa, Europe and South Asia convened for a U.S. Grains Council (UGSC) Buyers' Conference in Athens, Greece in June 2019. The conference resulted in 538,000 metric tons in sales of U.S. corn and co-products, sorghum and barley.

Ten expert speakers and 10 export-capable agribusinesses participated in the program,

offering presentations on topics ranging from the economic advantages of importing feed grains to the nutritional benefits of U.S. dried distiller's grains with solubles (DDGS) and sorghum.

Attendees also participated in one-on-one consultations on the last day of the conference. Expert nutritional and technical consultants delivered clear, well-researched information and suggestions to end-users, providing the tools necessary to make informed decisions on DDGS and sorghum use in processing feed.

The conference allowed time not only to answer this array of questions, but also for networking between U.S. sellers and overseas buyers. These face-to-face interactions are a critical component of the Council's work to promote U.S. coarse grains and related products.

The Athens conference followed a similar buyers' conference in 2017. These regional buyers' conferences are part of the Council's work to maximize the U.S. competitive advantage, develop strong ties to industry

and facilitate opportunities to make or negotiate sales.

In 2019, the Council used Agricultural Trade Promotion (ATP) funds to expand the scope of the program by inviting more than 20 participants from South Asia and Africa to the conference to lay the foundation for future sales to these regions.

In a survey after the event, attendees reported conducting business over the five-day period with volumes topping 540,000 metric tons. Buyers reported contracting 488,500 metric tons (19.2 million bushels) of corn and corn co-products, 45,5000 tons (2.09 million bushels) of sorghum and 6,000 tons (276,000 bushels) of barley.

Overall, the sales, valued at more than \$110 million, yielded a return on investment of more than \$231 per \$1 of USDA Market Access Program (MAP), Foreign Market Development (FMD) and ATP funds invested to execute this conference.

Michigan Corn Growers Association and Michigan FFA Foundation

NEW
PARTNERSHIP
WITH FFA

Friday, July 31
2020

GOLF OUTING & FUNDRAISER

The Michigan Corn Growers Association is proud to partner with FFA to host our first annual FFA/MCGA golf outing and fundraiser.

Four person scramble at Centennial Acres, 12485 Dow Rd., Sunfield

REGISTRATION:

\$65 per golfer – Includes 18 holes of golf with cart, complimentary range balls, lunch and steak dinner.

\$250 per foursome

\$85 per golfer – After July 22, 2020

Register online at www.micorn.org or by calling 888-323-6601.

Fax completed form to (517) 668-2670 or mail to 2020 Golf, MCGA, 13750 S. Sedona Parkway, Suite 5, Lansing, MI 48906

SCHEDULE:

9:00 a.m. Registration, coffee and doughnuts

10:00 a.m. Shotgun start

At the turn Lunch

3:30 p.m. Awards and steak dinner



2020 GOLF OUTING REGISTRATION

Company name: _____

Contact name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Player 1: _____

Player 2: _____

Player 3: _____

Player 4: _____

EARLY REGISTRATION ENDS JULY 22, 2020

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

☐ Credit Card (circle one): VISA MC Debit ☐ Check (#) ☐ Cash
Credit card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ CCV code: _____
Name on card: _____ Zip code: _____
Signature: _____ TOTAL: _____

Sponsorship opportunities available: 888.323.6601

Michigan Corn Growers Association

**NEW
DATE!**

**Tuesday, August 11
2020**

THUMB GOLF OUTING

**Four person scramble at Ubly Heights Golf Club
2409 E Atwater Rd, Ubly, MI**

REGISTRATION:

Early Registration:

Member – \$50 Non Member – \$85

Late Registration:

Member – \$70 Non Member – \$110

Register online at www.micorn.org or
by calling 888-323-6601.

Mail completed form to:
2020 Golf, MCGA
13750 S. Sedona Parkway, Suite 5
Lansing, MI 48906

SCHEDULE:

9:00 a.m. Registration, coffee and doughnuts

10:00 a.m. Shotgun start

At the turn Lunch

3:30 p.m. Awards and steak dinner



2020 THUMB GOLF OUTING REGISTRATION

Company name: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Contact name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

MCGA Member:

MCGA Member:

Player 1: _____ ☐ Yes ☐ No

Player 3: _____ ☐ Yes ☐ No

Player 2: _____ ☐ Yes ☐ No

Player 4: _____ ☐ Yes ☐ No

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

EARLY REGISTRATION
MCGA Member golf & dinner: # _____ @\$50.00 ea.

Non-member golf & dinner: # _____ @\$85.00 ea.

Dinner only: # _____ @\$25.00 ea.

LATE REGISTRATION
_____ @\$70.00 ea.

_____ @\$110.00 ea.

_____ @\$25.00 ea.

**EARLY
REGISTRATION ENDS
JULY 31, 2020**

TOTAL:

☐ Credit Card (circle one): VISA MC Debit ☐ Check (#) _____ ☐ Cash

Credit card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ CCV code: _____

Name on card: _____ Zip code: _____

Signature: _____

Sponsorship opportunities available: 888.323.6601



Michigan Corn Welcomes New Summer Intern – Andrew Smith

Michigan Corn Growers extends a warm welcome to our new summer intern: Andrew Smith. Andrew hails from the Bay Port area in Huron County. He is currently a sophomore at Michigan State University (MSU) dual majoring in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Education and Agribusiness Management.

Andrew grew up on a five-generation family farm specializing in corn, sugar beets, dry beans, wheat, and beef cattle. He has been heavily involved in FFA through showing steers at the fair, competing in leadership and career development contests, and serving in various leadership positions within his chapter and region. His leadership and agricultural involvement led to him being elected as the 2019-2020 Michigan FFA Association State Treasurer. Andrew is also active in MSU's Agriculture, Food, and

Natural Resources Education Club, in which he has recently been elected treasurer.

Through his involvement on the farm and in these extracurriculars, Andrew has developed a passion for representing, advocating, and providing solutions to issues on behalf of the agricultural industry. As a result, Andrew plans to use his two degrees from MSU to go into a career of agricultural policy to continue to give back to an industry that has given so much to him. With Michigan Corn being a prominent agricultural policy stakeholder within our state, Andrew is thankful to have the opportunity to join our organization for the summer. He looks forward to expanding his knowledge of the corn industry, making meaningful connections and continuing his passion of leaving a positive impact on the agricultural community.

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MCGA Brings Our Priorities to Washington, D.C.

By: Jim Zook, Executive Director, MCGA

This year, the Michigan Corn Growers

Association joined forces with other state corn associations to advocate in Washington, D.C. Fortunately, we were able to get in and out of D.C. before the COVID-19 situation developed. This partnership with other states has proven to be very effective for both our board member growth and for the organization's ability to show strength in numbers.

Michigan partnered with the following states for this event: Illinois, Wisconsin, Texas, Ohio, Minnesota, Nebraska and Kansas. Attendees representing the Michigan Corn Growers Association were: Matt Cary and his daughter Maddy, Brian Kreps, Chris Creguer, Waylon



Smolinski, Matt Frostic, Jason McConnachie, Ron Parks, Jim Zook and Phil Gordon.

This event helped expose our board members to geographically diverse issues around transportation, trade, water quality, conservation, soil health and ethanol. Interacting with perspectives different than what we have been accustomed to leads to a deeper understanding of the issues and the broader political context.

The overall result of this event was extremely positive and proved to be helpful in pushing the corn industry forward. These meetings helped to educate our policymakers and reinforced the importance of working together to accomplish the common goal.

During our meetings, we advocated for higher level blends of ethanol with government officials, as well as industry. We talked about different ways to address conservation and what would be effective or ineffective with agriculture. Trade is also a high priority, and we were able to share with our state's Congressional delegation our support for pushing for additional trade agreements.

Seeking Nominations for the Michigan Corn Growers Association Board

The Michigan Corn Growers Association is seeking nominations for open board positions.

Michigan's corn industry is facing a long list of challenges, including the upcoming state budget, maintaining trade relations, fighting to grow the ethanol industry, pushing back against EPA overreach and securing new markets for Michigan corn. Your service on the board will help make sure Michigan corn farmers' voices are heard in Lansing and in Washington D.C. We encourage you to consider running for a position on the MCGA board.



MCGA is seeking nominations in the following districts:

District 3 – Representing Huron, Saginaw, Sanilac and Tuscola counties.

District 6 – Representing Allegan, Berrien, Cass, Kalamazoo and Van Buren counties.

District 8 – Representing Lenawee, Monroe and Washtenaw counties.

At-Large – Representing the entire state. In order to appear on the ballot, nominations must be received by September 01, 2020.

All elected directors will hold office for a term of three years. To be eligible for a seat on the board you must be a regular

MCGA member in good standing.

Please contact Penni Sweeney at psweeney@micorn.org or 888-323-6601 if you would like to run or nominate someone for one of the above districts.



How Trade Benefits the U.S. Economy, and What Is the Impact of a Trade Deficit?

Over the next few editions of *Between the Rows*, we'll be sharing a series of excerpts from *The Essential Guide To U.S. Trade*, a backgrounder that was written by Andrea Durkin for the U.S. Grains Council and National Corn Growers Association. To read the whole backgrounder, visit our website at www.micorn.org/trade-101.

Look for the trade value in everything.

Most products we use have stories. They are the culmination of ideas, engineering, materials testing, accounting services, design, coding, sales, farming, manufacturing and countless other activities by workers who add their value along the way.

Examples can be found all around your home. Open your dresser drawer. Chances are, you'll pull a cotton shirt out of your drawer that doesn't have a "Made in USA" label. Even so, American researchers, engineers and designers in the textile industry are busy figuring out how our jeans

can hold up through a lot of washings, how to keep wrinkles out of our suit jackets, and how our yoga pants will stretch in downward dog. Even if American workers aren't stitching up the final product when the "Made in" label is sewn in, they are nonetheless responsible for creating around 70% of that garment's value.

Every industry is different, but the basic story is similar: the expansion of global production networks offers opportunities for a wide range of American workers to participate. The question is, where do American workers want to be on the production curve? Most jobs are being created at the beginning of the product journey and at the end, closer to customers. Fortunately, this is where American companies and workers excel and where jobs are being created.

Let's talk about the trade balance for a minute.

It may sound counterintuitive, but the more production processes are spread across national boundaries through global

value chains, the more integrated the U.S. economy becomes with other economies in the world. Having so many firms lead and participate in global value chains is an American strength.

Like any successful businesses, U.S. firms are focused on maximizing the value they create while minimizing the costs to do it. What they aren't doing is keeping track of the trade balance. Why? Because it's a national accounting mechanism that does not provide information on where value is created. If that's so, why do we hear so much about our trade deficit?

In 2018, the United States trade deficit grew to \$622 billion, the largest since 2008. Notably, the goods deficit with China hit a record \$378.7 billion, which is clearly a big component of the overall deficit. Should we be concerned?

It's mostly not the case that the deficit results from unfair trade practices. Nor is there agreement we need to do something about the trade deficit, since around half of what we import is comprised of the capital goods and material inputs we need to make our products.

Clouding things further, the methodology governments use to report trade flows is seriously outdated. The most common way to keep a national accounting of trade is to report the gross commercial value of goods and services as they exit and enter the country as if everything being traded is a finished product.

But, as described before, products are made through global value chains. Only one quarter of the goods and services traded globally are finished products. Therefore, the way we count the trade balance ignores that three quarters of global trade is in inputs or intermediary goods and services that make up parts of the overall production process.

In our previous clothing example, 70% of the value of a shirt might be added here in the United States, but if it was stitched up in China and sent to us as a final good, China gets 100% of the value of that shirt credited to its export balance. This is why trade policy shouldn't overly focus on the trade balance, even though we hear a lot about it in the media. It's not a very good representation of the strength of our economy, the "fairness" of our trading relationships, or whether jobs are growing or not. In fact, when our economy is booming, unemployment is down, and incomes are growing, we tend to buy more from all the businesses that use global supply chains – widening the trade deficit.

Keep reading at: www.micorn.org/trade-101



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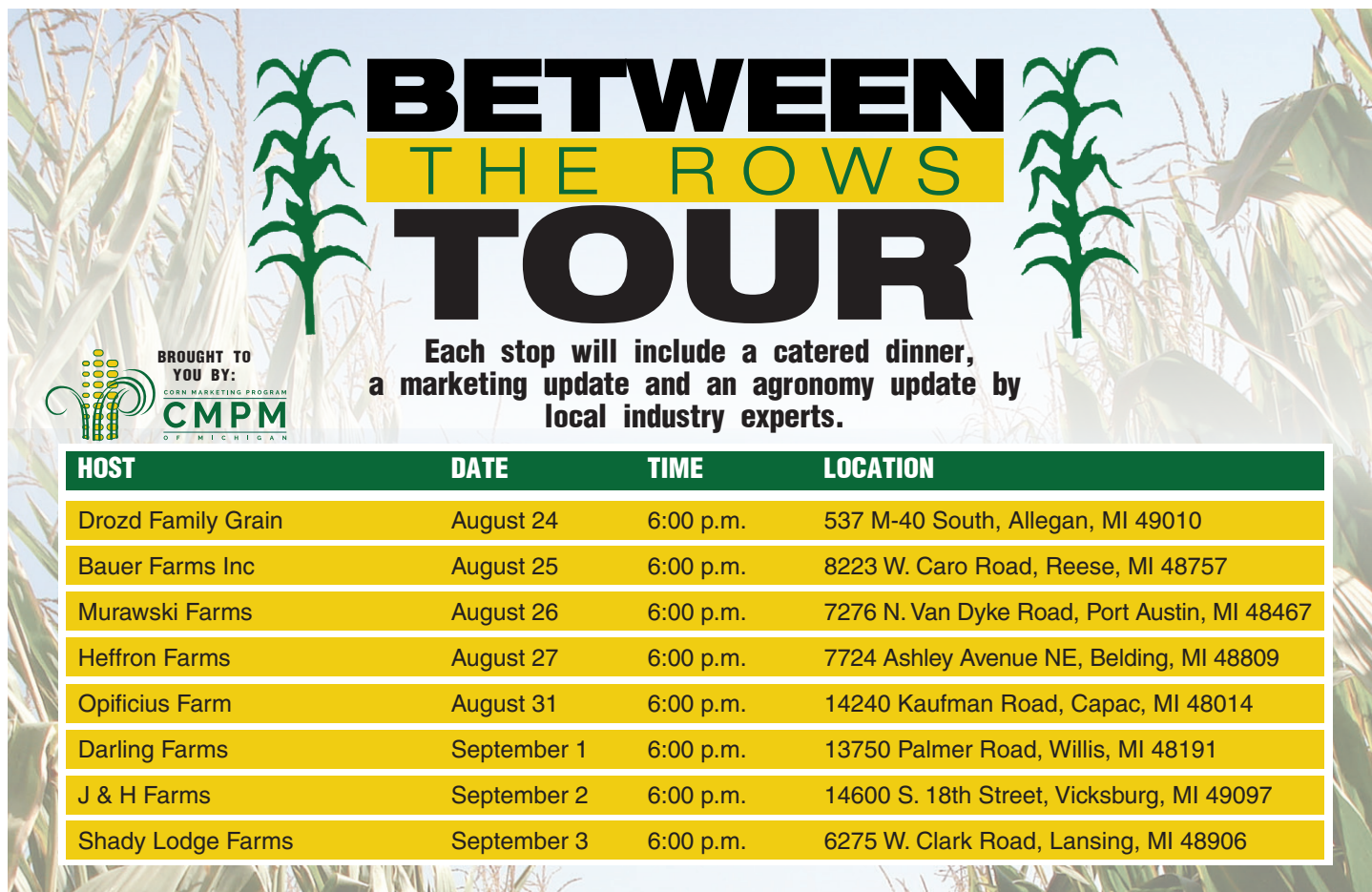
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**BETWEEN
THE ROWS
TOUR**

**Each stop will include a catered dinner,
a marketing update and an agronomy update by
local industry experts.**

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YOU BY:
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CORN MARKETING PROGRAM
OF MICHIGAN**

HOST	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Drozdz Family Grain	August 24	6:00 p.m.	537 M-40 South, Allegan, MI 49010
Bauer Farms Inc	August 25	6:00 p.m.	8223 W. Caro Road, Reese, MI 48757
Murawski Farms	August 26	6:00 p.m.	7276 N. Van Dyke Road, Port Austin, MI 48467
Heffron Farms	August 27	6:00 p.m.	7724 Ashley Avenue NE, Belding, MI 48809
Opificius Farm	August 31	6:00 p.m.	14240 Kaufman Road, Capac, MI 48014
Darling Farms	September 1	6:00 p.m.	13750 Palmer Road, Willis, MI 48191
J & H Farms	September 2	6:00 p.m.	14600 S. 18th Street, Vicksburg, MI 49097
Shady Lodge Farms	September 3	6:00 p.m.	6275 W. Clark Road, Lansing, MI 48906

Carbon as a Commodity

By: Kristin Poley, Michigan Research Manager/Soil Health Partnership

“Carbon Sequestration” may be the buzz phrase of the decade, with everyone from environmentalists and corporations to politicians interested in not only how to increase sequestration of carbon, but also how to incentivize and monetize the process. Carbon is one of the most abundant elements on Earth and is an essential building block of living things, including plants and animals. In agriculture, carbon in the soil is critical for many functions including sustaining beneficial microbial populations and building soil organic matter

Carbon is sequestered when carbon dioxide from the atmosphere is taken up by plants through photosynthesis and then stored as organic carbon in plant tissues such as stems, roots, and leaves. Carbon is then returned to the soil through root secretions when the plant is living, or as plants die through microbial activity and decomposition. Not all of the carbon released by plants and microbes remains in the soil however, as some is released back into the atmosphere as carbon dioxide during respiration. The build-up of soil carbon is directly related to the buildup of soil organic matter and is generally a slow process.

As soil organic carbon increases, soil structure generally improves. This means that the ability of the soil to resist degradation and to retain or drain water when appropriate also improves, ultimately leading to a healthier and more resilient soil.

The soil can act as a reservoir for carbon if managed correctly. It is estimated that 5.9 tons of carbon are taken in by corn plants each season. Reducing tillage operations reduces soil disturbance and helps to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere. Reducing tillage will also help to increase the capacity of the soil to hold more carbon by increasing soil organic matter over time. Additional practices such as cover crops and diverse cropping rotations can also increase the

amount of carbon in the soil over time.

The implications of increasing carbon sequestration are largely beneficial. For example, removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere will have a positive impact on mitigating the effects of climate change over time. However, making an effort to increase carbon sequestration is not without challenges and will require a system-wide change in management on the farm. This may be difficult to implement and will take time to manage effectively.

Understanding soil carbon and knowing the benefits of increasing carbon sequestration leads us to ask if there is potential to incentivize or monetize carbon for farmers. One organization that has set out to explore this concept specifically for agriculture is the Ecosystem Services Market Consortium (ESMC). Several organizations have joined in this effort as supporting members: the



National Corn Growers Association, Bayer, Syngenta, and the American Farm Bureau Federation, among many others. ESMC is a non-profit organization that works to

facilitate a market program for soil carbon, greenhouse gas, water quality, and water quantity credits through validation of a scientifically-backed, in-field protocol and with buy-in from corporations. Under this model, enrolled farmers will voluntarily adjust in-field management practices and, once validated, the farmer would get paid for any credits generated that are purchased by a buyer. The target launch date for ESMC is 2022 and pilots are currently underway throughout the country.

There are other organizations actively working to facilitate a carbon market for farmers as well. Indigo Ag, an agriculture technology start-up company, for example, reportedly has more than 19 million acres of farmland submitted to their carbon program and is already offering \$15 per verified carbon credit within certain networks.

Whether these markets will be profitable for farmers remains to be seen, and many questions remain: How stable can we expect a carbon market to be? How do we place a universal value on soil carbon that is meaningful to a farmer and to society as a whole? How can farmers that already implement sustainable management practices make a potential carbon market work for them?

So, could carbon become the next great commodity? Even if a carbon market is not realized in the near future, transitioning to cover crops or reduced tillage comes with many benefits other than increasing carbon in the soil. These practices can improve water quality, reduce erosion, improve water holding capacity within the soil and improve nutrient cycling - and it just might put you ahead of the curve.

**RAISE \$200
FOR YOUR
FFA CHAPTER
BY COMPLETING**

**STATEWIDE CORN
YIELD CHECKS**

We are looking for chapters and students to complete corn yield checks across the state of Michigan as a part of the Between the Rows Tour in August. All yield checks will need to be completed by August 20, 2020. Each check will need to be completed in separate fields. We encourage groups of two or more students to complete the yield checks.

You will be provided with:

- Yield Check Training
- Yield Rulers
- Tape Measures
- Car Magnets



If your chapter is interested in participating please contact:
Claire White by June 19, 2020
cwhite@micorn.org
517-668-2676

BELONG.

Belonging to the Michigan Corn Growers Association means you're connected to and supported by hundreds of like-minded, innovative corn farmers and industry partners. Like you, they face the same challenges of an ever-changing farming industry.

JOIN US - IT'S WHERE YOU BELONG



Matt Frostic, MCGA President

We know that we don't need to tell you how important our advocacy efforts are or that our strength is in our members. We are glad you realize how important it is to join your voice with other corn growers in the state so that we can present a united front to our elected and appointed officials.

Thank you for your trust and we will continue to aggressively represent you in Lansing and Washington D.C.

We're happy you want to belong.

Please join us and return this form today!



MCGA Membership Application

☐ First-Time Member ☐ Renewal (Membership Number: _____)

Recruited By: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Street Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Membership Type:

☐ Grower 3-Year (\$190)

☐ Associate 3-Year (\$190)

☐ Grower 1-Year (\$75)

☐ Associate 1-Year (\$75)

☐ Student 1-Year (\$20)

Farm/Company Name: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Mobile Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Please help us utilize membership dollars wisely and effectively by providing your email address.

Payment Options:

☐ Check Enclosed

☐ Visa/MasterCard/Discover

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

month/year

Security Code: _____

3 Digits

Signature: _____

Grower - Anyone who derives a portion of their income from corn production.

Associate - Anyone who doesn't qualify as a grower member.

Student - Any person enrolled as a full-time student.



Corn Marketing Program of Michigan
13750 S. Sedona Parkway, Suite 5
Lansing, MI 48906

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