

# **MICHIGAN COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Coopersville Farm Museum  
375 Main Street  
Coopersville, Michigan 49404**

## **MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 12, 2012**

### **PRESENT:**

Velmar Green, Chairperson, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Bob Kennedy, Vice Chairperson, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Diane Hanson, Secretary, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Don Coe, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Trevor Meachum, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Jamie Clover Adams, Director, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

### **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Green called the meeting of the Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development to order at 9:06 a.m. on September 12, 2012. Commissioner Hanson called the roll with Commissioners Coe, Green, Hanson, Kennedy, and Meachum, and Director Clover Adams present.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Coe suggested members of the public wishing to speak relative to the Generally Accepted Agriculture Management Practices be invited to speak during the first Public Comment period.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER COE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA AS AMENDED FOR SEPTEMBER 12, 2012. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MEACHUM. MOTION CARRIED.**

### **APPROVAL OF AUGUST 8, 2012, MEETING MINUTES**

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER COE MOVED TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 8, 2012, MEETING MINUTES. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER HANSON. MOTION CARRIED.**

### **NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 31, 2012, at Constitution Hall, Lansing.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND TRAVEL**

**Commissioner Hanson** reported the Upper Peninsula (UP) State Fair was held August 12-13 and was another great success, with over 61,000 people in attendance. The new Agriculture Miracle of Life pavilion was popular with attendees.

On August 16, she attended a Pure Michigan Campaign event at Elmer's County Market in Escanaba and the Director and several department staff were also present.

She attended the August 22 meeting at the Biomass Experimental Station in Chatham where many farmers and educators from the UP, as well as Michigan State University (MSU) and the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), discussed the future of the facility.

The UP Potato Growers held their annual meeting and field days recently, during which the Biomass Station and MSU Extension demonstrated results of their various experimental plots.

The UP has finally received some rain; however it is late for most of the crops, other than pasture. Potato harvest began this week and those without irrigation capabilities are experiencing low yields. Having had rain throughout the summer, crops in the Houghton area are good this year.

**Commissioner Meachum** met with a group of growers and representatives with Wilbur-Ellis in southwest Michigan to formulate a plan for the continued use of azinphos-methyl (AZM) for cherry, blueberry, and apple growers that was successfully granted. However, he believes the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) knew there was no product in the line and the manufacturer would not produce more; and therefore, felt safe in making that determination.

The majority of the few apples being picked in the area are suitable only for making cider. There has been some rain, and although it appears too late for the corn crop, at least half yield is expected for soybeans.

**Commissioner Coe** reported he attended a Regional Extension Council meeting, as well as continual meetings at the Horticulture Station with various representatives on the fruit tree disaster relief issue, and an additional meeting regarding the food hub effort in the Traverse area.

There is an overall shortage of forage and those with farm animals who have not been able to produce their own forage for the winter months will have difficulty. A workshop is scheduled for the end of the month to address forage issues and potential alternative feed in an attempt to bring our horse population through the winter.

Corn that had been irrigated in the area is average; otherwise, it is looking very poor. Apples are being harvested in some individual areas, and it appears the overall harvest in the area will be fair. Early harvest of the wine grapes will begin next week, which is the best in years – it is one crop that sinks its roots deep and managed to survive the warm, dry summer.

**Commissioner Kennedy** attended the Agriculture Leaders of Michigan meeting at which the Director spoke. Nationwide, there is a shortage of youth involved in agriculture and this group is in the promotion stage of tracking individuals through school systems, starting with grade school through the college level. It was a very encouraging

meeting and is something the agriculture industry needs to continue devoting efforts toward. Many young people today have no idea what happens in agriculture and many opportunities exist, especially when compared to the rest of the economy.

He attended several business meetings out of the state recently and those agricultural areas are extremely bad and worse than Michigan. As a result, expect high prices on all commodities to remain. Pricing will soon switch into a demand mode. If prices push higher, it will hurt demand on the export side of the market, which could actually help moderate the situation within the U.S. Eyes are currently on South America, because if they have any problems, things could skyrocket in this country. As a department, we need to watch the market call situations with all of the elevators in the state.

Saginaw Valley is actually enjoying about 80 percent of a typical crop and is very fortunate compared to the remainder of the state. He attended several fairs this year, which have been well attended and the dollars youth were receiving was very strong.

**Commissioner Green** advised his wife expressed her appreciation for all of the well wishes and she is progressing well following her surgery.

On August 15, he hosted the Governor's energy staff and discussed their alternative energy production and any issues they had with power companies. At that meeting, they took the opportunity to provide agriculture industry information to a potential new representative in their area, Tom Leonard, who has no agriculture background. The group then visited the wind farms in Gratiot County and discussed any concerns they have with the Public Service Commission, Consumers Power, or Detroit Edison regarding transmission of the power.

He has been working over the last few weeks on the 4-H Task Force reviewing delivery of the Animal Science Extension Program to 4-H and Future Farmers of America youth. The budget for 4-H through MSU Extension has been cut, and for cost savings, they are considering changing some of the specialists to educators. Also, there is some disparity in perception between the dairy and livestock industries and the university regarding program delivery effectiveness. Everything is very positive with the dairy and livestock exhibitions at the fairs this year, and yet, MSU feels they are not doing well. This is something perceived at the university that is not a reality in the countryside.

After at least twelve years, Wisconsin now will accept movement of Michigan cattle. This is a milestone for Michigan and he expressed appreciation to department staff for all of their efforts in facilitating that change. Commissioner Hanson advised this represents a tremendous economic advantage for the UP. Dr. Averill confirmed testing for Bovine TB of only the animals being moved into Wisconsin will now be required, as opposed to the previous requirement of a whole-herd test.

Harvest of sugar beets has begun in his area and it will be a bumper crop this year, with an anticipated average of 27 tons per acre and a price of \$80 per ton, which is outstanding. Corn yield is somewhat better than was anticipated and silage is currently being harvested. Feed prices cause concern, but the majority of Michigan dairymen do have the advantage of growing their own crops. The dairy industry looks very positive in

the future markets. His operation, along with other dairy operations, is currently selling milk through the Michigan Milk Producers Association to states south of Michigan.

In addition to travel previously mentioned, Commissioners Coe, Hanson, Kennedy, Green, and Meachum traveled to attend today's meeting. There was no other travel submitted for approval.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER MEACHUM MOVED TO APPROVE THE COMMISSIONERS' TRAVEL. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER HANSON. MOTION CARRIED.**

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Clover Adams advised she was impressed during the two days she spent at the UP State Fair and was pleased to see the butter cow exhibit and the wonderful new building for the Miracle of Life exhibit. It was evident the fair and its exhibits were very appreciated by the good crowd in attendance.

During the last month, she has taken the opportunity to ride with staff including inspection of a large grain elevator scale, a motor fuel quality inspection, and the initial meeting for a farmstead verification process, all of which were very interesting and informational. They also reinforced how talented and professional the staff are within the department and makes her proud to be a part of the organization.

The Governor conducted a statewide employee engagement survey, for which the results were recently received. MDARD has used that data to determine areas needing focus, including interdepartmental communication, leadership, diversity, and inclusion. An action plan is being developed and will be shared with the Commission during the next meeting. With exception of one other agency, MDARD had top participation in the state, with 81 percent of employees participating. The department is very close to the private sector benchmark for a high performing organization, and will be working on those things that move it into that category.

The recent Talent Forum was well received and she had an opportunity to interview with the press in that regard. The Governor is very engaged with the talent question and the department is focusing on how to move that effort forward in working with the universities and community colleges to interest young people in agriculture.

She reported Legislative Liaison Derek Bajema was unable to join the meeting today and advised that Senate Bill 862 is expected to move through the House this week or next. The bill clarifies that parcels of land next to agriculture real property which are used to create a buffer are classified as agriculture property.

House Bill 5581, regarding pesticide applicators, and House Bill 5784, relative to livestock dealers, are fee sunset extension bills. Although they need to be signed into law by October 1, the department is not confident that will happen. Because the Fiscal Year 2013 budget included revenue raised by the current bills, the department is considering the potential impacts.

The bill to allow MDARD to make temporary appointments to Conservation Districts Boards to fill a quorum until an election can be held will be introduced by Representative Pettalia this week.

The department is partnering with Eastern Market on the food hub effort in Detroit. They had applied for a grant under the Community Revitalization Program; however because that program was not written for non-profit organizations, she will be working legislation to bring them into eligibility and allow Eastern Market to continue moving forward on their various improvement projects.

Commissioner Coe reported he recently attended a well-received meeting in his area with the state's economic development cluster – MSHDA, LARA, MEDC, and MDOT. That group has been traveling across the state making informative presentations. He suggested this type of public presentation road trip might be something for the QOL Group to consider in the future.

### **DIRECTOR'S TRAVEL**

Director Clover Adams has no additional out-of-state travel planned in the near future.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT RELATIVE TO GENERALLY ACCEPTED AGRICULTURE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (GAAMPs)**

**Wendy Banka of Ann Arbor**, advised she has two chickens and a rooster and greatly enjoys being a residential farmer. She feels the 2013 GAAMPs as currently proposed will be approved by the Commission and her battle will be lost. She feels this year's GAAMPs represent the most important decision the Commission could make in protecting Right to Farm (RTF) for Michigan. And if approved as is, the Commission will effectively reverse the 1999 Amendment that gave RTF protection across the state regardless of local ordinances. Many agree the GAAMPs language trumps the law and would equate to people like her not having RTF protection, potentially affecting as many as eight million Michiganders. She strongly encouraged the Commission to not approve the 2013 GAAMPs and to remove the 2012 GAAMPs Preface. If Detroit is the issue, she feels there are other solutions within the law that could be used to address that situation. If the issue is the number of residential farmers and the department's ability to regulate those, then a special GAAMP could be written to control those operations.

**Randy Zeilinger of Garden City**, also spoke against the acceptance of the 2013 GAAMPs. He feels that turning over any RTF authority to local units of government completely negates the historical reasoning behind the RTF Act as originally enacted. The 1999 amendment was enacted to address the confusion created by numerous local community rules and restrictions. Returning to that kind of local rule would only bring chaos again. In fact, his community is proceeding as if the revised draft 2013 GAAMPs were already enacted, because historically they have gone through the Commission unchanged. He feels the proposed changes allowing local units of government to control residential farming will hurt the entire state and the development of the next generation of farmers. He would like to assist the Commission in developing a set of GAAMPs that addresses the small scale farm operation. He urged the Commission to reconsider the broad sweeping changes to one of the 2013 GAAMPs and help address the promotion of agriculture in Michigan. In response to question from Commissioner

Green, Mr. Zeilinger advised the issues at hand involve both the GAAMPs Preface and limitations of the Site Selection GAAMP.

**Cynthia Price, Chair of the Greater Grand Rapids Food Systems Council and Co-Chair of the Urban Agriculture Committee of Community Food Security Coalition,** advised she is active in urban agriculture issues. Her understanding of RTF is that the intention of the 1999 amendment was to address urban sprawl issues, which is a completely different issue than small farming operations within urban areas. She believes this is the way it is working now, and if she lives in Ann Arbor, she can have four chickens; however, if she lives in Grand Rapids, she cannot have any chickens. Looking nationally, in most instances, agriculture policy is established by the municipalities. However, she believes it is within the legislative intent to provide modifications to allow densely populated cities to set their own policies because each has its own unique situation. In a conversation with former Director Creagh about the situation in Detroit, she understood they were exploring a solution through the GAAMPs and believes there originally was intent to have an Urban Agriculture GAAMP. Certainly, that would address the problem as well. It is very important to recognize the distinction between people moving into rural areas and those wanting to begin small farms within urban areas.

**Amie Swiger of Coopersville,** advised she represents the average citizen who has a few chickens within an agricultural area. Her concern is that the proposed changes are too broad in scope. In trying to address the plight of chickens in the city, we now have rules that go anywhere from 1-5,000 animal units and she is concerned about space and distance issues. This discourages smaller businesses and beginner farmer interests, which have gone a long way toward promoting a cleaner image of farms in general.

**Dalon Anderson of Sparta,** advised he has had backyard chickens since he was 13 years old and he has benefited greatly from that opportunity. It is a clean operation and much more quiet than his neighbor's dogs. These types of activities are an important part of 4-H and the Future Farmers of America and should be preserved.

Commissioner Coe confirmed the 2013 GAAMPs will be presented to the Commission at their next meeting. The process of the various GAAMP committees to draft their proposals includes a public comment period and he hopes those here today have taken advantage of that opportunity. Each year, the Commission has the responsibility to review the GAAMPs for the following year and during the next meeting, they will question those proposals as they have done each year. It is not a "rubber stamp" process and includes a preliminary formal presentation of each GAAMP and several weeks' time period for Commissioners to study them in depth, with final action taken during a subsequent meeting. He appreciated comments from the public on the GAAMPs to allow the Commission to make the proper decisions. The Commission holds that RTF is a very important provision to this state and is concerned that RTF not be weakened; however, it is recognized that agriculture is an ever changing industry requiring a yearly review of the GAAMPs. As another step in the process, Commissioners having questions relative to the GAAMPs will take those to the department for clarification. Conflict between urban and farm has always existed and the GAAMPs were written to specifically address that conflict as urban moved toward the

farms. Under RTF, GAAMPs are simply good practices to be established by the farm and for the farming community. He is intrigued by the idea of an Urban Farming GAAMP and invited the department to consider the potential of drafting such a GAAMP.

In response to question by Commissioner Coe, Mr. Jim Johnson advised the RTF Act refers to commercial farming operations. Director Clover Adams reported a recent Michigan Court of Appeals decision found that a horse owner did not have RTF protection because it was not a commercial operation. Following discussion, Commissioner Coe requested the department further clarify for the Commission definition within the RTF Act of the Act's intention of applicability to commercial operations.

Commissioner Coe advised when the Detroit situation arose, the intention was to provide provision to allow urban agriculture within the City of Detroit and to work with the city to allow for their drafting an ordinance meeting their needs. This is an evolving process, and some suggestions have been made that deserve the Commission's review and consideration.

Commissioner Green thanked the presenters for their comments and assured them the GAAMPs review is a lengthy thoughtful process and comments will be taken under consideration.

In response to question from Commissioner Kennedy, Ms. Ayers confirmed the Commission will receive hard copies of the draft 2013 GAAMPs one week prior to their October 31 meeting and will have more than a month for review before official action at the December meeting. The Director noted the draft 2012 GAAMPs are also currently available for review online and results from the public comment hearing will also be posted later this week.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)**

There was no public comment relative to agenda items.

#### **REVISED MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSURANCE PROGRAM**

#### **STANDARDS: Thomas G. Coon, Director, Michigan State University Extension; and Scott Piggott, Chief Operating Officer, Michigan Farm Bureau**

Mr. Johnson noted when the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) was codified into law as Public Act 2 of 2011, and part of that responsibility includes the Commission approving the MAEAP Verification Protocol each year. Last month, the MAEAP Protocol and Standards were presented to the Commission for review. The creation of this set of standards required an extensive amount of dedicated work by staff, volunteers, university personnel, and members of the farming community. Much of the work is completed on behalf of the MAEAP Advisory Council led by Scott Piggott of Michigan Farm Bureau and Tom Coon of MSU. The leadership they provide and the coordination of all materials has been tremendous and he complimented everyone involved in that effort. It is amazing the number of environmental concerns that arise as a result of the process that subsequently need to be resolved by, in many cases, a number of individuals from various organizations.

Today, the standards and protocol that will be implemented for all verifications from this point forward are presented for approval by the Commission.

Mr. Piggott thanked the Director for the opportunity to serve in this capacity. Considerable time is spent discussing the standards. He complimented the department on its fantastic verification staff, who one of their community members referred to as “rock stars” when you consider the work they accomplish.

One of the realities of codifying MAEAP was to provide either incentives or protection for farms that would be verified for definition within law. Therefore, standards were created as a result of looking at every facet of environmental law applicable to a farm to build upon the GAAMPs.

Some changes were proposed, as reviewed with the Commission last month. He assured the Commission the Advisory Council is a very diverse environmental group, including environmental and conservation communities and agriculture representation from various commodities. The group is extremely thorough in its attempt to maintain the integrity of a program that is leading the nation in environmental assurance on farms. He is pleased to offer them to the Commission today so they may continue to move forward with verifications.

In response to inquiry from Commissioner Coe, Mr. Piggott confirmed a new law is not being established, protocols are being established to allow producers to be in compliance with the law, and the program is entirely voluntary.

In response to question from Commissioner Green, Mr. Johnson advised the law requires annual review and approval of the standards. To assist the producers, MDARD is working with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) on a protocol for MAEAP verification for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) that considers the issue of a three-year verification versus the five-year permit to see if they can somehow make those very similar to one another in terms of the review process.

Commissioner Hanson’s farm is currently progressing through the MAEAP verification process and Commissioner Coe’s operation recently received re-verification. Both confirmed the process is completely educational and very supportive, especially in ensuring the community that operations are concerned about the environment and are in compliance with law and good practice.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER COE MOVED TO APPROVE THE REVISED MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSURANCE PROGRAM STANDARDS AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MEACHUM. MOTION CARRIED.**

**CONNECT MICHIGAN UPDATE: Eric Frederick, Program Manager, Connect Michigan; and Jan Kellogg, Economic Development Specialist, Northern Lakes Economic Alliance**

Mr. Frederick provided an update on broadband service in rural Michigan, explaining that Connect Michigan is a non-profit organization, in partnership with the Michigan Public

Service Commission, tasked with facilitating the expansion of broadband access, adoption, and use throughout the state.

Connect Michigan is backed by Connected Nation, a national technology-oriented non-profit organization. In-state staff includes a state program manager and two community technology advisors who coordinate three major programs – mapping, research, and community planning and outreach.

The Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB) recently produced a video highlighting the importance of broadband in rural Michigan; it can be viewed on the YouTube website at <http://www.youtube.com/user/michiganfarmbureau>.

Last week, he published and presented a collaborative learning plan researching technology training for small rural businesses which looks at ways to improve the adoption of technology for those businesses to raise demand. Because of limited staff, he has been working with the Michigan Rural Council to develop a local broadband conversation kit and video to ensure all communities have that opportunity. Broadband coverage maps are updated every six months and the October 2012 data submission is currently in progress.

They are seeing progress in broadband coverage for rural counties throughout the state. As an example, Clare County has made substantial progress on providing their rural communities with broadband access through the Connected Community Engagement Program. In October 2011, only 69 percent of households in that county had access to three megabits per second (Mbps) service, and by April 2012, that had increased to 81 percent. The Connected Community Engagement Program's goals are to engage local community teams (e.g. chambers, Farm Bureau, local economic development, libraries, schools, local government, providers, etc.); assess the local broadband landscape of access, adoption, and use; develop goals and action plans; and implement projects to increase broadband and technology.

In response to question from Commissioner Kennedy, Mr. Frederick advised provider interest and involvement varies widely across the state. Commissioner Green asked if any service standards had been established. Mr. Frederick noted broadband is an unregulated industry; they can suggest certain speeds and quality of transmission, and the FCC's National Broadband Plan sets a goal of a minimum of three-four Mbps to every household. Because much of Michigan does not have access, at any price, to even the bare minimum speeds, they are trying to set that bar at a reasonable attainment level. Satellite is not considered a viable option, and although virtually available everywhere, does not deliver reliable service. They would like to see higher speed, higher quality options available to all Michigan residents.

He provided an update on their community engagement program, called Connected. They are working with local community teams throughout Michigan to help access them with regard to access, adoption, and use. Gaps are identified, goals and actions plans are developed, and hopefully projects implemented to increase access, adoption, and use for broadband for communities throughout the state. In March of this year, they had

four teams participating in their program and today, they have 12 communities participating, with interest in teams forming in many other areas.

Charlevoix County became the first community in Michigan and the nation to earn Connected certification status and complete a county-wide technology plan. That achievement was announced on August 22 in Boyne City and garnered 50 million media impressions (views) through media at local, state, and national levels.

Ms. Kellogg explained Charlevoix County is unique because it is at the northwest tip of the Lower Peninsula; its population is concentrated in three cities, with many rural residences as well; 30 percent of housing units are seasonal; and its topography is hilly and wooded. The three cities and county cooperate well, along with many other entities. Most local leaders and governments are progressive, forward thinkers. They realize the importance of broadband to the region's economy, education, and healthcare.

Northern Lakes Economic Alliance (NLEA) is a four-county economic development non-profit organization. NLEA staff and directors have pushed for better broadband access for many years. By participating, Charlevoix County expects to learn best practices from other communities; keep up to date on the latest broadband developments; exchange ideas and information between communities and other participants; develop a plan of action for better broadband adoption and access; and keep the broadband conversation moving forward.

Commissioner Green asked what could be done to provide dependable broadband service to the isolated communities such as Elsie. Ms. Kellogg noted that since it is private business, you need to demonstrate an adequate customer base, and they are hoping the Connect Michigan process will assist with that effort. In response to inquiry from Commissioner Coe, Mr. Frederick noted the 2011 Michigan Telecommunications Act almost completely removed regulation for the broadband industry. Ultimately, broadband is a private industry that needs a return on investment for the capital invested. Without that regulation and mandate, Connect Michigan is attempting to raise the demand.

Mr. Frederick reported the FCC has established the Connect America Fund, which takes universal service fees from rural telephone service and now subsidizes broadband in high cost areas. The first round of funding was announced in May and one provider in Michigan (Frontier) applied for that funding, receiving \$7.3M to expand broadband from current networks into rural areas. A second round of funding will be announced by early 2013 and will provide larger amounts of money to a wider array of providers. Director Clover Adams asked if there is anyway the state can incentivize rural providers to apply for the funds. Mr. Frederick advised one way is through the Connect Michigan maps demonstrating where those unserved areas exist; and so, the better quality maps, information, and community plans they can provide, the more likely those areas will become served. Their current grant allows them to map last mile connections to residences and they are working with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and other organizations in an attempt to map fiber connections to businesses. In response to question from Commissioner Kennedy, Mr. Frederick advised the providers become aware of funding opportunities through telecommunication

associations; however, only telephone operators who run broadband will be eligible for the Connect American Fund Program. They are assisting conversation in Washington to expand that to anyone able to provide the coverage.

Connect Michigan's grant funding goes through the end of 2014 and requires completion of 14 community engagements. There are 12 communities currently engaged and interest from at least 15 more that will be engaged by the end of October. Because they are at maximum capacity for staff currently available, additional resources are needed to expand their efforts.

Following discussion, Commissioner Coe suggested the department expand the Commission resolution in support of efforts to improve broadband telecommunications coverage for rural Michigan as approved in April to add that the Commission supports the enhancement of resources for outreach efforts being coordinated by Connect Michigan, with the resolution being transmitted to entities as suggested by the department. He requested the revised resolution be presented for consideration at the October Commission meeting.

#### **ADJOURN AND RECONVENE**

Chairperson Green adjourned the meeting at 10:55 a.m. for a brief break. He reconvened the meeting at 11:01 a.m.

#### **ANIMAL INDUSTRY DIVISION UPDATE: James Averill, Director, Animal Industry Division**

Dr. Averill reported the annual Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) Program Audit was conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Veterinary Services August 7-10 by a five-member team. Prior to the audit, the Animal Industry Division (AID) asked the Review Team to also consider what adds value to the program.

In their preliminary report, the Review Team recommended the Bovine TB Program 1) continue mobile patrols, specifics yet to be determined; 2) fully implement the Online Permitting System to provide movement permits any time of any day; 3) streamline the inventory reconciliation process, which is based on Michigan's outstanding traceability program; and 4) continue working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to cost share wildlife mitigation efforts.

They also recommended that 1) deer surveillance be focused in counties around Deer Management Unit (DMU) 452; 2) the feeding and baiting ban be maintained in northeast Michigan; and (3) MDARD and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) develop an integrated TB management plan – each agency currently has their own plan and efforts are underway to move toward this goal.

In response to question from Commissioner Coe, Dr. Averill confirmed the department does pay for mobile patrol services from the Mackinac Sheriff's Office and the State Police. Commissioner Coe inquired if MDNR conservation officers could be a resource directed to the Bovine TB mobile patrol effort to potentially reduce cost to MDARD for that service.

Dr. Averill advised the review initializes the next stage of the Bovine TB Program, which is to begin renegotiating the department's Memorandum of Understanding with USDA and moving toward another split-state status application. Those conversations begin in two weeks. The goal is for the process to culminate with a new split-state status being published by September 2013. The program is looking to move the six northwest counties to TB-Free status and further reduce the Modified Accredited Zone to two circles around DMU 452, which aligns with the anticipated new national program for Bovine TB. Preliminary discussions with USDA have been positive.

Dr. Averill provided an influenza update. He explained the basics of influenza, noting it is a respiratory virus that can result in mild to severe illness, with many types, including seasonal, pandemic, avian, and swine. Treatment for any of these viruses is very limited, consisting primarily of supportive care. He advised that influenza H3N2v is a "variant" that spreads more easily from hogs to people. It contains a gene from the 2009 H1N1 pandemic virus, was detected in U.S. pigs in 2010 and in U.S. humans in July 2011, and is not a food safety issue – our pork is very safe to eat. However, it is a human health issue and currently, 11 states are affected by H3N2v. To date, there have been 297 human cases and one death, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is watching its progression very closely. There have been a handful of "likely" human-to-human transmissions. In Michigan, there have been five cases reported, predominately in the southeast area of the state, with one being considered a "likely" human-to-human transmission. The main risk factor for infection by H3N2v is exposure to pigs, primarily in fair settings.

In response to question from Commissioner Coe, Dr. Averill advised the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) has sent alerts to the medical community encouraging further diagnostic analysis of any patients who present with flu-like illness and have recently been exposed to livestock pigs. He confirmed there most likely are more cases than reported.

It is MDARD's goal to prevent disease in people and animals, reduce anxiety and panic, and provide accurate information. The department has implemented various communications with fairs and fair veterinarians; collaborated with MSU Extension Swine Team and 4-H coordinators; and communicated information on precautions, practical bio-security measures, and notifications to exhibitors.

Another viral disease, West Nile Virus, is transmitted via mosquitoes and was first discovered in the U.S. in 1999 and in Michigan in 2001. It affects birds, horses, and humans. The primary enzootic cycle is between maintenance vector mosquitoes and birds. Periodically, bridge vector mosquitoes transmit to "incidental" hosts – horses or humans. Person to person transmission is possible via blood transfusion, organ transplantation, transplacental transmission, and potentially breast milk.

Signs and symptoms in horses include fever, twitching, incoordination, seizures, blindness, inability to rise, facial paralysis, and difficulties eliminating. In humans, signs and symptoms include headache, fever, body ache, nausea/vomiting, and neurologic (blindness, seizures, and coma). The CDC reports record numbers this year and of all the Midwest states, Michigan appears to be the hardest hit.

MDCH reports that cases of West Nile Virus in people continue to rise and is attributable to a number of things – it was a mild winter, followed by an early spring and drought conditions. These led to perfect conditions for vector-borne diseases, which has created an abundance of stagnant water. As of September 5, 2012, the current numbers in Michigan reported to have West Nile Virus are 166 people, six of whom have died. Most of those were reported through tests of people exhibiting West Nile Virus symptoms and an additional 29 people discovered via routine screening after blood donation. The disease has not been bad on the animal side, with 19 birds and only one horse case having been recorded in the state. Hardest hit counties appear to be Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, and Kent, although other counties have reported cases as well.

In partnership with MDCH, the department is reaching out to the veterinary community and equine producers to emphasize the importance of vaccinating horses annually. There is no vaccine approved for human use.

Prevention for any vector-borne disease involves the “four D’s” for mosquito prevention and control, which are: DEET – use insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus; drainage – drain all standing water around your home and barns; dusk – minimize outdoor activity (house animals inside) when mosquitoes are most active which is typically dusk and dawn; and dress – wear long sleeves and pants when possible outdoors.

There are over 100 reportable diseases in Michigan and today’s report represents only a snapshot of a few. All in all, it has been an extremely busy summer for AID staff. He recognized and thanked Drs. Rick Smith, Nancy Barr, and Michelle Schalow for assistance in developing today’s presentation.

**BUDGET UPDATE: Amy Epkey, Budget Officer**

Ms. Epkey noted this is an extremely busy time of year because the department is currently working with three different fiscal year (FY) budgets. FY2012 will end September 30, and as the department continues to monitor revenue levels and expenditures, it is confident in the ability to close FY2012 with no significant issues.

October 1 begins FY2013 and relative to some of the new funding, applications in response to the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Value Added Grant Program have been received, the RFP for the County Fair Grant Program has been released, and the department has begun hiring new staff.

Held last week was the kick-off meeting for the FY2014 budget development. Efforts in that regard are toward release of the Governor’s 2014 Budget Proposal in February. The significant milestone is the Budget Hearing with the Budget Director and the Governor scheduled for October 2, which in contrast to previous years, will be held with the QOL group in one meeting. The focus of that meeting will be on the goals moving forward in terms of their economic impact, as well as customer centric initiatives, which include the equine registration effort, department inspection system, and licensing project. Focus will also include the employee engagement process, as well as a

customer survey being planned. There also will be an opportunity to highlight some of the investments needed as the department moves forward.

Commissioner Green questioned if MDARD received any reimbursement from Enbridge to compensate for its costs incurred during the oil spill response effort. Ms. Epkey will investigate and respond to the Commissioners.

In response to inquiry from Commissioners Hanson and Kennedy, Ms. Epkey advised the County Fairs Grant Program legislation targets county fairs, and it was communicated through a press release, website postings, and individual mailings to each county fair. Director Clover Adams advised the deadline for applications is November 15.

### **INTRODUCTION OF TIM SLAWINSKI, EMERGING ISSUES SPECIALIST: Kevin Besey, Director, Food and Dairy Division**

Mr. Besey introduced Tim Slawinski, one of the department's new employees, who will serve as MDARD's Emerging Issues Specialist. He will be the key person to help manage and understand all of the pending food safety changes contained in the new Food Safety Modernization Act. These changes will affect numerous individuals through produce safety rules and prevention rules for processors, and the department wanted to be proactive in supporting our agriculture industry in making all of those changes.

Mr. Slawinski advised he has been working in the food safety field for twelve years, coming from the Kellogg Company, where he had been helping to prepare them for the Food Safety Modernization Act modifications. Prior to that, he was with SNF International in their food safety auditing group. He has a Bachelor's degree in microbiology from MSU and he looks forward to his future with MDARD.

In response to question from Commissioners Coe and Kennedy, Mr. Besey advised the department will be working directly with the industry in meeting any new challenges regarding food safety concerns. The local health departments work well with MDARD in handling most of the direct food service entities. It is anticipated the majority of the Food Safety Modernization Act changes will affect at the food processor and producer levels, with the biggest change being a return to the farm level.

### **COMMISSIONER ISSUES**

Commissioner Meachum expressed concern regarding issues for blueberry growers. Those trying to expand are experiencing difficulties in being able to drain fields to prepare for blueberry planting because of the federal Wetlands Program. The growers are asking if MDARD can assist with that situation, which is enforced by MDEQ. The Director advised the issue is with NRCS being more vigilant about wetlands and MDEQ struggling with what EPA is requiring of them with regard to conversion of wetlands. There have been several QOL group discussions around the topic and legislation is currently being considered as well. Commissioner Meachum advised Michigan Farm Bureau anticipates legislation will be passed before the end of the year; however, some blueberry growers are concerned that if they do not have plantings completed this fall and grandfathered in before the legislation is enacted, they will be severely hampered

going forward after the first of the year. The Director will inquire through MDEQ and provide an update to the Commissioners.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No additional public comment was requested.

**ADJOURN**

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER KENNEDY MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER COE SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Attachments:

- A) *Agenda*
- B) *Agriculture and Rural Development Commission Meeting Minutes August 8, 2012*
- C) *Director Jamie Clover Adams – Issues of Interest Report*
- D) *MAEAP Standards Documents*
  - *2011 MAEAP Standards*
  - *A\*Syst Documents*
  - *MAEAP Standards Summaries of Changes*
  - *Draft 2013 MAEAP Standards*
  - *MAEAP Advisory Council Members*
  - *MAEAP Educational Questions*
- E) *Update on Broadband in Rural Michigan Presentation by Connect Michigan*
- F) *Animal Industry Update*
- G) *Bovine TB Review Exit Meeting Summary*