

MICHIGAN COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE
Constitution Hall
Con-Con Room
525 W. Allegan
Lansing, MI 48933

MEETING MINTUES
November 9, 2004

PRESENT:

Bill Pridgeon, Chair, Commission of Agriculture
James Maitland, Vice-Chair, Commission of Agriculture
James Byrum, Secretary, Commission of Agriculture
Douglas Darling, Commission of Agriculture
Ann Jousma-Miller, Commission of Agriculture
Dan Wyant, Director, Michigan Department of Agriculture

OTHERS PRESENT: (all or part of the meeting)

Michigan Department of Agriculture Staff
E.J. Brown, Michigan Association of Fairs Exhibitions
Kendra Butters, Senate Republican Office
Denise Yockey, Michigan Apple Committee
Tonia Ritter, Michigan Farm Bureau
Debbie Nolan, Montrose, Michigan
Daniel Hill, Montrose, Michigan

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

Chair Pridgeon called the Commission of Agriculture to order at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 9, 2004. Secretary Byrum called the roll with Director Wyant, Commissioners Darling, Maitland, Pridgeon and Jousma-Miller present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MAITLAND MOVED APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 9, 2004 AGENDA AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DARLING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2004 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: COMMISSIONER DARLING MOVED APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 16, 2004 MEETING MINUTES. SECONDED

BY COMMISSIONER MAITLAND. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Commission of Agriculture is scheduled for January 10, 2004, in Lansing.

APPROVAL OF COMMISSIONERS' TRAVEL:

September 30, 2004, Attended Animal Health Diagnostic Lab Dedication at MSU in East Lansing, Darling
Various County Farm Bureau Meetings in the Upper Peninsula, Jousma-Miller

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MAITLAND MOVED TO APPROVE THE ABOVE TRAVEL FOR THE COMMISSIONERS. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BYRUM. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Jousma-Miller reported on several meetings she attended, including the Breakfast on the Farm in Menominee County, serving over 600 people. She attended three of the six county Farm Bureau annual meetings this year and found them to be interesting and well attended.

Six meetings over three dates in December are being set up to have Kevin Kirk, from the Animal Industry Division, to discuss animal identification tags and for Dr. Steve Halstead to talk about the application for TB Free Status for the Upper Peninsula.

The U.P. Potato Growers Annual Meeting and Banquet is scheduled for November 10, 2004.

Seventy-five independent truckers from the Upper Peninsula went to Florida to help with the clean-up after the hurricane. Most are independent loggers who could pick up much of the debris because of the "jammers" on their trucks.

Governor Granholm appointed a new UP Fair board member, Stuart Owinga.

Commissioner Byrum reported on his international market development work and challenges for Michigan commodities in international markets. He indicated that Chinese production is inexpensive and they are buying

large quantities of fertilizer causing a short supply and the prices to increase.

Fall harvest is continuing with a lot of soybeans still in the field. Transportation problems have eased. Wheat acreage is down more than 15% with many switching from white wheat to red wheat.

Commissioner Byrum attended a reception for incoming freshman legislators. There were many new legislators interested in agriculture.

The dry bean market should be favorable, especially since Minnesota and North Dakota lost approximately 60% of their crop from frost.

Commissioner Byrum noted that there have been two tragic deaths in the last month at the same operation. The Michigan Agri-Business Association is embarking on an aggressive safety campaign.

Commissioner Maitland reported on the weather and apple harvest in the northern Lower Peninsula. There was a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) agreement between four townships (in Grand Traverse and Antrim County) that had been adopted prior to the recent election. It was significant nationally in that it was an inter-governmental agreement where all agreed to the same ordinance. However, only one township passed the millage so they have an ordinance with no funding.

Commissioner Maitland participated in the last household hazardous waste turn-in for the year in the Traverse City area. He commented that it is a great program for getting hazardous chemicals out of the sheds and disposed of properly.

Commission Darling congratulated Brad Deacon on passing the bar exam.

Commissioner Darling attended the dedication of the diagnostic lab at Michigan State University (MSU). There was a good turnout, many legislators attended and Lt. Gov. Cherry spoke. Many of the industry partners and agencies were part of the presentation and dedication. It will be a great asset for the future of agriculture and human health.

Commissioner Darling attended several county Farm Bureau annual meetings and there are a number of diverse issues emerging.

Harvest in southeast Michigan is about half completed with many soybeans still in the field. Early crops are seeing record yields in corn and soybeans. The later crops are at or below average.

Commissioner Pridgeon reported that United State Department of Commerce placed a duty on all pork from Canada that is being challenged.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Wyant briefly discussed election outcomes and how important it will be for staff to make contacts with the newly elected legislators and educate them on agriculture issues.

The 2004 budget books are being closed. One outstanding issue for MDA is the supplemental spending authorization request made by the Michigan State Fair that has not yet been approved by DMB or the legislature. The Michigan State Fair did make a profit this year of over \$300,000.

The Governor will focus the 2006 budget process on outcomes and measurables. The budget will be presented in January or February with the focus that there is \$39 billion to spend, even with a \$500 million deficit, and what priorities can be accomplished with those resources. This will allow for new initiatives and realignment of resources. Each department has been asked to develop a 5% reduction scenario. Through this process we have moved away from baseline budgeting to outcomes based budgeting where we identify our priorities and determine how much to spend to accomplish those priorities.

The Governor has been very inclusive through this process, forming teams around the six priority areas: environment, economy, homeland security, better government, health and education. MDA is represented by Director Wyant on the environmental team, even though all programs do not reside in one area. Six priority areas have been identified and they are being accommodated (food safety, environmental stewardship, plant and animal health, viable agriculture economy, consumer protection and homeland security.) The environmental team has a meeting with the Governor mid-December to review priorities and initiatives.

Gov. Granholm is interested in farmland preservation. The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) will help with farmland preservation, water quality and wildlife habitat. MDA currently has a proposal to increase CREP acres and there is an existing contact with USDA to do that. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and

the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are supportive and will expand funding options.

The Motor Fuel Quality May Day to Labor Day Project report is complete. MDA will continue to work to ensure a level playing field and consumer protection.

Director Wyant addressed a question from Commissioner Darling about the equine industry and long term impacts of the passing of Proposal 1.

Eddie Moore from MSU was appointed to the Farmland Preservation Fund Board.

There was a front-page story in The Detroit News about the Emerald Ash Borer that we have responded to aggressively as the article was quite inaccurate. MDA did not have much of an opportunity to contribute to the article.

MDA has applied for TB Free Status for the Upper Peninsula (UP) at the National Veterinarian Medical Health Association meeting. Staff will be making visits to both Wisconsin and Minnesota to explain program accomplishments. Commissioner Jousma-Miller and a producer from the UP will also go.

Commissioner Byrum will be chairing a workgroup on a multi-state session concerning large scale animal agriculture.

Director Wyant has been discussing with DNR Director Humphries the possibility of a joint commission meeting in March. Some topics of joint interest would be the final results of the captive cervid audit, deer hunt numbers, TB testing and CWD testing, feeding & baiting, crop damage and other topics.

The May Day to Labor Day report from the increased gasoline inspection effort is completed and distributed to commissioners. Target was a 20% increase in locations monitored (inspected). Actual increase was 30%. No fraud was found. Some quality issues were found, i.e. water in gasoline after heavy rains.

Director Wyant reviewed meetings and events of interest, including the 1,000,000th pound of pesticide collected through the Clean Sweep Program; testimony at the Deganaish hearing; Michigan Farm Bureau Policy Subcommittees; FSA State Committee; farm market visits; Friends of Extension Banquet; EPA Policy Advisor, Jon Sholl; Michigan State Fair

Advisory Board Meeting; Department of Civil Rights Director, Linda Parker, interested in Migrant Labor Housing and Inspection Programs; and Fund for Michigan Agriculture workshop at MSU.

Upcoming events of interest: Michigan Harvest Gathering continues on November 10; meeting with producers in northeast lower Michigan to introduce Dr. Halstead to the advisory producer group in that area and Director Humphries will also attend to address deer issues; Great Lakes Ag Advisory Board, responsible for administering the Rural Development Grant; Michigan Food Processors Banquet, Michigan Farm Bureau Annual Meeting; Great Lakes Fruit & Vegetable Expo; MDA Employee Award Ceremony on December 10; USDA Fruit & Vegetable Advisory Committee, January 11-12, 2005; and Food Safety Alliance Meeting, January 28, 2005.

Director Wyant discussed the loss of MDA's dairy inspector in the UP in a tragic automobile accident. Currently, MDA inspectors from other areas are rotating to cover the UP. MDA is moving to fill that position permanently.

MSU is in the process of hiring a new Extension Director and has it narrowed down to three candidates. There will be seminars for the candidates to present their ideas.

Chris White and Keith Creagh attended the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) meeting.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER BYRUM MOVED TO APPROVE DIRECTOR'S TRAVEL TO THE USDA FRUIT & VEGETABLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING ON JANUARY 11-12, 2005. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MAITLAND. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Director Wyant presented the Commission with the adjusted proposed 2005 Commission Meeting dates.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER BYRUM MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED 2005 COMMISSION MEETING DATES. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DARLING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Director Wyant reviewed the nomination and selection process for the Commission Award for Excellence. This award is presented to

employee(s) in recognition of a singular outstanding achievement or activity that projected a positive impact on the Michigan Department of Agriculture. Employees who receive this award exemplify the traits that are valued in MDA employees.

This year, on very short notice, this group created a tremendous food safety display that got the attention of stakeholders, partners, and Governor Granholm. They performed over and above their normal job duties because of their passion for their issue, food safety. The recommendation of the selection committee is that this team of employees, Theresa Wright, Paula Sample, Sue Trombley, Jasmine Lincicome and Venus Harris from the Food & Dairy Division and also Scott Carlton from the Finance and Administrative Services Division, be awarded the 2004 Michigan Commission of Agriculture Excellence Award.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER DARLING MOVED TO APPROVE THE STATE FAIR MARKET TEAM SELECTION FOR THE 2004 COMMISSION OF EXCELLENCE AWARD. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS BYRUM AND MAITLAND. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ANNEX 2001: Ken DeBeaussaert, Director, Office of the Great Lakes, Department of Environmental Quality, Jim Birdin, Office of the Great Lakes, Department of Environmental Quality

Mr. DeBeaussaert provided a PowerPoint presentation and background on Annex 2001.

Of the ten leaders who began this process in 2001, only two remain in office today. The process has continued with commitment from all jurisdictions.

A key part of the agreement process was the creation of an advisory committee so that agriculture, municipal water users, industry, environmental groups and observers were all a part of this process. This committee has been very helpful and has served as a sounding board prior to going out for public comment. Michigan has had good representation on this committee.

In July, there were four public comment periods.

Jim Bredin discussed the draft agreements and the technical aspects of Annex 2001.

One of the key principals under the Annex was the decision making standards. 1) Preventing and minimizing water loss through return flow (any diversion or use of water has to return water to the Great Lakes) 2) Implementation of environmentally sound and economically feasible water conservation measures. 3) no significant adverse individual or cumulative impacts to the quantity or quality of the water or water-dependent natural resources 4) an improvement to the waters or the water-dependent natural resources of the basin 5) compliance with applicable state, provincial, federal and international laws and treaties.

Key provisions: all diversions would subject to the standard and improvement requirements. Diversions under 1 million gallons per day would be subject to jurisdictional review. Diversions over 1 million gallons per day would require regional compact review and unanimity of those voting.

Anything going through regional review would have a determination of finding. This would be non-binding; a statement of all 10 jurisdictions. A compact review between the eight Great Lakes States resulting in an approval or denial would be binding.

There are no enforcement provisions under the agreement between the 10 jurisdictions, but there are enforcement provisions been the eight compact states.

This will not go into effect until all 10 jurisdictions approve legislation through their legislative process.

Specific areas were identified for public comment including the voting requirements for diversions and for in-basin uses, compact powers, the Chicago diversion, and in-basin transfers.

Mr. DeBeaussaert then reviewed the process of public comments.

Plant Health Update: Kenneth Rauscher, Director, Pesticide & Plant Pest Management Division; Sara Linsmeier-Wurfel, Public Information Office; Pat Lockwood, Emerald Ash Borer Coordinator

Sara Linsmeier-Wurfel discussed The Detroit News article and its inaccuracies. MDA provided a timely response and distributed it to staff, legislators, stakeholders, other state contacts.

Pat Lockwood explained the current state contract for tree removal. The purpose is to reduce the cost to homeowners and municipalities for cutting down the dead and infested ash trees. It will only be available in the 13

quarantined counties. This is the first time municipalities and homeowners will have an opportunity to access the state's contract for tree removal of dead and dying ash trees. The municipalities will act as an agent of the State and will provide a municipal coordinator that will work with the department to define the roles and responsibilities. It is a three-year program that will begin in January 2005. Industry meetings have occurred and a contract has been created. The contracts are on-line and bids are starting to come in.

A series of meetings are being conducted within the 13 counties. The municipalities have had a lot of questions, which has helped to further define and refine the process. So far, there are 64 communities interested in participating. MSU and DNR are partners.

Ken Rauscher provided a PowerPoint presentation and updated the Commission on the Emerald Ash Borer Management Program, trap trees, and current outlier activities.

Firearm deer season provides an opportunity to monitor the movement of firewood and the opportunity to talk to the general public about the movement of firewood. Several "firewood blitz" locations have been identified in rest areas. Public Service Announcements have been running throughout Michigan on radio, billboards on major highways and news releases have also been put in place. In addition, a check point is being set up just north of the Mackinac Bridge.

Mr. Rauscher discussed a possible permanent check point north of the Mackinac Bridge in conjunction with the Mackinac Bridge Authority and MDA's Animal Industry Division.

Commissioner Jousma-Miller encouraged Ms. Lockwood to contact the chambers of commerce and convention and visitor's bureaus with the firewood movement message so they can get the word out to festival and event planners.

Mr. Rauscher commented about the interest of some area prosecutors to pursue violators of the firewood movement ban and discussed the fines for violations. Amendments to the plant pest act are being reviewed.

Ms. Lockwood and Ms. Linsmeier-Wurfel also discussed flyers being used at the top 100 retail sellers of hunting and fishing licenses. Negotiations are on-going for placing a more prominent sticker on the cover of the "hunter's guide" for next hunting season.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one wished to speak at this time.

RECESS

The meeting was recessed at 11:55 a.m.

RECONVENE

The meeting was reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), MDA-DEQ: Vicki Pontz, Director, Environmental Stewardship Division; Rich Powers, Chief, Water Bureau, Department of Environmental Quality

Ms. Pontz and Mr. Powers discussed the details of the new Memorandum of Understanding. Ms. Pontz expressed her appreciation for the cooperation from the staff at DEQ involved in the creation of the MOU.

The Right to Farm Act (RTF) spells out that the Commission and the Director will enter into a MOU with the Director of Environmental Quality. According to RTF, the investigation and resolution of the environmental complaint concerning farms will be conducted in accordance with the MOU. The Agriculture Director shall notify the DEQ Director of any potential violations of NREPA and activities at a farm or farm operation are subject to applicable provisions of NREPA. The Commission and Director shall develop procedures for investigation and resolution of farm related complaints. The last time a MOU was before the Commission was in 1993.

With recent changes in the industry and regulations, there was a need to redefine the appropriate roles of DEQ and MDA, streamline the process, and improve communication between the two agencies, particularly as it relates to transferring cases between the two agencies. A consistent and uncomplicated message to producers and the public was also needed.

Ms. Pontz reviewed the MOU and changes. The MOU reiterates the law that MDA will notify DEQ of any potential violations of NREPA. It also requires DEQ to notify MDA of any enforcement action they are taking on farms. MDA notifies DEQ of any nuisance complaints and their status on a quarterly basis. The MOU includes language about having access to each others information on cases when necessary.

There is a specific process for enhanced communications at the field level. Both agencies agree that they would like as many decisions as possible to be made at the field level. Communications becomes critical, for example, when a farm may be regulated under DEQ by surface water or ground

water permit or under an enforcement action, and an odor complaint comes in that is not covered by the permit.

The referral process to DEQ has been significantly streamlined and parameters have been added. Referral will only occur after consultation with DEQ. The farmer must be in non-conformance with GAAMPS and been given the adequate time to correct the problem. The case would not be referred until MDA has consulted with DEQ and determined whether or not there is a potential violation of NREPA or how likely it is that enforcement action would be taken. That decision will be made at the division level. It also clarifies how a file or a complaint can make its way back to MDA.

Other clarifications deal with identifying the lead agency on permitted farms, on farms that use composting on farms, and on the processing of by-products that are being land applied. Reporting expectations between the two agencies are addressed.

There is room for flexibility in this MOU with the procedures of the two agencies attached. A joint committee has also been appointed to meet on a regular basis to resolve issues as they arise. They will also evaluate how the new process is working and make recommendations for change.

Ms. Pontz and Mr. Powers are working on joint training for staff on the new MOU and procedures.

Pursuant to a question by Commissioner Maitland, Ms. Pontz explained that if a complaint investigation has exhausted the timeframes and attempts to bring the producer into conformance with the GAAMPs, and it's not a violation of NREPA but more of a nuisance issue, then MDA will send a letter to the producer informing them they have not come into conformance with the GAAMPs. MDA will close the case and inform the farmer that he has failed to avail himself of the nuisance protection under RTF. A copy of the letter will also go to the complainant and the local unit of government. It will allow MDA to close the case but not refer the case to DEQ if there is not an environmental violation.

(The floor was yielded for Public Comment prior to the vote on the motion.)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tonia Ritter, representing Michigan Farm Bureau, commented that MFB is supportive of the MOU and has spoken to Ms. Pontz regarding procedural

questions that can be addressed through the joint committee established through the MOU.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER BYRUM MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER DARLING SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Clean Sweep Update: Vicki Pontz, Director, Environmental Stewardship Division; Jack Knorek, Groundwater Program Manager

Ms. Pontz and Mr. Knorek provided background and an update on the Groundwater Program with a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Knorek highlighted activities and successes of the program, particularly the Clean Sweep Program. This program partners with local health departments to collect and properly dispose of unwanted and outdated pesticides, met a significant landmark in collecting the millionth pound of product at the Kalamazoo Clean Sweep Site. They are open all year, 3 days a week. There are currently 15 permanent sites, with the possibility of establishing a 16th site in Sault Ste. Marie.

Software has been developed to help track the product collected by the EPA registration number. The product is picked up by a local waste hauler and taken to an incinerator facility.

Satellite collection sites are also set up throughout the state.

Mr. Knorek introduced Bruce Wilkenson, Region V, EPA, who answered questions about restricted use products. Mr. Wilkenson is in Michigan to audit the Michigan Clean Sweep project. He also presented Director Wyant and Mr. Knorek with a plaque celebrating the millionth pound of product collected. Mr. Wyant thanked Mr. Wilkenson for the plaque and noted that this program could not exist without funding from EPA.

Legislative Report: Brad Deacon, Acting Legislative Liaison

Mr. Deacon gave an update of recent legislative activities. A number of bills were introduced after the election, including another pesticide notification bill, a number of aquatic and genetically engineered nuisances and a companion animal welfare fund and license plate funding effort. The fund would be created and housed in MDA. There was a bill introduced to create a DEQ commission. There is a very limited number of session days left before the end of the year.

MDA is following Rep. Walker's bill to create a new farmland preservation program that has moved out of the Senate agriculture committee and onto

the Senate floor. MDA is working with the Governor's office and Department of Treasury on the cost and whether there should be a cap or phase in, and if so, how much.

The authority of the Natural Resources Commission with consultation from the Agriculture Commission, over feeding of wildlife, sunsets on December 31 and if not reauthorized would negatively impact Bovine TB and any other wildlife/livestock cross-over disease. The bill has passed the Senate and is in the House Natural Resources Committee. MDA is working jointly with DNR to increase awareness of the need for this legislation.

There are two bills by Sen. Brown regarding methane digesters. This bill states the state treasurer "may" invest surplus funds into methane digesters or other qualified agriculture energy production loans.

The companion bill would create a tax credit in the general property tax act, for people who have installed a methane digester. The bill is back to the House for final action.

Two bills were signed into law since the last meeting. Sen. Barcia's effort to help the sugar industry and Rep. Palzrok sponsored the Common Sense Consumption Act which would prohibit lawsuits against people eating too much then suing the people who made or sold them the food.

Mr. Deacon discussed the changes in the House and other election results.

Looking forward to next year's projects, MDA will be working to create a penalty for operating without a license under the Migrant Housing Law; updating the plant act to create more significant penalties; and updating the Bodies of Dead Animals Act.

Emergency Management: We are working with the Michigan State Police and the Governor's office to create a critical infrastructure.

On December 7, MDA will be conducting a contact drill. In December, all departments in state government will be working on an emergency management scenario.

Animal Health Update: Dr. Steve Halstead, Director, Animal Industry Division

Dr. Halstead reported that Brad Deacon has arranged several meetings with legislators and that these meetings have been valuable. Also, he met with several of stakeholders, with additional meetings to come.

MDA has applied for free status for the Upper Peninsula in the TB program. The application was delivered to USDA during the US Animal Health Association (USAHA) meeting. MDA anticipates nine to 12 months before a decision is made. There will be discussions and many opportunities to answer any questions USDA may have. The application includes a recounting of our activities conducted for TB surveillance and protection of the UP in past years.

Meetings have been set up in the UP in December by Ben Bartlett, the MSU Extension agent for the UP. Discussions will include the free status application, tagging issues and identification in general.

Identification continues to be a strong project. MDA has had discussions with USDA regarding the definition of official ID. Under our split state status we are required to have identification of all cattle moving inter and intra state. Within the modified accredited zone (the high risk zone) that is electronic identification. All the readers and staffing are in place. In the modified accredited advanced zone, we are still relying on other means of identification, metal tags, tattoos, or breed registry information. We would like to have one uniform method, preferably the electronic tag but would accept the metal tag. Regardless, we will make sure we are consistent with the national method.

A meeting is planned with the producers from the modified accredited zone November 12 in Atlanta. Director Wyant, Director Humphries, USDA staff and Extension staff and Dr. Halstead will be attending. Dr. Halstead has received very positive feedback from the producers about their being full partners in this effort.

MDA has recently hired a wildlife biologist within the TB section of the Animal Industry Division. Brett Nelson has a strong background in mapping and geographic information systems and in wildlife management. His responsibilities will include helping those producers manage the wildlife interface, protecting the feeding and housing operations from encroachment by deer. He will also be involved with other projects across the department.

There have been a couple of incidents with salmonella in the state involving hamsters in pet stores in the Detroit area. Several children became ill. MDA is working with the CDC and MDCH. MDA has traced back the rodents to a distributor in the greater Detroit area and the animals have all been isolated. Work is being done through regulatory enforcement from USDA.

There was also salmonella reported from a private hog roast where 11 individuals became ill in the Kalamazoo area. The roaster was traced back to a Michigan farm through a Michigan processor, working with the CDC and MDCH, and our Food & Dairy Division.

MDA is moving ahead with hiring personnel in the TB area to assist at the bridge and keep up with the testing. Testing has been going well which will allow producers to move animals to market.

Dr. Halstead gave an update on the US Animal Identification Plan, indicating that all farms have been identified in Michigan, the first milestone for the national system.

International Trade Program Update: Jamie Zmitko, Acting International Trade Manager, Agriculture Development Division; Robert Craig, Director, Agriculture Development Division

Jamie Zmitko provided information on the 2004 International Export Grant Results and the Initiatives for Enhancing Agricultural Export Market Development. The most significant activity was the first shipment of fresh Michigan apples to Mexico.

Ms. Zmitko provided a PowerPoint presentation on 2004 International Marketing Activities and 2004 International Grants awarded for international development. The presentation highlighted dollars leveraged and successes of the individual companies.

Director Wyant explained the unique partnership with MIATCO. Federal dollars flow through MIATCO which Michigan companies can access.

Agriculture Tourism: Sandy Hill, Commodity Coordinator, Agriculture Development Division; Robert Craig, Director, Agriculture Development Division

Sandy Hill discussed direct marketing and agriculture tourism. She distributed copies of the 2004-2005 Michigan Farm Market, Pick & Ag Tourism Directory. The printing of the directory was paid for with a federal grant (Rural Development grant,) the distribution costs are being covered by revenue received from fees and advertising in the directory. 225,000

directories were printed and the directory is also available in a searchable database on the MDA website.

She also distributed a fact sheet about agriculture tourism.

Ms. Hill also reported that the Michigan Carrot Industry Development program recently completed a successful continuation referendum.

Many of the commodity groups have developed very conservative promotional budgets for the coming year.

She discussed the movie "Polar Express" and the close ties to Michigan. Some of the filming was done in Michigan, a Michigan author wrote the book and the Michigan Christmas Tree Association was involved with promotion of the movie.

Select Michigan has been very involved in promotion of several Michigan commodities.

Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS): Jack Bricker, State Conservationist

Jack Bricker, newly appointed State Conservationist, was introduced to the Commission. Mr. Bricker reviewed his background. He has been with the NRCS for 21 years, working first in Ohio, New York and New Mexico, before being selected as Michigan's state conservationist in October.

Mr. Bricker briefly reviewed the NRCS budget and issues related to how and when the money is allocated and impact on different programs. The St. Joe Watershed in Michigan was selected as one of the pilot watersheds received under the Conservation Security Program last year. This year four watersheds in Michigan were selected: Carp-Pine Watershed, Kawkawlin-Pine Watershed, Pere Marquette-White and River Raisin.

Upcoming issues: streamline and implement the conservation programs in a more efficient manner; staffing concerns and workload distribution; competitive sourcing; and expanding e-government on the web. Outreach in the state is very important to all segments of the population. Modernization is important to make people more efficient and productive. Most importantly, building strong partnerships with MDA, other state agencies, federal agencies and with the private sector remains a priority.

Mr. Bricker plans on visiting county offices to meet with the employees and partners at the local level.

Public Comment

Tonia Ritter, Michigan Farm Bureau, commented that Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB) has been very involved with Annex 2001. One area of concern is recognition of aquafir recharge that agricultural lands provide. There are other matters of concern that MFB has commented on in the past, but they have also encouraged industry representatives to provide comments as well.

Ms. Ritter also discussed issues from county Farm Bureau meetings and the MFB Annual Meeting.

There was a brief discussion about recruiting more veterinary students to farm-based large animal practice.

MFB is pleased with the progress of TB-free status for the Upper Peninsula and offered their assistance in helping to gain cooperation with neighboring states.

Denise Yockey, Michigan Apple Committee, shared information about the Michigan Apple Advertising and Promotion Program with the Commission and their recent Apple Day at the Capitol. She also thanked MDA for the Select Michigan Program and the opportunities to promote Michigan apples.

ADJOURNMENT:

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER MAITLAND MOVED TO
ADJOURN THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER DARLING
SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Attachments:

A – Commission of Excellence Award

B – Michigan Commission of Agriculture Minutes September 16, 2004

C – Annex 2001

D – Plant Health Update

*E – Michigan Department of Agriculture/Michigan Department of Environmental
Quality Memorandum of Understanding*

F – Legislature Report

G – International Trade Program Update

H – Agriculture Tourism Update