

**Michigan Commission of Agriculture Meeting
Geagley Laboratory
1615 S. Harrison Road
East Lansing, MI**

**MEETING MINUTES
January 7, 2004**

PRESENT:

Bill Pridgeon, Vice-Chair, Commission of Agriculture
James Maitland, Secretary, Commission of Agriculture
Douglas Darling, Commission of Agriculture
James Byrum, 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
Monte Bordner, Michigan Cattlemen's Association
Tonia Ritter, Michigan Farm Bureau

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Vice-chair Pridgeon called the meeting of the Commission of Agriculture to order at 9:25 a.m. on Wednesday, January 7, 2004. Secretary Maitland called the roll with Director Wyant, Commissioners Byrum, Darling, Maitland, Pridgeon, and Jousma-Miller present.

INTRODUCTION OF ANN JOUSMA-MILLER

Director Wyant welcomed and introduced Ann Jousma-Miller, newly appointed Commissioner, replacing Nora Viau, whose term expired December 31, 2003. Commissioner Jousma-Miller is from Gladstone.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**MOTION: COMMISSONER BYRUM MOVED APPROVAL OF THE
JANUARY 7, 2004 AGENDA AS PRESENTED. SECONDED.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 5, 2003 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: COMMISSIONER DARLING MOVED APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 5, 2003 MEETING MINUTES. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEXT MEETING

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

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MOTION: COMMISSIONER DARLING MOVED THAT OFFICERS ROTATE CHAIRS IN THE MANNER OF MOVING UP THROUGH THE OFFICES WITH BILL PRIDGEON AS CHAIR, JIM MAITLAND AS VICE-CHAIR AND JIM BYRUM AS SECRETARY. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF COMMISSIONERS TRAVEL

Commissioner Darling stated that Commissioners Maitland, Pridgeon and Darling attended the MDA All Employee Meeting on November 25, 2003. Commissioners Maitland, Byrum, Pridgeon and Darling attended the Michigan Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in Traverse City on December 4-5, 2003. Commissioner Darling attended the MDA Employee Awards Ceremony on December 12, 2003. Commissioner Maitland attended the Great Lakes Fruit and Vegetable Show in Grand Rapids on December 10, 2003.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER BYRUM MOVED TO APPROVE THE ABOVE STATED TRAVEL BY COMMISSIONERS DARLING, MAITLAND, PRIDGEON AND BYRUM. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Darling attended the MDA All Employee Meeting and stated that it was a good learning experience for him to attend and talk with employees. He also attended the Michigan Farm Bureau Annual meeting in Traverse City. In December he attended the MDA Employee Awards Ceremony. He stated that soybean prices are up, but supply is low. Commissioner Darling welcomed Commissioner Jousma-Miller to the Commission. He noted that he was grateful to Nora Viau for the years that she served on the Commission.

Commissioner Maitland attended the MDA All Employee Meeting and the Great Lakes Fruit and Vegetable Show. He also attended the Michigan Farm Bureau Annual meeting. He stated that cherry supplies are average and the apple market appears to be strong.

Commissioner Byrum reported that soybean prices are up, and beef prices have risen after the initial drop with the announcement of BSE in Washington. He reported that nitrogen prices will be high and supplies will be tight. Nitrogen will probably have to be imported into Michigan this year.

Chair Pridgeon reported that the U.S. exports 10% of our beef production and we need to assure other countries that we have the situation under control. Chair Pridgeon stated that he appreciated Director Wyant's leadership at the MDA All Employee meeting and he was impressed with the number of employees in attendance and felt it was a good meeting. He liked the Governor's idea of having standards for every decision that we make.

Commissioner Jousma-Miller thanked everyone for the warm welcome that she received. She thanked the Department for their efforts at the Upper Peninsula State Fair. She stated that agriculture industry in the Upper Peninsula is limited, but that the Upper Peninsula is experiencing an economic recovery. Ag tourism has become a vital part of the Upper Peninsula's economy.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Dan Wyant highlighted key issues occurring in November and December. He also provided the Commissioners with a list of upcoming events of interest to them. Director Wyant reported that the Governor's initiatives and the Department's strategic planning are in alignment; with food safety, plant and animal health protection, viable agriculture, ensuring good environmental stewardship and consumer protection as priorities for the Department.

Director Wyant reported that recommendations were made to the Adam and Naomi VandenBosch of Kent City, to remedy their abandoned orchard situation and the VandenBoschs have in turn challenged the Department's recommendations. The VandenBoschs have filed a complaint against the MDA in Kent County Circuit Court.

Robert Dagenais from the Upper Peninsula, was turned down for a permit to erect a fence for a captive cervidae operation. He has filed an appeal with the Department.

The Department and the Governor have been working with the U.S. Office of Management and Budget to obtain funding for the Emerald Ash Borer project. Resources for the program will be depleted by the end of January.

Director Wyant reported that Governor Granholm attended a portion of the Department's All Employee meeting on November 25 and that he felt it was a successful meeting on identifying

visions and values.

Director Wyant gave a brief overview of the Department's priorities, programs, and compared the Department's budget from FY 00 to the present, which shows a reduction of 52% in general funds from 2000 to 2004. He stated that the FY 05 budget reductions will have an impact on areas not previously cut.

Other items briefly reviewed were: BSE, Ralstonia, ag equine funding, alpaca production, water use reporting, Continental Dairy, Monitor Sugar and CAFOs.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT: Brad Deacon, Legislative Liaison

Mr. Deacon reported on the legislative activity that has taken place since the November Commission meeting. Legislation of interest includes:

- Senate package on genetic organisms and release of non-native organisms
- Senate Anhydrous Ammonia bills (739, 777, 786)
- Pesticide use in schools (5154)

Mr. Deacon reported that both the House and Senate Ag Committee have asked that the Department give a presentation before their Committees on BSE (Mad Cow Disease). This will take place in January.

Mr. Deacon introduced four policy advisors in attendance: Mark Salagar, House Democratic Policy; Jamie Clover-Adams, Senate Republican Policy; Liesel Clark, Senate Democratic Policy; and Rebecca Clark, House Republican Policy. Also introduced was Jeff Cobb of Senator VanWoerkoem's office.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

LOCAL AND ORGANIC FOODS MARKETING ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND EVALUATION OF 2003 SELECT A TASTE OF MICHIGAN CAMPAIGN:

Bob Craig, Director, Agriculture Development Division and Melinda Curtis, Select a Taste of Michigan Program

Mr. Craig and Ms. Curtis gave a power point presentation on Select a Taste of Michigan, Campaign 2003, highlighting promotions, economic and nutritional messages, and announcing the 2004 campaign promotions.

The vendors and retail groups have been pleased with the promotions and want to continue them in 2004. This program is a partnership among MDA, Michigan Integrated Food and

Farming Systems, Michigan farmers and food processors, commodity groups and organizations. Sixty-eight stores in the Grand Rapids area have taken part in the promotion.

RECESS:

The meeting recessed at noon.

RECONVENE:

The meeting reconvened at 1:05 p.m.

HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE: Dr. Edward Mather,
Department Director, National Food Safety and Toxicology Center, Michigan State University

Dr. Mather gave a power point presentation on Homeland Security Center(s) for Excellence. He reviewed the role of the National Food Safety and Toxicology Center and MSU in the proposal request.

The Request for Proposal was announced in mid-December at a meeting held in Washington, DC with the Department of Homeland Security and academic leaders from around the U.S. There are two requests for proposals, one on Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Issues, and one on Post Harvest Food Protection and Defense. There will be one center supporting each issue. Funding will be \$5 million for theme two and \$6 million for theme one per year for three years. The letter of intent is due January 5 and the full proposal is due February 9. Homeland security requires coordinated action on the part of local governments, the private sector and concerned citizens across the country.

Dr. Mather requested a letter of support for MSU participation in the proposals from MDA. He also suggests that we not wait for federal dollars, we should use our present resources.

COMPREHENSIVE NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLANS: Vicki Pontz, Director,
Environmental Stewardship Division and Jan Wilford, Michigan Agriculture
Environmental Assurance Program Manager

Ms. Pontz and Ms. Wilford did a power point presentation on Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP), detailing the goals of the program, components of a CNMP, where they come from, and what the Department's capacity is to get CNMPs completed.

Ms. Pontz reviewed the goals and objectives - environmental protection through pollution prevention; economically viable and environmental responsible farms; adopting the program in a

cost-effective way and maximizing flexibility. Education goals are to develop program manual, producers to pilot the program before introducing program to farms; thus building on programs already in place that were successful.

In June 2000, the GAAMP for Siting Livestock Facilities went into effect. At this point in time, if a new or expanding facility wants to be MAEAP Certified they have to have complied with the Livestock GAAMP. In December 2002, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) signed a regulatory innovation agreement, which was to set the stage for the CAFO plan in Michigan. All CAFOs (over 1000 animal units) have to have a CNMP by September 2006. Any operation under MDEQ enforcement action also has to have a CNMP. The 2000 Farm Bill required a CNMP to access cost share for livestock production facilities. In 2004, MDEQ is planning for individual permits for new and expanding CAFOs.

Ms. Wilford reviewed the components of a CNMP:

- Overview - enterprises, goals and long-term plans for resource management,
- Farm headquarters map,
- Production – species, production level; amount, location and characteristics of wastewater generated; mortality management; veterinary waste management; volume of stored manure,
- Manure collection, storage, transfer and treatment,
- Conservation practices in manure application areas,
- Land application management,
- Maintenance and application records,
- Inputs to animals,
- Alternative utilization activities,
- Inspections, operation and maintenance training,
- Schedule of CNMP implementation,
- Emergency action plan,
- References and appendices.

Ms. Pontz talked about providers - NRCS offices are able to approve plans at no cost to the producer; four firms have contracted with NRCS to write plans; MSUE is working on the education aspect, MAEAP techs, housed in Conservation District Offices, are not writing CNMPs, but are helping producers prepare; MDA staff are verifying MAEAP farms, and MDEQ staff review CNMPs for enforcement.

MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE SURVEY UPDATE: Dave Kleweno, State Statistician

Mr. Kleweno gave a survey program update power point presentation. He also distributed information on Michigan 2002-03 survey highlights, and Michigan 2002 Turfgrass Survey results. Of the 1.9 million acres in lawn and turf statewide, 1.6 million is homeowner acreage. The 2002 Census of Agriculture Michigan response rate was 89.8%. The farm definition remained as 'any place from which \$1,000 of ag products were produced and sold'. Some changes included 100 acres of pasture only; government payments with sales and points; updated point farm calculations and instructions were clarified for public land and grazing associations. New information collected in 2002 included: multiple operators; acres in certified organic commodities; aquatic plants, acres treated with animal manure; grain storage capacity; bison, deer, elk, llamas, emus and ostrich inventory, computer/internet use and more detailed farm-related income. Farm and ranch irrigation surveys will be mailed January 12, 2004.

BLUEBERRY LICENSING PROCEDURES: Ron Bodtke

Mr. Bodtke expressed concern, as a blueberry grower, with the Office of Intellectual Properties (OIP), MSU and licensing protocol. MSU released three new blueberry varieties in 2003. Mr. Bodtke feels that the licensing/distribution process needs to be improved. Of concern is that the foreign country license allowed for first right of refusal of any new releases that come from MSU. There is not a consistent policy for all commodities.

Mr. Bodtke requests that MDA meet with Michigan Farm Bureau, industry representatives and MSU OIP to address concerns with the bidding process and the risks of beneficial research being restricted.

Drs. Jan Grey and Gary Lemme have held meetings with commodity groups and internally to come up with a process. When this is released it will be reviewed with Michigan's interest in mind. Chair Pridgeon asked that Director Wyant keep the Commission updated on any discussion the Department may have on licensing commodities.

ANIMAL HEALTH UPDATE: Dr. Joan Arnoldi, State Veterinarian

Dr. Arnoldi reported on continued surveillance of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) with 2,000 samples, all negative. The MDNR continues with hunter samples also. On-going surveillance will continue. Wisconsin continues to have positive CWD animals. Dr. Arnoldi also reported the establishment of a new "Potential High Risk Area" for Bovine Tuberculosis in Crawford, Ogemaw and Roscommon counties on December 4, 2003 due to the diagnosis of TB in wild white-tailed deer. A beef herd in Alpena county and a dairy herd of 68 head in Alpena County have also tested positive.

BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY (BSE) UPDATE: Dr. Joan Arnoldi, State Veterinarian and Ken Rauscher, Director, Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division

Dr. Arnoldi reported on the discovery of BSE in a dairy cow in Washington on December 23, 2003. As a non-ambulatory animal, brain samples were taken at slaughter. Two weeks later the samples came back positive. Ear tags were checked and 14,000 pounds of ground beef were tracked and removed from sale. The ear tag was traced to Canada, and DNA results linked the animal to a Canadian herd. The International Regulations state that if you can prove you received the BSE animal from another country, then you may be able to declare yourself disease free and not have to go through the one to five year shipment quarantine.

Secretary Veneman has issued a ban on non-ambulatory animals into the food supply.

Dr. Arnoldi believes that monies for the long-awaited livestock identification tag system will be forthcoming from USDA-APHIS.

Mr. Rauscher addressed the Federal "BSE Rule" for feed manufacturers and Michigan's BSE feed inspection program, and distributed a chart of Michigan's BSE inspections conducted since 1999 showing percentage of firms in compliance. Since 1999 the compliance percentage has grown from 61% to 100% for 2003. In 2004 the inspection schedule has been accelerated with a completion target of February 13, 2004.

PLANT HEALTH UPDATE: Ken Rauscher, Director, Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division

Mr. Rauscher gave an update on the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), along with a timeline of events occurring since June 2002 when EAB was initially discovered in Michigan. There is a strategic plan in place for EAB addressing eradication and restoration. The quarantine area includes 13 counties in southeast Michigan. 900,000 acres in SE Michigan have been surveyed to identify the leading edge of the infestation. The core area currently includes 2500 square miles. An initial meeting with local government officials will take place, followed by a media roundtable. Then a public meeting will be held for impacted residents from the area, with packets of information provided to property owners. A second public meeting will then be held with impacted residents informing them of the final determination as to whether the plant host must be eradicated, and the extent of the eradication necessary to prevent the spread of the insect pest where the infestation has occurred. Additionally, since EAB has been declared a public nuisance, four public hearings will be held, starting January 21, with the last one scheduled for January 27.

Mr. Rauscher also briefly updated the Commission on other plant pests:

▸ Plum Pox – an aggressive sampling program for this pest over the past three years has been negative. This is good news, as Michigan is considered a high-risk state for Plum Pox due to the proximity to Ontario and the level of infestation there.

‣ Gypsy Moth – an exotic pest in Michigan for the past 30 years, this pest is a major challenge for nursery growers shipping out of state.

‣ Alternaria in Ya Pears from China – Early December 2003 the Department was informed about this disease that is of concern to our pear and apple industry. A significant recall of infected pears was done in conjunction with USDA.

‣ Ralstonia – is a bacteria on the list of suspected terrorist organisms with the Department of Homeland Security. This pest attacks geraniums and potatoes (brown rot). In 2003, Ralstonia was detected on geraniums received in Michigan from Kenya. In 2004 USDA discovered geranium shipments originating from Guatemala with Ralstonia. These cuttings have been destroyed, and Guatemalan shipments have been halted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Monte Bordner, President of Michigan Cattlemen’s Association and Chairman of the TB Advisory Committee – Mr. Bordner stated that he feels the media is distorting the safety of Michigan’s food supply. He feels that mandatory ID needs to be in place, for TB and for BSE. As Chair of the TB Advisory Committee he is advising the Departments of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Community Health to revisit the agreement signed several years ago regarding eradication of this disease.

There does not appear to be a drop in beef demand since the discovery of BSE in Washington. The beef industry got the facts early on and conveyed the food safety facts to the media.

Note: At 4:15 Commissioner Ann Jousma-Miller left the meeting due to scheduled airline flight.

Tonia Ritter, Michigan Farm Bureau – Conveyed that President Wayne Wood had contacted Ann Jousma-Miller at the time of her appointment with congratulations.

The MFB policy book will be available shortly. Items of interest from policy discussions are:

- ✓ Water Use – decisions made will reflect favorably on agriculture.
- ✓ Equine Industry – the ag enhancement package of legislation will receive continued support.
- ✓ Jurisdictional Transfer of Private Cervidae – MFB is opposed to the transfer of jurisdiction over the private cervidae out of MDA. It is important that privately owned livestock animals stay under the regulation of MDA for animal health reasons.
- ✓ Funding for the Animal Health Diagnostic Lab – MFB will continue to support funding.
- ✓ Other funding – MFB will continue to support funding for MDA, MSU Extension and for research. A strong support structure for agriculture is vital.
- ✓ Property Taxes – will support legislation for favorable agriculture property taxes.
- ✓ Well Set-backs – support of a set-back equivalent to what is stipulated in the Grade A Dairy Law (75 feet).

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: COMMISSIONER BYRUM MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

ATTACHMENTS

A - Agenda

B – November 5, 2003 minutes

C – Director’s Report – December 2003 and January 2004

D –Vision and Values Employee Sessions MDA Final Report

E – Legislative Report, January 2004

F –Select a Taste of Michigan Campaign 2003

G – Homeland Security Center for Excellence (power point) and Award Guidelines for Homeland Security Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense and Homeland Security Center for Post-Harvest Food Protection and Defense

H – Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program Progressive Planning and Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans brochure

I –National Agricultural Statistics Service Fact Finders for Agriculture

J – Blueberry Licensing

K –Establishment of a Potential High Risk Area for Bovine Tuberculosis

L –BSE Overview/Backgrounder and BSE Feed Inspection Program

M- Emerald Ash Borer timeline; power point; press release