

**Michigan Commission of Agriculture Meeting
Michigan Department of Agriculture
Dow Leadership Center
22 E. Galloway Drive
Hillsdale, Michigan**

**MEETING MINUTES
November 6, 2002**

PRESENT:

Douglas Darling, Chair, Commission of Agriculture
Nora Viau, Vice-Chair, Commission of Agriculture
Bill Pridgeon, Secretary, Commission of Agriculture
James Maitland, Commission of Agriculture
Jordan Tatter, Commission of Agriculture
Dan Wyant, Director, Michigan Department of Agriculture

OTHERS PRESENT: *(all or part of the meeting)*

Michigan Department of Agriculture Staff
Jim Riley, Assistant Attorney General
Robert Bender, Bovine Tuberculosis Eradication Coordinator
Kristine Fedewa, Michigan Integrated Food and Farming Systems
Tonia Koppenaal, Michigan Farm Bureau
Stacey Lott, House Republican Policy Office
Dan Marsh, Michigan Deer and Elk Farmers Association
Bridget Patrick, Michigan Department of Community Health
Wayne Wood, Michigan Farm Bureau

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Darling called the meeting of the Commission of Agriculture to order at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 6, 2002. Secretary Pridgeon called the roll with Director Wyant and all Commissioners present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER VIAU MOVED APPROVAL OF THE
NOVEMBER 6, 2002 AGENDA AS PRESENTED. SECONDED.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2002 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: COMMISSIONER TATTER MOVED APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 18, 2002 MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Commission of Agriculture is scheduled for December 5 and 6, 2002 in conjunction with the Michigan Farm Bureau Annual Meeting, Grand Traverse Resort, Traverse City, Michigan.

APPROVAL OF COMMISSIONERS' PER DIEM AND/OR TRAVEL

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MAITLAND MOVED TO APPROVE COMMISSIONER DARLING'S TRAVEL OF SEPTEMBER 21 TO LENEWEE COUNTY FARM BUREAU ANNUAL MEETING, SEPTEMBER 25 TO WAYNE COUNTY FARM BUREAU ANNUAL MEETING, AND OCTOBER 31 TO MSU DIAGNOSTIC LAB TOUR; COMMISSIONER TATTER AND MAITLAND'S TRAVEL OF OCTOBER 1 TO ATTEND MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES HUNT CLUB MEETING AT ROSE LAKE. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF DIRECTOR'S OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MAITLAND MOVED TO APPROVE DIRECTOR WYANT'S TRAVEL ON OCTOBER 31-NOVEMBER 1 TO ATTEND THE USDA FRUIT AND VEGETABLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Pridgeon welcomed the Commission to Hillsdale. He reported that crops were harvested early with a wide variety of yields from North to South in the county. He stated that the National Pork Checkoff was ruled unconstitutional, and an appeal has been filed. The checkoff system has been challenged nation wide and is not holding up in court. He believes that a voluntary checkoff system may be coming.

Commissioner Maitland reported that apple harvest is almost complete in northern Michigan. He attended the hunt club meeting held by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. This is a good opportunity to meet with major players involved in TB in the deer herd in Michigan. He also attended the Northwest Michigan Farm Bureau meeting in Traverse City.

On October 29 he attended a ceremony recognizing Don Nugent of Graceland Fruit as recipient of the Madigan Award.

Commissioner Viau stated that October recorded record lows for the UP. Corn is still being harvested, the fields have been very wet and the crop is high in moisture.

Commissioner Tatter reported that apples are done and the crop was less than predicted. Grapes also are harvested with about a 50% crop, which was more than predicted. Soybeans are almost finished and corn is coming out fast.

Since the September Commission meeting Commissioner Tatter participated in the following ag-related functions:

- an MDNR sponsored Bovine TB/Deer Herd Management and Habitat Improvement meeting with hunt club members in northeast Michigan, along with Commissioner Maitland.
- MSU Extension and Agricultural Experiment Station Advisory Council meeting.
- a conference call regarding the selection of the new Chair of the Department of Agricultural Economics at MSU.
- a grower listening/discussion meeting held by Congressman Upton dealing with the Farm Bill, drought and disaster relief, and the possible funding of the 2000 fire blight loss under the unfunded Tree Assistance Program.
- the VanBuren County Farm Bureau annual meeting.
- the MSU Southwest Michigan Research and Extension Center Advisory Council meeting.
- participated in the Michigan State Chamber of Commerce Environmental Quality Committee dealing with land use and water use policy formation.
- attended the Berrien County MSU Extension Council meeting.

Commissioner Tatter thanked Director Wyant, his administration team and all the members of the Department for their responsiveness to constituent concerns during another trying, yet exciting, year for Michigan agriculture.

Chair Darling attended Washtenaw and Monro County Farm Bureau annual meetings. Corn and soybean harvest is about done, and a lot of wheat has been planted. He attended the MSU Diagnostic Lab tour.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT - Brad Deacon

Supplemental Budget was signed reinstating the budget for the Office of Racing Commissioner. Late September saw new bills introduced regarding genetically engineered or modified aquatic

species, a series of bills regarding cervid and Chronic Wasting Disease , pet shop act revisions, drain code, and pesticide notification. Reported out of committee was HB 6256, Ag Commodities Act 232.

Brad also distributed a list of agriculture statutes and corresponding administrative rules. Research for this list resulted in discovery of a few statutes and/or rules, which are conflicting or outdated. Brad plans to submit these for repeal. All statutes have MCL numbers and can be viewed in their entirety at www.Michiganlegislature.org.

Brad gave a brief overview of election results, touching on district seats of importance to the Department. Brad reported that congratulatory letters will be sent to all 2003-04 legislators and an open house will be held highlighting the divisions within MDA and one-on-one visits will be made with agriculture committee members.

Brad introduced Stacey Lott, Policy Advisor, House Republican Policy Office.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Director Wyant

Director Wyant introduced Dr. Gary Wolfrom, Professor at Hillsdale College. Professor Wolfrom gave a brief background on Hillsdale College.

Dan stated that the Department will have bipartisan recognition with the new legislature. He wants the Department to present itself to the new administration professionally and be open to a smooth transition.

The new strategic planning currently taking place has been very productive. Significant issues have been identified: water use, manure management, local control, value added opportunities, regulatory approaches to agriculture, homeland security, emerald ash borer, TB, and CWD. This planning process will allow refocusing on what our priorities should be in light of the current budget issue. It has been the Department's policy to maintain quality programs and prioritize.

Dr. Jeff Armstrong, Dean of MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources has asked Dan to sit on an Agriculture and Natural Resources Advisory Board. MSU is currently filling a new Agriculture Economics Chair, a new Animal Science Chair and has brought aboard a Water Specialist.

The Michigan Harvest Gathering reception will be held November 18, 5:30 at the Red Cross Food Bank, Lansing, Michigan.

Dan attended the National Association of State Ag Directors in Lexington, Kentucky. Issues

discussed were grain warehousing, federal preemption, and security.

The MAGNA Entertainment Corp. made a presentation to the Department, legislative leadership and industry leadership on a proposed harness and thoroughbred horse race track near Romulus.

He participated in the grand opening of the ethanol plant in Caro. The plant starts actual processing on November 6.

Don Nugent of Graceland Fruit received the Edward R. Madigan Award (exporter of the year). This was the first time a Michigan business has received this award. The award is given to an entrepreneur who has been innovative in techniques to open and expand exports for U.S. agricultural goods.

The Director attended a subcommittee of the USDA Fruit and Vegetable Advisory Committee in Phoenix, Arizona. This committee was formed to look at a microbiological data-testing program (MDP). USDA is funding a MDP where fresh produce is tested for E. coli and salmonella. Michigan is one of six states given funding to do the testing. The fruit and vegetable industry is concerned about where this information will go and what the goal of the program is. Director Wyant is in favor of the program, as it will give us the ability to identify if there are problems, and to focus on food safety. The results are demonstrating that our fresh produce is safe.

Director Wyant participated in a conference call with Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO). The Department of Environmental Quality is holding a hearing on November 21 for a permit process under the National Pollutant Discharge System program.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has been found in northern Illinois. To date no CWD has been found in Michigan.

The Governor will be requesting a disaster declaration from USDA for 14 counties in the Upper Peninsula which received 6-7 inches above average rain this past growing season and 19 counties on the southern border of Michigan receiving 2-3 1/2 inches below average rainfall.

The Michigan Asparagus Committee has a new executive director, John Bakker of Hart. The Michigan Apple Committee is in the process of hiring a new executive director.

Director reported that over-quota milk from Canada is being shipped to a cheese plant in

Indiana. Some Michigan dairymen have approached the Department with the issue of Michigan milk being displaced by the Canadian milk. Ohio also had some cheese plants taking milk from Canada. The Ohio Agriculture Director informed Canada that its milk would not be allowed into Ohio, as it did not meet state sanitation standards.

Milk protein concentrate is being used in cheese products. This concentrate is coming in from New Zealand, Switzerland and other countries. The dairy industry, particularly Wisconsin, has an issue with this product as the Food and Drug Association has not approved it as a processed cheese additive. FDA is moving to have the concentrate approved and U.S. dairymen will be able to provide the concentrate.

Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) has received six applications for Agricultural Processing Renaissance Zones. MEDC is seeking MDA's input. At this time no decisions have been made on the six applications.

REPORT ON WATER USE GAAMPS - Mike Gregg, Environmental Stewardship Division, Resource Conservation Section Manager and Dr. Ted Loudon, Chair of Water Use GAAMPS Committee

Dr. Loudon reported on the progress of the task force appointed to develop a GAAMP on agricultural irrigation. The task force visited several agricultural irrigation sites throughout the state. The second draft of the GAAMP is almost completed and will be provided to the task force for comments. The chair and subcommittee will then develop draft three for presentation to the full task force in mid-November. The task force plans to present a final draft to the Commission after the first of the year.

2002 AG CENSUS - Vince Matthews, Deputy State Statistician, Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service

Provided the Commission with a 2002 Census of Agriculture Information Kit and the 2001-02 Michigan Agricultural Statistics and Vegetable Inventory reports. The Census of Agriculture provides comprehensive agricultural data for every county in Michigan. The census serves as the baseline for evaluating the changing economic structure and demographics of Michigan agriculture and its rural communities. The last census of agriculture was in 1997 with an 87% response rate. The goal for the 2002 census is 90% response rate.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MAITLAND MOVED TO SUPPORT THE MICHIGAN CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE AND ENCOURAGE A PROMPT RESPONSE TO THE CENSUS. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**MICHIGAN INTEGRATED FOOD AND FARMING SYSTEMS PROGRAM UPDATE -
Kristine Fedewa, MIFFS Project Coordinator**

MIFFS is a non-profit organization working to improve the economic and social well-being of Michiganders who grow and eat food. MIFFS has a partnership with MDA and local partners working to develop and field educational campaigns to promote Michigan produced organic and locally grown products.

Ms. Fedewa presented a power point presentation on who MIFFS is and the Buy Local program they are developing. This project's goal is to increase the marketing opportunities for Michigan organic and locally grown food products and to increase the awareness and purchases of these products.

A campaign will be launched in January 2003, followed by monthly print and media promotion with peak periods in June/July and October to promote and utilize fresh fruits and vegetables as they become available in Michigan's diverse and bountiful harvest.

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF SEMEN TRANSPORT FEES - Barbara Hensinger,
Director, Fairs, Exhibitions and Racing Division**

Ms. Hensinger asked the Commission to approve the Advisory Committee's recommendation that a resolution be adopted to support the recommendation as follows:

As required by Public Act 279 of 1995 and Regulation 814, the transport fee for the 2003 and 2004 foal crop is \$0.00.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON MOVED TO APPROVE THE
RECOMMENDATION AS PRESENTED. SECONDED. MOTION
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION OF EXCELLENCE AWARD - Director Wyant

Director Wyant announced that the Commission of Agriculture Excellence Award Committee had recommended the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) as the award recipient for 2002. The CREP was a superior effort and example of what the Department likes to promote. CREP was innovative in putting a partnership together, participation was far greater than expected.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER VIAU MOVED TO PRESENT THE MICHIGAN
COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE EXCELLENCE AWARD TO**

**THE CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.
SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**REVIEW OF TENTATIVE 2003 COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE MEETING
SCHEDULE - Robert Tarrant**

Dates were presented to the Commissioners for their review. Discussion ensued on the June meeting, recommending the location be moved to the Northeast Michigan area. The August meeting in Escanaba may be a shorter meeting. It was also discussed that the Commission may want to meet at the Detroit State Fair. Director Wyant asked the Commissioners to think about another out-state meeting, perhaps in the Southwest area. Dates will be finalized in December. It was noted that the March date should be March 5, not March 6.

**APPROVAL OF COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE RESOLUTION HONORING
ROBERT BENDER - Director Wyant**

Director Wyant stated that Bob Bender was the ideal person to handle the Bovine Tuberculosis Eradication Coordination. He has brought MDNR and MDA together consistently on the TB issue and formed a team approach.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER TATTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE
COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE RESOLUTION HONORING
ROBERT BENDER ON HIS RETIREMENT AS THE STATE'S
BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS ERADICATION COORDINATOR AS OF
OCTOBER 1, 2002. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED
UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dan Marsh, Michigan Deer and Elk Association - Stated that there are no deer farms within 25 miles of the Illinois site where a positive CWD deer was found. He thought the November 4, CWD joint meeting with MDA, MDNR and Michigan United Conservation Clubs was an informative meeting.

Tonia Koppenaal, Michigan Farm Bureau - Gave an update on the Federal Warehousing Act (FWA) and the impact on the Grain Insurance Fund Initiative (GIFI). There is concern over how FWA will work with licenses that are established on the State level. If the FWA supersedes the state license, there will be some challenges with the GIFI as far as collecting, and enforcing payment. MFB has stepped back from pushing this bill forward until it is clarified what is going on with the FWA and how it will work in conjunction with state licenses.

MFB and MDA are holding three TB Informational meeting in the northeast Michigan mid-November. These meetings are to address livestock producer concerns.

PRESENTATION ON TRIP TO CHINA - Commissioner Maitland

Commissioner Maitland gave a presentation on the Michigan Farm Bureau Agricultural Tour in China, September 1 - 15. One of the more impressive visits was to an apple juice concentrate plant in Shanghai Province. They also met with US Embassy officials, agricultural and governmental officials in Beijing. It was interesting to observe their manure management practices and food safety processes.

The Great Wall of China is the main tourist attraction. The Wall is 3600 miles long and is an amazing structure. The Government owns all the land in China, peasants farm small plots (less than one acre) of land and pay 10% of their crop as rent. Most grain crops were spread on cement to dry. Modern equipment is scarce, but manual labor is plentiful. Commissioner Maitland felt that soybeans and cherries might be good products to export to China.

MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION FUND BOARD UPDATE - Vicki Pontz-Teachout, Director, Environmental Stewardship Division; Rich Harlow, Farmland Preservation Section Manager; and Wayne Wood, President, Michigan Farm Bureau

Ms. Pontz-Teachout gave a brief overview of the board and its functions. The board is appointed by the Governor. The board's first responsibility was to set up criteria by which to select grants from local units of government. Standards, guidelines and a scoring system were developed to inform local communities how the Board would be making decisions on the applications.

Mr. Harlow outlined three steps required to participate:

1. Adopt a purchase of development rights ordinance
2. Update the comprehensive plan and include how localities are going to preserve farmland communities
3. Come up with matching funds to match the State's

Rich briefly detailed information provided in the Proposed Standards, Guidelines, Application Process and Scoring System for the Michigan Agricultural Preservation Fund.

The goal of the Fund is to preserve 200,000 farmland acres over the next five years. There are no targeted areas; rather, this is based on the local units of government and factors of development pressure, non-farm population, and market value of ag products in the county.

Mr. Wood fielded questions regarding the Agricultural Preservation Fund, Purchase of

Development Rights and Michigan Farmland Community Alliance. Public meetings are scheduled in Grayling on December 2 and in Lansing on December 9 to receive public input on the proposed standards and guidelines. After the public hearings, comments will be reviewed and revisions made if necessary. Michigan Farm Bureau will also be making a presentation to the Natural Resources Commission on November 7. The Michigan Agricultural Preservation Fund Board is charged with the final decision on the standards and guidelines. He feels that it will be three years before any substantial funding is available.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

ATTACHMENTS

- A - Agenda*
- B - September 18, 2002 minutes*
- C -Legislative Report*
- D - Agriculture Statutes*
- E - Director's Report, October 2002*
- F - Water Use GAAMPS*
- G - Michigan 2002 Census of Agriculture Information Kit*
- H - Michigan Agricultural Statistics 2001-2002*
- I - Vegetable Inventory 2001-2002*
- J - Michigan Organic and Locally Grown Foods Project FAQ's*
- K - Request for Resolution for Semen Transport Fees*
- L - Commission Excellence Award - Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program*
- M - Commission Resolution Commending Robert Bender*
- N - Fruit Growers News article on China Apple Juice Plants*
- O - 2003 Commission Meeting Schedule (tentative)*
- P - Proposed Standards, Guidelines, Application Process and Scoring System for the Michigan Agricultural Preservation Fund*
- Q - TB Update*