

**Michigan Commission of Agriculture Meeting
Constitution Hall – ConConA Conference Room
525 W. Allegan
Lansing, MI**

**MEETING MINUTES
November 5, 2003**

PRESENT:

Nora Viau, Chair, Commission of Agriculture
Bill Pridgeon, Vice-Chair, Commission of Agriculture
James Maitland, Secretary, Commission of Agriculture
Douglas Darling, Commission of Agriculture
James Byrum, 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 and Exhibitions
Kate Carolan, Michigan Farm Radio Network
Jill Corrin, Michigan Farm Bureau
Amy Frankmann, Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association
Tonia Koppenaal, Michigan Farm Bureau
Karen Tremble, Michigan Farm Radio Network

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Viau called the meeting of the Commission of Agriculture to order at 9:20 a.m. on Wednesday, November 5, 2003. Secretary Maitland called the roll with Director Wyant, Commissioners Byrum, Darling, Maitland, Pridgeon, and Viau present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: COMMISSIONER DARLING MOVED APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 5, 2003 AGENDA AS PRESENTED. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 17, 2003 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: COMMISSIONER DARLING MOVED APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 17, 2003 MEETING MINUTES. SECONDED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Commission of Agriculture is scheduled for January 7, 2004 at the Geagley Lab, East Lansing.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Darling reported that soybean harvest is about 85% complete in the southeast portion of the state with below average yields. Corn harvest is just starting with high moisture and good yields. Commissioner Darling attended Michigan Farm Bureau annual meetings in Wayne, Washtenaw and Monroe Counties.

Commissioner Pridgeon reported that bean harvest is complete in the southern part of the state, with below average yields. Corn yields are high with insufficient storage available. Commissioner Pridgeon attended a meeting on Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) hosted by Michigan Farm Bureau. He reported that both the beef and pork check offs were ruled unconstitutional.

Commissioner Byrum stated that soybean yields across the state are low. Corn yields should be high, moisture is up, drying corn costs will also be up due to the price of natural gas. Storage for corn will be in short supply. He predicts that dry bean acreage will be up next year, especially in the thumb area.

Commissioner Byrum commended MDA for investigating a Tuscola County operation that was buying beans from Brazil and repackaging and selling as Michigan beans.

Commissioner Maitland reported that apple harvest in the northwest portion of the state is almost complete with good quality and quantity. Commissioner Maitland attended the Graceland Fruit groundbreaking ceremony for a 30,000-foot expansion in an Ag Renaissance Zone in September.

Chair Viau reports that the Upper Peninsula has snow on the ground currently. Harvest is ahead of schedule. Chair Viau attended a TB meeting at the Escanaba State Fairgrounds hosted by MDA. She felt it was a well-received meeting.

MICHIGAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT: Dale Sherwin, Director

Dale Sherwin reported Michigan had approximately 39 Value Added Producer grant applications

submitted to USDA Rural Business Cooperative Service. These grants are currently being reviewed. Mr. Sherwin complimented the partnership that worked on the Agriculture Innovation Center grant and congratulated the team on receiving a \$999,860 one year grant.

GREAT LAKES AGRICULTURE INNOVATION PROGRAM: Dr. Chris Peterson, Director, MSU Product Center for Agriculture and Natural Resources

Dr. Peterson gave a report on the Agriculture Innovation demonstration program. The monies are provided under Section 6402 of the Farm Bill through USDA, Rural Development. There were 26 proposals submitted and 10 granted nationally. The Michigan Partnership for Product Agriculture sponsored the proposal. A broad array of support from the agricultural community was essential. Match had to be provided dollar for dollar to qualify for the funds. Of the \$999,860 received for one year, 62% goes to direct delivery of services and 38% to capacity building. The capacities include: *Responsive* – to assist entrepreneurs and existing businesses with the development of new product and new business ideas; *Proactive* – proactive marketing research to position Michigan entrepreneurs and existing businesses for greater success; *Educational* – develop cutting edge and transforming educational experiences for entrepreneurs and managers; and *Research* – develop an academically recognized, applied research program related to the innovation and commercialization of products, services, and supply chains driven by the customer.

Innovation counselors will be trained and rapid opportunity assessments done to determine where the opportunities lie for successful development and commercialization of high value, consumer-responsive products and businesses in the agriculture and natural resources sectors.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Director Dan Wyant

◀ Michigan Commission of Agriculture Excellence Award – Director Wyant presented to the Commission nominations received by the committee. The Committee recommends the “Blackout of 2003 Team” be selected as the recipient of the 2003 award.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER DARLING MOVED THAT THE MICHIGAN COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE EXCELLENCE AWARD BE PRESENTED TO THE ‘BLACKOUT OF 2003 TEAM’. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

◀ Wood-McInerney Commission has been established for the Michigan State Fair and will be co-chaired by Wayne Wood, President of Michigan Farm Bureau and Hoot McInerney, well-known Detroit area businessman and entrepreneur. This commission is to make recommendations to the Governor regarding year-round use of the fairgrounds, as well as changes and improvements to the annual fair, future viability and all options related.

Commissioner Byrum is a member of the committee also. Director Wyant also supplied the Michigan State Fair Advisory Council list and the Upper Peninsula State Fair Board list.

♦ Executive Directives – Distributed copies of the six Executive Directives received from the Governor's office. They are: restrictions on purchase of non-essential supplies, materials, equipment, printing or other products; restrictions on non-essential travel; reductions in state motor vehicle fleet; reductions in use of wireless phone services, pagers, and wireless data services; reductions in periodical subscriptions and prior review and approval by the State Budget Director of all memberships in associations and organizations.

♦ Director Wyant gave a brief overview of the Department's budget, including priority, programs that impact Michigan agriculture and require significant resources, and budget reduction options.

♦ Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) - Commissioner Byrum expressed concern that there aren't enough plan writers available to meet the need. CNMP providers have new requirements, and new training is required even for those already certified. An update on CNMP providers, training and continuing education, and MAEAP goals was provided by Gordon Wenk, Deputy Director, Environmental Stewardship Division and Kevin Wickey, Assistant State Conservationist-Technology, U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service. MDA has set a goal to have 85% of Michigan's production covered by a CMNP by the end of 2005. The focus will be on large operations (1,000 head or more). Commissioner Byrum is concerned that the lack of CNMP providers may impact the Department's ability to meet the goal.

Due to time constraints the agenda was adjusted as follows:

- Legislative Report to be addressed in afternoon
- Food Security Summit to be tabled until the January 2004 meeting

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tonia Koppenaal, Michigan Farm Bureau, reported that MFB is currently in the process of policy development. MFB is appreciative that President Wood is on the Commission for the Michigan State Fair. The MFB has some issues and concerns with recommendations made in the Chronic Wasting Disease Report. Any movement of the cervidae industry out of MDA is problematic, from the animal health standpoint and for the future growth of the industry. MFB appreciates the work that has gone into the Grain Insurance Fund legislation.

ANIMAL INDUSTRY UPDATE: Dr. Joan Arnoldi, State Veterinarian

Dr. Arnoldi distributed the procedures and restrictions that will be used with herds that fail to comply with TB testing requirements by the December 31, 2003 deadline.

The Department continues to test the privately owned cervidae population for Chronic Wasting Disease. Excellent participation by producers has occurred. MDNR has begun TB and CWD testing on deer taken during bow season.

MOBILE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SUPPLY TRAILER: Dr. Joan Arnoldi, State Veterinarian

Dr. Arnoldi provided the Commissioners a tour of the mobile emergency supply trailer. This unit (one of two available) is equipped with a two-week supply of various gear and items that the state's veterinarians may need to quickly respond to animal health situations due to a natural disaster, a disease outbreak or an intentional act of animal-related terrorism. Veterinarians and technicians also carry personal emergency response kits with them. The kits and trailers are funded by federal homeland security dollars provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help shore up local emergency preparedness as well as response capabilities.

RECESS:

The meeting recessed at 12:00 p.m.

RECONVENE:

The meeting reconvened at 1:10 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT: Brad Deacon, Legislative Liaison

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

- Grain Insurance Fund has been presented to the Governor for signature (HB 4311).
- Genetically Modified Fish has passed the Senate (SB 226, 227).
- Two storm water fee bills have passed the Senate. The House exempted Agriculture from the bills and the Senate did not concur, the bills are in conference committee currently. MDEQ's budget was passed with these proposed fees included (SB 252, 260).
- Several bills addressing methamphetamine/anhydrous ammonia have been introduced dealing with the theft, penalties, and safety standards (SB 652, 739, 777, 786).
- Ethanol labeling has passed, effective 8/13/03, removing the requirement that pumps dispensing ethanol blended fuel display labeling on the pump (PA 116 of 2003).
- A couple of bills addressing farmland preservation, security areas, and property tax have been introduced (HB 5030, 5031).
- A bill on pesticide notification in schools has been introduced. The department is working with the sponsor to address the issue of a current regulation dealing with this issue (HB 5154).

- A bill on labeling food containing genetically altered organisms (HB 5155).
- A bill to allow conservation districts to mail-in absentee ballots (HB 5194).
- Mourning Dove bill allowing hunting season has passed the House.
- A Senate Resolution was adopted proclaiming Constantine as the seed corn capital of the nation (SR 170).
- Senate Resolution was adopted proclaiming November as venison month (SR 155).

RIGHT TO FARM CASE REVIEW: Wayne Whitman, Right to Farm Program Manger, Environmental Stewardship Division

Mr. Whitman presented a right to farm case to the commissioners regarding Dan and Charlotte Showalter of Monroe County. The Showalters have a small farm operation. The Department received a complaint in early April 2003 of excessive odor and care of farm animals. Upon inspection, it was determined that the Showalters were not conforming with the Right to Farm GAAMPs. On August 6, 2003 a follow-up inspection was conducted that resulted in a letter of intent to work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to develop and implement the required plan. On October 23, 2003 a status review indicated that no effort towards developing the required plan had taken place. The Department is recommending that this case be referred to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality for enforcement per the Memorandum of Understanding with MDA.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON MOVED TO REFER THE SHOWALTER RIGHT TO FARM CASE TO THE MICHIGAN DEPARMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY FOR ENFORCEMENT ACTION. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NUTRIENT UTILIZATION GAAMP: Wayne Whitman, Environmental Stewardship Division

The final language for the Nutrient Utilization Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices (GAAMP) was revised to include reference to the newly effective Regulation 642, On Farm Fertilizer Bulk Storage, under authority of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Part 85 and presented to the Commission for final approval.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER BYRUM MOVED TO APPROVE THE NUTRIENT UTILIZATION GAAMP FINAL LANGUAGE. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

IRRIGATION WATER USE GAAMP: Mike Gregg, Resource Conservation Section Manager, Environmental Stewardship Division

The final language for the Irrigation Water Use GAAMP was presented to the Commission for final approval.

Amy Frankmann addressed the Commission and expressed Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association's support of the Irrigation Water Use GAAMP.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON MOVED TO APPROVE THE FINAL LANGUAGE FOR THE IRRIGATION WATER USE GAAMP AS PRESENTED. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

EMERALD ASH BORER UPDATE: Ken Rauscher, Director, Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division

Mr. Rauscher gave an update on Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), briefly detailing statewide survey activities, the USDA Science Advisory Panel, federal funding requests, outreach communications and federal budget.

Mr. Rauscher distributed a map of the statewide survey activities for the past year and a map of the southeast Michigan core area survey activities from the months of July, August and September. It is intended to have a leading edge established for the core area by mid-December. There are 12 to 15 outliers (Saginaw, St. Clair, Shiawassee, Ingham, Eaton, Jackson, Calhoun, and Kent counties) outside of the core area. Meetings will be held with local officials and then homeowners to begin delimitating infestations. Delineating includes determining the outer edge of the last visible signs of infestation as well as that area that could be infested via current year egg laying.

The Science Advisory Panel is a panel of experts, organized by USDA to review and recommend actions, including survey, and mitigating outliers. The panel is comfortable with the half mile delimit for the one year infestations. They have asked that protocol for multiple year sites be reviewed prior to eradication activities.

Federal Funding – There is a considerable amount of cost to the communities in southeast Michigan for tree removal. To date this cost has been absorbed by the communities. The State and the communities are interested in seeking federal funds for reimbursement. MDA and the Michigan State Police are pursuing damage assessment in those areas and request that SEMCOG work with the local

communities to assess the needs and identify a process for seeking federal funding. There is a meeting scheduled for November 19 in Detroit for local leaders, emergency management personnel and local governments.

The nursery industry is looking at opportunities to remedy their lost sales situation. The quarantine in 13 counties has mandated ash trees not be sold or moved, resulting in lost revenue. The Federal Quarantine of October 14 may provide for low interest loans under the Farm Bill for the nurseries in the quarantine area. The Governor has submitted a request to the USDA Secretary for low interest loans. Approval has not been received as of November 5.

Outreach - signage for movement in and out of the infested area is being built and should be in place by November 15. These signs will be erected on expressways and other primary arteries in and out of the core area reminding motorists that removal of all firewood and ash tree materials is prohibited. USDA and MDA will also have checkpoints at various locations along major thoroughfares and key travel routes leaving the 13 EAB quarantined counties.

Federal Budget – Budget proposal for dollars for MSU, MDNR, and MDA has been sent to USDA and is in the process of being considered. Governor Granholm has requested additional funding and asked that USDA waive cost share requirements due to the national importance of containing this insect within the quarantine area. Imposing a cost share percentage on the state will cause significant and costly delays in treatment.

PROPOSED MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2004 COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE MEETINGS

Monthly meeting dates and locations were proposed to the Commission as follows:

January 7, Geagley Lab, East Lansing
February 10, Lansing
March 11, Kellogg Center, MSU
April 14, Lansing
June 10, Saginaw
July 20, Geagley Lab, East Lansing
September 16, Lansing
November 9, Lansing

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

ATTACHMENTS

A - Agenda

B – September 17, 2003 minutes

C – Director’s Report – November 2003

D – Commission of Excellence Award (Blackout Team)

E – Ag Innovation Center

F – CWD Report, TB Testing Deadline

G – Legislative Report – November 2003

H – Right to Farm Case Referral Letters

I – Nutrient Utilization GAAMP

J – Irrigation Water Use GAAMP

K – EAB Update

L – 2004 Proposed Meeting Schedule