

# MICHIGAN COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Michigan Municipal League  
First Floor Training Room  
208 North Capitol Avenue  
Lansing, MI 48933

## MEETING MINUTES

JANUARY 21, 2015

### **PRESENT:**

Diane Hanson, Chairperson, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Trever Meachum, Vice Chair, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Fred Walcott, Secretary, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Dru Montri, Member, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Jamie Clover Adams, Director, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

### **ABSENT AND EXCUSED:**

Bob Kennedy, Past Chair, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development

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

Chairperson Hanson called the meeting of the Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development to order at 9:06 a.m. on January 21, 2015. Commissioner Walcott called the roll with Commissioners Hanson, Meachum, Walcott, and Montri, and Director Clover Adams present.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER MEACHUM MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA FOR JANUARY 21, 2015. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WALCOTT. MOTION CARRIED.**

### **APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 12, 2014, MEETING MINUTES**

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER WALCOTT MOVED TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 12, 2014, MEETING MINUTES. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MEACHUM. MOTION CARRIED.**

### **REVISED PROPOSED 2015 MEETING SCHEDULE and NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING**

Revisions to the Proposed 2015 Meeting Schedule were discussed, which included designation of the meeting location for the February and March meetings and cancellation of Geagley Laboratory as the location for the July meeting.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER MONTRI MOVED TO APPROVE THE REVISED PROPOSED 2015 MEETING SCHEDULE. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MEACHUM. MOTION CARRIED.**

The next scheduled meeting will be held on February 18 at Agro-Culture Liquid Fertilizers, 3055 W. M-21, St. Johns, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

### **ELECTION OF NEW OFFICERS**

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER MONTRI MOVED TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER MEACHUM AS CHAIR AND COMMISSIONER WALCOTT AS VICE CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION FOR 2015. COMMISSIONER MEACHUM MOVED TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER MONTRI AS SECRETARY OF THE COMMISSION FOR 2015. MOTIONS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER HANSON. MOTION CARRIED.**

Commissioner Hanson passed the gavel to Commissioner Meachum for chairing the remainder of the meeting.

### **RECESS AND RECONVENE**

Chairperson Meachum recessed the meeting at 9:08 a.m. for a brief break for a photograph of the new officers. He reconvened the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND TRAVEL**

On behalf of the entire Commission, Commissioner Meachum thanked Commissioner Hanson for her service as chair, recognizing her dedication and hard work over the past year. He also thanked the Commissioners for their vote of confidence in electing him as chair for 2015.

Commissioner Montri advised she attended the Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB) Annual Banquet and the Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable, and Farm Market Expo in Grand Rapids during December. She also participated in the December Urban Livestock Workgroup meeting held in Lansing, and received reports that during the January meeting, which she was unable to attend, participants were very engaged and pleased with the content discussed, which is an indication important steps are being taken. She also attended the Generally Accepted Agriculture and Management Practices (GAAMPs) Public Input meeting held on December 12 in Lansing, during which only one person provided comment. She will be traveling this weekend to the Northern Michigan Small Farms Conference. Next week she will be a monitor for the Michigan Farmers Market Association's Market Managers Certificate Program in Waterford, with satellite campuses in Traverse City and Waukesha, Wisconsin. The program's expansion throughout the Midwest, and as far away as Washington State, is exciting.

Commissioner Walcott advised his operation struggled through one of the longest harvest seasons for corn and soybeans he has ever experienced. A small portion of corn in his area is still standing, but there are no reports of storage problems. Although there are concerns for a rather moist crop, harvest went relatively well. He thanked Commissioner Montri for the personal tour she hosted of her facility for the Commissioners following the November Commission meeting. The other Commissioners offered their appreciation as well.

Commissioner Hanson reported she attended the December MFB Annual meeting in Grand Rapids. In January, she participated in a Michigan State University (MSU) meeting to review results of plot trials. Verso Corporation has completed its acquisition of the NewPage paper mill in Escanaba. The potential of a deep water port in Escanaba is being discussed, which could contribute to agriculture products being shipped from that area. There is about one foot of snow in their area and they are still trying to harvest the corn, which was testing at 33 percent in December.

Commissioner Meachum advised he attended the December Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable, and Farm Market Expo in Grand Rapids, which enjoyed record attendance, with a record number of vendors participating. There was a great, positive attitude throughout the event, not only from commercial operations, but from small farms, greenhouses, and farm markets. Over the last two weeks, he spent considerable time working with the Michigan Tree Fruit Commission. It appears they will collect their goal of \$800,000 through taxing themselves, and are now focused on obtaining matching funds from the Legislature. In light of the current budget situation, this will be difficult, but work is progressing. He will be sharing a packet of information with the Director and other Commissioners containing details regarding the Tree Fruit Commission that will explain their process of developing a means to assist the four MSU Extension Research Centers that focus on produce.

He will be attending his first Agriculture Labor Workgroup meeting next week and is looking forward to helping with efforts to improve the agriculture labor situation for Michigan. Corn harvest for his operation was complete the first week in December, with some good yields this year. Many producers have 50-60 percent of their crop field finished or chisel plowed and everyone is looking forward to next year. Many are realizing the pitfalls of commodity prices that have resulted in little to no cash flow. Numerous growers are attempting to refinance rent or loan agreements and are not purchasing any new equipment.

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

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

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Clover Adams introduced Kirk Hanna, who is the department's new Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs. He comes to us from the private sector, including ten years with Kelly Services working legislation in 50 states. Prior to that, the Director worked with him in the Legislature. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) is fortunate to have his expertise and looks forward to what he will be able to accomplish.

The Director was in Washington, D.C., last month to participate in a National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) meeting with the Food and Drug

Administration (FDA) regarding implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). It provided an excellent opportunity to meet with FDA leadership. She participates on the Governing Council and Tim Slawinski, from MDARD's Food and Dairy Division, participates on the Technical Workgroup. The two groups are working with FDA on how to implement the rules in a practical manner that avoids driving producers out of business and still provides for safe food.

Last month, the department had the honor and good fortune of announcing the opening of a fresh pork processing plant for Michigan – Clemens Pork Processing Plant in Coldwater. This is a game changer for Michigan, providing an outstanding opportunity for our producers, coupled with benefits the job opportunities will offer.

Also in December, the department held a meeting with stakeholders to discuss agriculture goals for the next five years. They discussed the various needs and focused on how everyone can work together in prioritizing those needs to move forward an agenda for the food and agriculture sector. Those conversations will continue.

Beginning this week and through the month of February, the department is hosting regional town hall meetings with food processors around the state to identify their challenges and opportunities. That information will be discussed with agriculture stakeholders in the spring during the process of developing new industry goals. In response to inquiry from Commissioner Montri, the Director advised an average of 30 individually-invited food processors are expected to attend each of the town hall meetings. This effort was initiated because the food processors are not as structurally organized as are other segments of the industry. Understanding their needs is a key to developing the goals that will lead to increasing agriculture's economic impact beyond \$100 billion.

#### **DIRECTOR'S TRAVEL**

Director Clover Adams requested approval for travel to Washington D.C., to attend the NASDA Winter Policy conference.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER MONTRI MOVED APPROVAL OF THE DIRECTOR'S TRAVEL. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WALCOTT. MOTION CARRIED.**

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

There was no public comment relative to agenda items.

#### **BUDGET UPDATE: Maria Tyszkiewicz, Budget Officer**

Maria Tyszkiewicz reported the department is waiting for budget information from the State Budget Office and the Governor. The revenue estimates have been finalized, and the General Fund/General Purpose (GF/GP) revenues were revised downward for Fiscal Years (FY) 2015 and 2016, with a \$330 million deficit for FY 2015. The department is expecting either an Executive Order or a negative supplemental to close that gap. The predicted deficit based on known FY 2015 spending and case-load adjustments for FY 2016 is \$382 million.

The department has been working with the State Budget Office to identify reductions for FY 2015 and those discussions are still ongoing, and the same is true for FY 2016. The Governor's budget is expected the week of February 9, at which time he will also include the FY 2015 reduction proposal.

The department submitted minimal investment requests to support programmatic activities and is not very confident it will actually receive any of them. Commissioner Meachum pointed out that MDARD has endured larger reductions than other departments in the past and wondered if the department could be kept higher in the loop in recognition of that fact. Ms. Tyszkiewicz noted the State Budget Director has advised reductions will not be across the board; rather, considerations will be made programmatically within each department relative to what should be reduced. The Director added the Governor advised the state will continue to make investments in those areas that add value.

**PROSPERITY REGION 6 REGIONAL AGRICULTURE PLAN: Janice Karcher, Vice President-Economic Development, Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce**

Ms. Karcher thanked the Commission for the opportunity to provide an update on the agri-business strategy that is being developed by Region 6. The I-69 thumb region is one of ten regions in the state that have been established and encouraged by the Governor's office, the Michigan Department of Economic Development (MEDC), and other departments to consider both short and long-term development opportunities and formulate strategies that consider the strengths and assets of the individual region.

Collaboration in the I-69 Thumb Region consists of seven counties and there are six economic development organizations within that area. It offers the opportunity to consider agri-business and value-added as very strategic for the region. The regional priorities developed include economic development, tourism, infrastructure, education, quality of life, and continued regional collaboration, all of which have an eye to agri-business as a strategy component.

The region enjoys considerable export activity in manufacturing and agriculture commodities. The region can boast of several agriculture commodity number-one ranking counties in Michigan, including dairy, wheat, dry beans, soybeans, sugar beets, organic farms, cattle, livestock markets, and fertilizer and pesticide production and storage. One of the group's policies is to understand and help promote value-added processing and capture more of that agricultural production.

Many major exporters are based in the region, including agri-based Koegel's, Coffee Beanery, Vlastic, Dairy Farmers of America, and Cooperative Elevator. Many have benefited from the region's ability to offer additional incentives to help support expansion projects. This is well complimented by the rest of the supply chain in the region.

A recent seven-county wage and benefit survey revealed companies are very optimistic about their plans for 2015. The vast majority advised they are expecting to add jobs this year. The talent component and support for those companies is a key element of the collaboration needed.

A freight growth forecast was also conducted in partnership with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). Farm products and food were found to be among the components forecasted to grow significantly into 2030. The average increase forecasted is 35 percent in volume and 63 percent in value. This represents a sales growth opportunity for existing companies, but also a call for real estate and infrastructure strategy to support that additional growth.

One of the big challenges for the region is labor and talent and continuing to encourage completion of education that fits the jobs that are being created. They have begun considering forecasts for the education and skill level requirements of upcoming jobs.

The region has a rich quality of life to offer its residents and yet enjoys a lower cost of living than the national benchmark, even lower than the other regions in Michigan. The area can boast of ten colleges and universities, enjoys over 200 miles of Great Lakes shoreline, and 93,700 acres of parks.

The region is focusing on an agri-business development strategy, continuing to offer support for companies already in the region, and more aggressively promoting the assets of the region to help attract additional investors. Strategies will focus on marketing and talent, value-added processing, leveraging sites and infrastructure assets for new facilities, and increasing awareness of strengths and opportunities for growth. Region personnel have been very pleased to work with MDARD's staff, Mike DiBernardo and Scott Corin in particular, in considering specifically how to maximize agri-business development opportunities for the region, and they look forward to continuing that relationship.

In response to inquiry from Commissioner Montri, Ms. Karcher advised support for the farm markets in Flint and Genesee Counties has been strong and they recognize the support available for early stage food producers and processors as a critical component of the business development continuum. The farm market in the thumb area is recognized as having tourism, quality of life, and economic development components.

**AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES ORDER: Mike Bryan, Nursery and Export Specialist, Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division**

Mr. Bryan reminded the Commission that as part of Governor Snyder's commitment to preventing introduction and spread of invasive species into the Great Lakes, water soldier was identified as one of the 16 "Least Wanted Species." Today is a continuation of that process, with the Commission potentially issuing the order listing water soldier as a prohibited species.

The authority comes under the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA), which states the Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development has the authority to list plants and insects. NREPA dictates the species must meet certain criteria, the proposed order be posted on the website 30 days prior to issuance, and a copy of the order be distributed to various committees in the Legislature. The criteria for prohibitive species includes that it must be non-native, not wide spread if naturalized, potentially harmful to humans, agriculture, or silvicultural resources, and management practices are ineffective in controlling the species.

He briefly reviewed characteristics of water soldier as introduced during the September Commission meeting. Water soldier is an invasive aquatic plant native to Europe and northwest Asia. This species forms a dense mat of floating vegetation that can hinder recreational activities such as boating, fishing, and swimming. The sharp serrated edges of water soldier leaves can cut swimmers and people who handle the plant. In addition, the dense floating mats can crowd out native vegetation and have the potential to alter water chemistry, which could have adverse effects on the environment. Since water soldier only occurs at one location in North America, prohibiting the sale of this plant will help assure it does not become established in Michigan. If approved, this would be the first invasive species order issued by this Commission.

In response to inquiry from Commissioner Montri, Mr. Bryan reported the department received no comment relative to the order.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER WALCOTT MOVED TO APPROVE THE ADDITION OF WATER SOLDIER TO THE STATE'S LIST OF PROHIBITED SPECIES. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER HANSON. MOTION CARRIED.**

**ACT 189 INSPECTION FEES INCREASE: Mike Bryan, Nursery and Export Specialist, Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division**

Mr. Bryan advised the Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division (PPPMD) requests the Commission consider and approve proposed increases in its per-acre and per-hour inspection fees.

PPPMD inspects plants and plant products, certifies that phytosanitary requirements are met, and charges inspection fees for those services. P.A. 189 authorizes MDARD to charge an inspection fee based on the cost of doing an inspection and to annually adjust inspection fees based on the percentage of change in the Detroit-Ann Arbor-Flint Consumer Price Index as determined by the State Treasurer, which may not exceed five percent in a one-year period and must be approved by the Commission. The department was informed by the State Treasurer there was an increase of 1.1 percent in the subject Consumer Price Index and if an inspection fee increase is in order, suggested the \$57/hour fee be increased to \$58/hour for export, special, and dealer inspections, and for nursery growers the \$52/first acre fee be increased to \$53/first acre and the \$31/additional acre fee be increased to \$32/additional acre.

Following the annual evaluation of the cost for conducting inspections, it was found that inspection fees collected in FY 2014 did not cover the cost of the inspection programs and general funding was still required to support the program. Therefore, PPPMD proposes implementation of the suggested increases. This will result in an estimated \$12,119 revenue increase. The cost for the department to conduct those inspections far exceeds the fee amounts collected. An estimate conducted two years ago indicated the actual cost was over \$100/acre.

Those affected by the increase are nursery stock growers, nursery stock dealers, exporters of plants and plant products, importers of foreign-source nursery stock, and

other persons requesting inspections under special circumstances. Mileage fees are not affected by inspection fee adjustments.

The proposed implementation date would be February 1, 2015, with an effective period through December 31, 2015. In November, PPPMD notified affected parties in writing of the proposed changes in fees to allow for comments prior to the Commission's consideration. Notification of increased inspection fee adjustments and the effective period as approved by the Commission will include the adjusted fee schedule, implementation date, and effective period. Concurrently, the information will be posted on the department's website.

In response to inquiry from Commissioner Montri, Mr. Bryan advised 80 percent of the nurseries inspected are five acres or less and the remaining 20 percent range from five to 900 acres. Commissioner Meachum asked if the entire acreage of an operation requires inspection. Mr. Bryan advised through an owner consultation, plants that will be offered for sale during the ensuing year are identified and inspected. In response to question from Commissioner Hanson, Mr. Bryan confirmed the nursery law requires any stock to be sold must be inspected annually and every grower in the state is visited each year. In response to comment from the Director, Mr. Bryan confirmed the nursery inspection program facilitates trade with other states and other countries, which would not happen otherwise. About 30 percent of the nursery industry's plant material is sold out of state, including several foreign markets.

The Director added that when the current law was being negotiated, it represented a compromise. Items were added to the statute that added value for business and in return for that, they agreed to the Consumer Price Index system for proposed increases in the fees. Overall, the program is now more valuable to the industry. Mr. Bryan added that a portion of nursery license fees support an industry research fund.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER WALCOTT MOVED THE PER-ACRE AND PER-HOUR INSPECTION FEE ADJUSTMENTS BE APPROVED AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER MONTRI SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **RECESS AND RECONVENE**

Chairperson Meachum recessed the meeting at 10:10 a.m. for a brief break. He reconvened the meeting at 10:23 a.m.

#### **FEED CONTAMINATION INVESTIGATION REPORT: James Averill, State Veterinarian and Director, Animal Industry Division; and April Hunt, Fertilizer and Feed Specialist, Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division**

Dr. Averill thanked the Commission for the opportunity to share details of a team effort in MDARD around a feed contamination investigation. He and April Hunt will present an overview of the 2014 incident management response, which began late last summer.

Ms. Hunt advised this is a very interesting investigation that came to the department originally as a complaint and represents a multi-divisional response that later became a multi-agency response. On August 11, 2014, the department was notified of turkey mortalities at the index farm, which was a large integrated turkey and swine operation.



The cause of death was unknown and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) was notified of turkey mortalities at the processor. Turkeys and feed samples were sent to MSU for analysis and the necropsy findings indicated lasalocid toxicity. Lasalocid is an animal drug approved for use in poultry, cattle, and sheep feeds. One of its uses is to prevent coccidiosis in poultry, and turkeys are fed at a rate of 68 to 113 grams per ton.

MDARD visited the farm to determine who makes the feed, if the farm uses lasalocid in turkey feed formulations, and how mortalities were disposed. Turkey shipments had been suspended since August 13. Feed samples were found to have five times the labeled rate of lasalocid, an amount that would be toxic to the birds. Since the farm is an on-farm mixer feeder and also owns and operates a commercial feed mill, the initial hypothesis was an on-farm feed mistake.

Many questions arose about whether the farm could get the turkeys back, when the farm could begin sending birds to the processor, are the birds now on clean feed, etc. With other agencies now involved, the best solution was to conduct multi-agency conference calls to ensure everyone had the same information and begin to formulate answers. The multi-agency response involved USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), the FDA Detroit District Office (DET-DO) and Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM), and MDARD Feed Section and Animal Industry staff. There were numerous questions and very few answers. Regular multi-agency conference calls were initiated on August 21. MDARD and FDA conducted joint investigations at the index farm to research the root cause, conduct a lasalocid inventory reconciliation, remove approximately 450 tons of turkey feed, review a reconditioning plan (FDA), and collect and retain official samples (MDARD). The farm did not have an inventory of lasalocid large enough to have caused the five times level in the feed, so it had to be coming from elsewhere. Working jointly with FDA, additional samples were taken and over 450 tons of turkey feed were removed from the farm. Enough information was received on the new samples to confirm clean feed and USDA cleared the farm to resume shipping August 28.

There were 25 different feed ingredients being used at the index farm, including oil and grease used for fat and flavor content. The MDARD Lab can determine if dry ingredients are clean, and low levels of lasalocid in finished feeds, but has no official method for testing fats and oils. The dry ingredients were found to be clean. The MSU Diagnostic Center for Population and Animal Health (DCPAH) has the ability to qualify the presence of lasalocid in grease; they could indicate the drug was present, but not at what quantity. This was sufficient, because the drug should not be present in the grease and oil at all. It was further determined to be in the restaurant grease.

On September 11, 2014, having been detected in grease samples, it was confirmed that 1,510 grams per ton of lasalocid was present in the swine feed. Dr. Averill advised that Lasalocid is not approved for use in swine, because the drug has not been requested by the industry for approval for use in swine, as coccidiosis is not a problem for swine. MDARD contacted the index farm, which typically ships 5,000 pigs weekly. The farm agreed to not ship any pigs to market, which was a huge delay for their operation. The department attempted to assist the producer in working with federal agencies in establishing a reasonable withdrawal time for the pigs, while protecting the food supply.

The Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank (FARAD) recommended a 28-day withdrawal time for the pigs. Out of an abundance of caution, FDA CVM made that recommendation to USDA based on state-collected sample results. This impacted 20,000 pigs at the index farm and began on September 16. Amazingly, the producer found an acceptable means of holding those animals, but not without a huge economic impact.

Ms. Hunt advised the situation became very complex and several recalls were also involved as the Michigan grease processor had shipped contaminated grease to 13 locations in four states. MDARD issued a stop sale order and recall on September 26. MDARD initiated an Incident Management Team to manage the recalls and determine the root cause. FDA continued traceback investigations at out-of-state sources and Shur-Green Farms in Ohio issued a recall on October 23.

The likely root cause was determined to be loads of soyoil containing lascadoil that were intended for commercial use (biofuels) and may have crossed over to the feed ingredient stream. The index farm ultimately lost 50,000 turkeys, 20,000 market-ready pigs were impacted, and 450 tons of feed were lost. More than 100 farms in at least eight states received contaminated grease/feed. On November 12, MDARD held a compliance conference with the Michigan grease supplier and a consent agreement was signed.

Because there is an apparent minimal oversight of grease suppliers, processors, haulers, jobbers, and brokers, Dr. Averill noted this situation could lead to additional regulation of animal feed ingredients at the federal level.

Ms. Hunt noted several successes were realized as a result of this investigation, including standing-up of the Incident Management Team; regular multi-agency conference calls; FDA's ability to use state, university, and private laboratory results and analytical methods; pre-established working relationships with state and federal partners; and the Animal Industry (AID) and Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Divisions (PPPM) joint inspection project.

Dr. Averill advised the department is constantly trying to be ready for that next incident and much energy has been devoted to that effort. MDARD was able to respond effectively, but it always is a juggling act between the incident management activities and routine department work.

In response to inquiry from Commissioner Walcott, Dr. Averill advised lascadoil is a bi-product of the pharmaceutical industry and strict requirements of that waste dictate it to be used only for bio-fuels. An apparent change-up in paperwork allowed it to be used in feed, which remains under investigation. Having been close to the case, Commissioner Walcott complimented MDARD staff on their expeditious handling of the incident and a job very well done.

In response to question from Commissioner Montri, Dr. Averill advised the turkeys were the only animal mortalities resulting from the incident on the one farm. The oil itself was distributed to a number of states and various swine operations; however at a lower level than that received by the index farm.

In response to question from the Director, Ms. Hunt advised Michigan is one of 18 states to have a Rapid Response Team grant which has helped the department learn how to quickly respond to emergency situations and establish plans and procedures. Through that, great working relationships have been built with FDA and other state partners who helped expedite the response. Various staff throughout the department have been trained in emergency response and were available to assist, with 24 of them involved in this incident. Without those efforts by the department over the last five years, being able to clear the turkeys for market within two weeks of the incident being reported and quickly obtaining the approved hold time for the swine would not have been possible, which greatly benefited the producers.

### **RETIREMENT RESOLUTION HONORING JANICE WILFORD**

Commissioner Meachum noted the department has been blessed with the presence of an individual that has made the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) something that stands out nationally as a role model. If it weren't for Jan Wilford's hard work and dedication, we would not be where we are today with our environmental stewardship systems in Michigan. Unfortunately, Ms. Wilford will soon be retiring and there will be a great void. Mr. Johnson confirmed she will be greatly missed. The Commission presented a resolution to honor her retirement, which he read:

*The Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development is pleased to recognize and honor Janice Marie Wilford upon her retirement from the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) on February 2, 2015.*

*Jan was born in Mt. Clemens, Michigan, on September 26, 1947. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Michigan State University (MSU) with honors in Secondary Education. Jan received her Masters of Management with honors from Aquinas College in Business Management.*

*Jan married Pete Wilford in 1969 and moved to Germany, where Pete was stationed until his discharge in 1971, and their return to the United States. During her tenure in Germany, Jan managed the on-post daycare center for the children of the military personnel.*

*Upon their return home, Jan spent time raising their two children, Becca and Jake, before returning to the active workforce. During the mid-eighties, Jan was the Coordinator and a Field Scout for the Integrated Pest Management Program with the Eaton County Extension Service. Jan then became the County Secretary for the Eaton County Farm Bureau for two years before becoming the Direct Marketing Coordinator for the Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association. From there, Jan moved on to become the Manager of the County Services Department for the Michigan Farm Bureau for the next ten years. It was in this position that Jan gained the contacts that would make her next career so remarkable.*

*In early 2001, Jan went to work for MDARD as the program manager on a new program known as the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program, or MAEAP. Over the next 14 years, Jan would guide this small program into a national model for voluntary, partnership driven, environmentally sustainable programs. Initially working with only a handful of farms, the next 14 years would see the program rise in stature and participation, with approximately 1,300 unique farms participating, and over 2,500 verifications performed.*

*As MAEAP grew, so did Jan's responsibilities within the department. More programs were placed under the MAEAP model for outreach, risk assessment, and mitigation. Jan worked hard to assure the program was science driven with the flexibility to reflect the diversity of Michigan's agriculture. She assured that the conservation technicians working with farmers were well trained to address this diversity. Being a whole new approach, Jan also assured that her staff was properly trained, equipped, and provided with personal development opportunities. As a result, Jan earned the*

*nickname “mom” and generated incredible passion and loyalty from her staff, and respect from her peers. Her ability to foster relationships, both with her staff and with strategic partners, is one of her lasting gifts to the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program.*

*Jan’s commitment and dedication to both MDARD and MAEAP have not gone unnoticed. During her time at MDARD, Jan was awarded the Employee of the Year Award in 2006, and the Front Line Ambassador award in 2014. Numerous other recognitions of Jan’s accomplishments have been given by many of the MAEAP partner organizations. Additionally, MDARD has been contacted by other state, federal, and non-governmental organizations in recognition of MAEAP’s effectiveness with interest in implementing similar programs.*

*Jan has been very influential in her private life as well. She was a Sunfield 4H leader in multiple project areas over the years, as well as being the club’s Administrative Leader. Jan was also an active member on the board of the Sunfield United Methodist Church, holding several positions on the board. Jan has also been an active member of the Lakewood Area Choral Society for over 25 years.*

*Upon retirement, Jan and her husband, Pete, plan on moving to Tennessee to be closer to their children and five grandchildren. Jan will also have more time to enjoy her hobbies, including reading, writing, photography, and gardening. Jan and Pete plan to travel more, including trips to Germany and Ireland, where they have developed lifetime friendships.*

*The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development commends Jan for her 14 years of service to MDARD and the MAEAP program, the agricultural industry and the people of the State of Michigan. The Commission joins Jan’s family, friends, and colleagues in wishing her a long and happy retirement and great success in future endeavors.*

Commissioner Meachum personally thanked Ms. Wilford for all she has accomplished for agriculture. Ms. Wilford noted she remembers the first time she presented to the Commission, which was at the beginning of the Livestock System. The support of the industry groups that created the idea, the Commission, the university partners, and other agencies have allowed her the opportunity in this career. She expressed her gratitude and appreciation to the Commission and the other groups who made MAEAP possible.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER MONTRI MOVED THE RESOLUTION FOR JANICE WILFORD BE ADOPTED WITH BEST WISHES FOR HER LONG AND HEALTHY RETIREMENT. COMMISSIONER WALCOTT SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **RECESS AND RECONVENE**

Chairperson Meachum recessed the meeting at 11:00 a.m. for a brief break for a photograph of Ms. Wilford with the Commissioners and Director. He reconvened the meeting at 11:03 a.m.

#### **2015 GENERALLY ACCEPTED AGRICULTURAL AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (GAAMPS): Janice Swanson, Chair of the Farm Animals GAAMP Task Force; and Jim Johnson, Division Director, and Wayne Whitman, Right to Farm Program Manager, Environmental Stewardship Division**

Mr. Johnson advised he appreciates the opportunity to complete the review and approval process of the 2015 GAAMPs. He reminded the Commission the Right to Farm (RTF) Act is very specific in terms of the role the Commission has relative to establishing a set of defined GAAMPs, those standards that are used for determining compliance with the RTF Act. It also dictates the GAAMPs be reviewed and approved

on an annual basis. In November, the GAAMPs were introduced for the Commission's review, and today it has the opportunity to ask questions and ultimately make a decision about each of the eight GAAMPs as presented. Each GAAMP can be approved individually, or they can be approved as a group.

Mr. Whitman advised RTF has been in existence since the introduction of the Manure GAAMP in the mid-1980s. Through the complaint response process, last year over 117 new complaints were fielded that typically reference the manure management GAAMP. The next GAAMP introduced was Site Selection in June 2000, and 58 site verification requests were received last fiscal year. The department does have occasion to reference each of the GAAMPs from time to time and one being reviewed today is Animal Care. Dr. Janice Swanson chairs that GAAMP committee and is here to present it for the Commission's consideration.

Dr. Swanson advised the majority of the chapters of the Animal Care GAAMP are largely unchanged, consisting of reference updates, etc. There are two chapters, the beekeeping and farm-raised mink and fox that have more substantial changes. She emphasized the committee takes time to discuss the GAAMP in detail, begins their meetings in March each year, asks MDARD to participate, and reviews any pertinent material received for consideration of any necessary changes. Subcommittee chairs for each section have expertise in that particular area and also coordinate with various stakeholders during the process.

Language has been added to each mammalian section of the GAAMP regarding the vet/patient client relationship as related to pharmaceutical use in agricultural animals, which resulted from several new federal mandates. In reviewing the public comments, she saw no concerns regarding that language.

The farm-raised mink and fox chapter underwent extensive review, in particular to make it more consistent with the other chapters. Also, considerable updating in the nutrition, handling, facility, equipment, euthanasia, and transportation sections was made to be of more guidance to those using the information. All of these were largely meant to be in accordance with revisions from the U.S. Fur Commission and the Canadian Codes that also help instruct the committee on how animals should be managed under this system. She is aware that one comment came forward about this, but the proposed changes actually provide only additional guidance and updates of information.

Minor revisions in aquaculture provide clarity, but largely there is no change to that chapter.

The subcommittee chair of the beekeeping and apiary chapter, MDARD's Mike Hansen, works consistently with stakeholders. Based on complaints received, an attempt was made to provide additional clarity. Most of the specifications regarding high density and siting are largely unchanged and the attempt was to provide additional guidance for beekeepers and looking at a more logical way to present the information. In the public comments, concern was expressed regarding barriers. The barrier has always been a part of the GAAMP. More clarity was provided and the word "impenetrable" was removed, understanding that a solid barrier was not necessarily needed to cause the

bees to avoid a direct flight across used (living space) property by a neighbor. Further clarification was provided in the tables 2A and 2B and actually no substantial changes were made. The attempt was to address siting issues with landowners that have irregularly-shaped properties and small lots. The recommendation of 200 feet is guidance only and additional information was provided to help hive owners with these types of property to avoid problems. The attempt was not to discourage small agriculture producers, but to try to minimize the type of nuisance that might occur with neighbors nearby.

She noted that all public comments were reviewed and carefully considered. Some suggested changes in language that could be considered today include stating “developed portion of the property.”

In response to questions, Terry Toland, president of the Michigan Beekeepers Association, confirmed the GAAMP is a guideline and is somewhat fluid, having been in existence for a short period of time. The Association approves the proposed changes, with the addition of the “developed portion of the property” revision. He noted that after about 15 feet, bees fly upward and then in a straight line to their food source. The six-foot barrier pushes the bees over the normal height of a person, emphasizing that honey bees are not an aggressive species. The language will be considered for any further needed revisions during the review process for the 2016 GAAMP.

Considerable discussion ensued relative to the 200 foot guidance and the perception that the language would require beekeepers to place a barrier around their entire property. Dr. Swanson suggested the language be revised to read, “...shall extend beyond the direct line of sight from the entrance to the hive...” to provide clarification for non-beekeeping individuals.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER MONTRI MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2015 CARE OF FARM ANIMALS GENERALLY ACCEPTED AGRICULTURAL AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES WITH THE ORIGINAL PROPOSED CHANGES AND THE TWO AMENDMENTS AS PRESENTED TODAY. COMMISSIONER WALCOTT SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.**

In response to inquiry from Commissioner Montri, Dr. Swanson confirmed the GAAMP committee chairs decide who serves on their respective committees. Farmers have been invited to serve in the past, but one of the problems is actually getting them to the meetings. She would gladly take future recommendations from the Commission. In response to question from the Director, Dr. Swanson confirmed that each GAAMP chair consults with the various organizations that represent the respective producers.

Mr. Whitman next asked for review of the Site Selection GAAMP, which contains minor changes only to clarify categories and definitions. Commissioner Montri pointed out that discussion of the GAAMP last year initiated excellent ongoing conversation and asked if recommendations are made as a result, could the Commission consider those at any time during the year. Mr. Johnson confirmed that would be the case, and advised this committee’s first meeting is scheduled for March 25.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER WALCOTT MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2015 SITE SELECTION AND ODOR CONTROL FOR NEW AND EXPANDING LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION FACILITIES GENERALLY ACCEPTED AGRICULTURAL AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES WITH CHANGES AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER HANSON SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.**

Mr. Whitman asked for consideration of the Manure Management GAAMP, noting again, no significant changes are proposed. In response to inquiry from Commissioner Montri, Mr. Whitman confirmed the references removed were merely outdated.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER HANSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2015 MANURE MANAGEMENT AND UTILIZATION GENERALLY ACCEPTED AGRICULTURAL AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES WITH CHANGES AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER WALCOTT SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.**

Since there were no recommended changes to the remainder of the GAAMPs for 2015, Commissioner Montri suggested those be considered for approval as a group. Mr. Johnson introduced Dr. Larry Olsen, who chairs the Pesticide GAAMP, and expressed appreciation to each of the chairs for their commitment to the GAAMP process. It represents a considerable amount of time on their part and the department appreciates all of their efforts.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER MONTRI MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2015 CRANBERRY PRODUCTION, FARM MARKETS, PESTICIDE UTILIZATION AND PEST CONTROL, NUTRIENT UTILIZATION, AND IRRIGATION WATER USE GENERALLY ACCEPTED AGRICULTURAL AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES WITH NO CHANGES AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER WALCOTT SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.**

**WATER USE ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE: Wayne Wood and Brian Eggers, Co-Chairs, Water Use Advisory Council**

Mr. Wood advised he was happy to report today because water is vitally important to agriculture and often causes a difference in opinion among neighbors. The Water Use Advisory Council was organized two years ago to advise the Quality of Life (QOL) agencies on the state's Water Use Program. The Council was charged to provide advice in (1) water conservation and efficiency goals, objectives, and voluntary measures; (2) technical underpinnings related to proposed water withdrawals; (3) technical and compliance assistance; (4) methods and tools to assist water users in resolving and preventing conflicts; (5) environmental monitoring; (6) new and emerging water use categories; and (7) outcomes and metrics for determining program success.

The Council was comprised of 22 members and 9 ex-officio members representing a diverse group of water use stakeholders across Michigan, each appointed for a two-year term. There also was a leadership group that met prior to most Council meetings to help guide the discussion. The Council established five workgroups to address the general issues, outside technical experts were invited as needed, and members were actively involved in refining detailed charges for each workgroup and developing work plans.

Full Council, in-person meetings were held approximately bi-monthly the first year and monthly during the second, and each was open to the public. Ultimately, it was agreed that decisions would be made using “will live with” consensus.

Mr. Eggers advised the five workgroups were comprised of specialized volunteers. One focused on the technical underpinnings of the computerized water withdrawal tool. There was an environmental monitoring group that considered various ways monitoring was utilized within the program. The others included the water users, water conservation and use efficiency, and preventing adverse resource impacts in inland lakes and ponds.

Much of the first year was spent primarily organizing, collectively learning, and identifying the needs that existed. Great efforts were taken to solicit and invite speakers that could share information about the new relevant topics for advances across the country to open their minds to different strategies being utilized.

During the last year, the workgroups began developing recommendations, which required considerable commitment from members. The Council offered 69 separate and distinct recommendations, as detailed in the report previously shared with the Commission. Considerable progress was realized within the two-year timeframe; however, there are many issues that still need to be considered.

Mr. Wood advised the highlight of the report varies by interest group. For agriculture, he feels it was very important the Council recognized that one tool does not fit all applications in this state. It also offered the opportunity to help others understand that water used by agriculture doesn't necessarily leave here. It goes into the crops, fruits, and milk, or is returned directly to the eco-system.

Commissioner Montri asked about continuation of the Council and plans for implementation of the recommendations. Mr. Eggers advised Director Wyant talked about aggressively beginning implementation of some of the recommendations and consideration of continuation of the Council in some form, and is considering the best route to make that happen.

In response to question from Commissioner Montri, the Director advised the department is working with Director Wyant as he moves the effort forward. MDARD is concerned about how it could accomplish these recommendations given its reduced resources.

Commissioner Meachum advised he hopes the Council continues in some fashion. The efforts expended and recommendations developed should be taken to heart. The Commission has been informed in previous meetings about problems with the water withdrawal tool, permitting, etc., and doesn't want to lose what has been accomplished.

Mr. Eggers noted there are many data gaps within the water use tool and there is considerable room for improvement in that area, confirming not as much is known as was originally assumed. To be able to quantify actual water that exists is one area needing improvement, as well as improvement of data sharing between agencies.



The Commission thanked the presenters for their hard work and contributions to the Water Use Advisory Council and for sharing their insights today.

### **INTRODUCTION OF THE DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS, KIRK HANNA**

The Director asked Mr. Hanna to introduce himself to the Commission. Mr. Hanna advised he is excited to be with MDARD, noting the Director did a good job explaining his background. When he began in the legislative system, he worked for some gentlemen who represented agriculture districts, which provided him with a good sense of the industry. For the last ten years, he has been working in state and federal affairs through Kelly Services and has visited state capitols around the country. He is excited to bring his skill set and advocate for the department and farmers here in Michigan.

Through recent communications with the Commission, he has informed them of the new legislative committee assignments and advised the Commissioners are free to contact him at any time with questions or assistance in establishing meetings with those new committee members.

In response to inquiry from Commissioner Meachum, Mr. Hanna advised he grew up in Royal Oak and currently lives in Brighton. He and his wife both attended Michigan State University and they have two children, ages three and five. He is glad to be back where he is not traveling around the country and will have more time to spend with his family.

Commissioner Meachum welcomed Mr. Hanna to the department and noted the Commission looks forward to many years of working with him.

### **COMMISSIONER ISSUES**

Commissioner Meachum referred to the communication proposing the Commission discuss policy issue topics they would like to discuss during upcoming meetings. Following discussion, it was determined that water is extremely important and needs to continue to be a focus for the Commission. It was requested that future meetings include discussion around what opportunities MDARD has to address recommendations in the Water Use Advisory Council (WUAC) report that are specific to the department. The Commission would also like to receive presentations from the chairs of each of the five WUAC subcommittees. Commissioner Meachum asked the Director if it could be determined if water is a challenge for processors during MDARD's upcoming town hall meetings with that sector of the industry.

Commissioner Meachum emphasized that what the department was able to accomplish through the animal feed contamination investigation was the difference in that producer being able to remain in business. The Director added that anytime the Commissioners can share that story with those who vote on MDARD's budgets, it would be appreciated. It is a perfect example of how the department adds value to what it provides, not simply as regulators, but being extremely efficient and effective so that, in this instance the producer was able to start shipping again within only two weeks. This occurs much more frequently than people realize.

Following further discussion, the Commission determined that, following continuation of water policy, it would like to focus on rural development and broadband, with initial focus on adequate broadband service for rural areas. The Director suggested service providers could be invited to present, which would provide an opportunity for Commissioners to share actual usage concerns from a personal experience standpoint.

Commissioner Meachum requested the urban agriculture focus be continued as well. It was decided that a presentation of recommendations of the Urban Livestock Workgroup would be presented during the May 13 meeting. Any further policy focus on that topic could be based on those recommendations.

Commissioner Meachum next reviewed a retirement resolution before the Commission recognizing Michael Arquette.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER WALCOTT MOVED THE RESOLUTION FOR MICHAEL ARQUETTE BE ADOPTED WITH BEST WISHES FOR HIS LONG AND HEALTHY RETIREMENT. COMMISSIONER HANSON SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Wendy Banka, Michigan Small Farm Council**, thanked the Commission for adjusting the Care of Farm Animals GAAMP. Relative to the animal feed contamination investigation report, she emphasized the reason people want to raise their own food is because they feel they cannot trust the food system and there is a real concern. Very little data can be found to improve that confidence and she asked that more testing be conducted and the results be made available to the public. She has never heard a report on what the department does in terms of testing food products and is very interested in that, as would be many other people.

**Randy Zeilinger, Michigan Small Farm Council**, advised he feels more opportunity should be provided for the public to ask questions or obtain additional information on the very interesting presentations given during Commission meetings. He also thanked Ms. Wilford for her assistance in helping him attain his MAEAP verification. If it weren't for considerable work she completed in the office, he would not have that designation.

Commissioner Meachum noted that although allowing for additional questions would be ideal, meetings are not designed to be a public forum and need to be kept within designated time limits. The Commission determined it would be helpful for presenters to list their contact information as part of their presentations, and Ms. Ayers confirmed those presentations are posted on the department's website. Ms. Ayers will make that request of presenters in the future. There also is an opportunity for individuals to request information through the department's email contact information listed on the website.

#### **ADJOURN**

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER WALCOTT MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER HANSON SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:23 p.m.

Attachments:

- A) *Agenda*
- B) *Agriculture and Rural Development Commission Meeting Minutes November 12, 2014*
- C) *Revised Proposed 2015 Meeting Schedule*
- D) *Director Jamie Clover Adams – Issues of Interest Report*
- E) *Prosperity Region 6 Regional Agriculture Plan*
- F) *Aquatic Invasive Species Order Presentation*
- G) *Aquatic Invasive Species Draft Order*
- H) *State Treasurer Memo: Inspection Fee Inflation Adjustments*
- I) *Feed Contamination Investigation Report*
- J) *Janice Wilford Retirement Resolution*
- K) *2015 Draft Generally Accepted Agriculture and Management Practices*
- L) *Executive Summary: Final Report of the Water Use Advisory Council*
- M) *Michigan Farm Bureau Press Release Re: Water Use Advisory Council Final Report*
- N) *Public Input Meeting Summary – 2015 Draft GAAMPs*
- O) *Michael Arquette Retirement Resolution*