



## **MIFFS 2008 Council Members**

### **Joe Colyn – *Battle Creek***

Joe Colyn is an innovative Agri-Food professional with 25 years of experience in research and development, purchasing, quality programs and business scenario development. He has a track record as an innovative leader, delivering creative and cost effective programs in support of business development and growth. Originz, LLC is a single member professional services firm founded by Joe Colyn in 2001 and focused on the Agri-Food sector. Clients include Fortune 500 companies, start-up firms, producer co-operatives, 501(c)3s, and other consulting firms in need of expertise. Previous to Originz, Joe worked for the Kellogg Company for 18 years. His global experience includes supporting product development programs in Latin America, managing contract food research programs in North America and Europe, and 10 years in Canada leading and delivering food R&D, agronomy, and identity preserved grain programs.

The bounty of Michigan's agriculture and food capacity is one of the best kept secrets in the nation. In the past six years working as an independent consultant to the food industry I have become convinced that Michigan has the capacity in our family farm base to develop a much stronger local and regional food system that leverages our diverse crop base to satisfy the 21st century consumer expectation of food for health. MIFFS is well positioned as a facilitator of the change needed within Michigan to allow our farmers and food markets to thrive and I would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the MIFFS effort as a Council Member to achieving more sustainable food systems for Michigan.

### **Keith Creagh - *Williamston***

In April 2008 I retired from the Michigan Department of Agriculture where I had the pleasure to serve as the Chief Deputy Director for four different Directors since 1995. In this capacity I was responsible for operational and administrative functions within the department. During that tenure I did have the opportunity to work with and develop a relationship with MIFFS at the executive level. Prior to becoming Deputy Director with MDA I held various positions in the Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division. During the last three months of my state employment, I worked with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to develop an implementation plan for the Governor's Land Use Leadership Council. My past experience has allowed me to form lasting relationships with numerous federal and state agencies as well as a diverse group of stakeholders. Upon leaving state government I worked on federal Renewable Energy Standards (RES) supported by the Union of Concerned Scientists. I was specifically asked to build an agricultural coalition that would support a broad RES portfolio. Currently I am employed by Neogen Corporation whose core business is to provide cutting edge analytical technologies to the food safety and animal health sectors.

I graduated from Michigan Technological University in 1974 and reside with my wife Laska in Williamston, Michigan. We are the proud parents of four great kids, have many diverse hobbies and are currently members of the MSU Student Organic Farm CSA. I look forward to using my experience to help MIFFS grow and continue to serve Michigan farmers.



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### **Lucy Hartlove – Lansing**

Lucy graduated from Indiana University with a BS in Business Administration, and from MSU with an MA in Interpersonal Communications. She has had a wide variety of experience in the workplace including Human Resources Administrator for Consumers Energy, and owning her own custom sewing business for the past 20 years. She has also grown produce, flowers and herbs which she sold at the Boyne City farmers market for six years prior to moving to Lansing. Lucy has worked at MIFFS as the Administrative Assistant, and is now helping to create a Friends of the Lansing City Market organization. She is very interested in holistic nutrition, local foods, and keeping local dollars in local communities.

Lucy would like to serve on the MIFFS Council because she wants to help the organization with their efforts in securing farmers a place in the economy in Michigan, training new farmers, getting local food to residents, and partnering with other organizations to do this. She also would like to see that more residents of Michigan know about the organization and get them to join!

### **Joanetta Greer-O'Bryant – Bangor**

Joanetta is a blueberry farmer, 4-H leader of an inter-city group of children in Kalamazoo. She is a retired Detroit Police officer that has been substitute teaching at Van Buren Intermediate School District for the past five years. I have people interviewing, crisis-intervention and para-legal planning skills that I have used for thirty years. I cherish my membership to MIFFS.

I would be honored to be an elected member of the MIFFS council. I am dedicated to sustaining food and farming systems. I believe that MIFFS purpose will improve the economic, health, and ecological well being of our communities. In my present humble contribution as a blueberry farmer and 4-H leader, I have attempted to show the merit of the MIFFS prospective.

### **Tom Kalchik - Lansing**

Tom is a native of Leelanau County where he grew up on a fruit, grain and livestock farm. He is a 1969 graduate of Michigan State University with a Bachelors Degree in Horticultural Science. After graduating, Kalchik returned to the family farming operation in partnership with his brother. He left the partnership in 1973 and has held several positions with agricultural trade associations and food processing ventures. He has 25 years of experience in managing cooperative businesses. He joined MSU Extension in 2000 and was named Associate Director of the MSU Product Center in 2003.

### **Doug Kirkpatrick – Herron**

Doug and his wife Lee moved from Alaska to the northeastern part of Michigan near Alpena, where they bought a beautiful 160-acre farm. There they pasture raise and process broilers and turkeys and keep 50-60 beef cows. Doug and Lee are innovators, using their ideas to develop workable housing and pasturing methods in the production of their eggs, meat birds, and turkeys. Doug has been challenged by the various rules and regulations associated with the processing of poultry on his farm. His greatest frustration comes from the 1,000-bird limit language and the availability of labor to assist with the process. Doug declares that he is making some progress in getting his production and marketing in balance. Like any entrepreneurs Doug and Lee have their ideas, but more than many they have a commitment and passion to see them through.



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### **Lori Phalen** – *Hastings*

Lori has been employed in the agriculture and natural resources arena for many years and is currently the Executive Director for the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts (MACD), based in East Lansing, Michigan. Prior work experience includes the Barry Conservation District, Co Executive Director position and ownership of Geum Services Incorporated, an ecological consulting company based in southwest Michigan. Lori has past experience with MIFFS, serving a term on the board during 2001-02. Since that time she has remained interested and committed to the mission of MIFFS and has enjoyed watching the organization grow and thrive.

Lori is a Barry County landowner and small farm enthusiast, along with her husband Floyd. On the Phalen farm one will find three horses and a small meat goat herd that share the rotationally grazed pastures, and in the summer a batch of chickens grazing their way in a movable chicken pen all the way to the freezer. There is also a long history on the farm of laying chickens and turkeys however at the present time, they are not in the animal mix.

### **Ron Steiner** – *Hart*

Ron was former executive director of the Oceana County Economic Development Corporation, from 1998 through 2004. Since then, he has been with MSU Extension, working as a regional entrepreneurship educator in the value-added agriculture sector. He has a deep desire to provide technical assistance to new entrepreneurs and innovators at the many points of the food systems, and his current mission to show local and state leaders in Michigan that “consumer-driven” farming is basic not only to the state’s economy and culture but also a great business opportunity. Ron has a sincere belief that rural communities can be revitalized and once again become economically viable if the residents of communities are willing to commit their time and energy to the process. Ron came to the position out of early retirement from working as a successful custom computer marketer. He has worked with MIFFS throughout the process of obtaining grant money to develop kitchen incubators on the east and west sides of the state, and is directing the development of the West Michigan Regional Kitchen Incubator, in Hart MI.

### **Howard Straub** – *St. Johns*

Howard Straub is a grass based dairy farmer from St Johns in Clinton County. His farm exemplifies an approach to dairying that is not only environmentally sound but also highly lucrative. Howard’s pasture based dairy enterprise allows him more time for research and innovation activities, further improving profit potential. Non-monetary gains are also substantial; Howard says that grazing “puts the fun back in farming” and notes the sharp contrast between his father’s long days spent mixing feed with the more diverse daily chores of the current farm - milking cows, feeding calves, and “walking the hay” to monitor grass growth. As a result of seasonal dairy practices in which all cows are bred to dry off during the same six to eight week period, the family has recently enjoyed long February vacations. The proof however, is in the figures: Triple H Farms has an average cost of \$7.85 per hundredweight, compared to the midwestern dairy belt average of \$11.50.

Howard’s commitment to rotational grazing is closely related to his varied roles in the community, as a Michigan farmer, a grazing leader, and a member of an intergenerational farm family. His approach to farming



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reflects his interest in promoting a viable rural quality of life, and it is through the community that he has fully realized his potential as a grazer. A major motivation for Howard is the opportunity to use his knowledge of rotational grazing to help young farmers enter agricultural production. Howard serves as steering committee Chair for the Michigan Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative and as President of the Michigan Hay and Grazing Council. Through his leadership in the Hay and Grazing Council, GLCI, and other farm related organizations Howard promotes a broad exchange of information among federal, state, local and private interests. Howard has a desire to continue to share his talents for the benefit of MIFFS council and the organization.

### **Nicholas Welty – Northport**

Nicholas manages fruit and vegetable crop production and agricultural business plan development at Black Star Farms. He is dedicated to the pursuit of sustainable agriculture, saving farm land, and is an avid supporter of local farmers. Prior to his position as Farm Manager, Nicholas completed a Master of Science degree at The Ohio State University, where he focused on plant genetics. Prior to that, he received a Bachelor of Science degree at Carnegie Mellon University. There he doubled majored in Biology and Economics and minored in Chemistry. Early on, Nicholas developed a passion for growing plants and saving seeds. He first began growing plants for profit (giant pumpkins) at 13, and today he is the co-founder of Megalos LLC, a seed company based in 6 years of prior hobby pumpkin breeding research. He shares his love of plants with his wife Jennifer Welty (Farm Market and Winery Café Manager at Black Star Farms) and their 7 year old daughter Avery.

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### **Dan Wyant**

#### ***To replace Wendy Wieland's position on the council for one year***

As president and chief operating officer, Dan Wyant oversees strategic direction for the Edward Lowe Foundation, which promotes entrepreneurship and helps second-stage business owners accelerate growth for their companies. Wyant joined the foundation in a full-time capacity in 2005 and has served on the foundation's board of trustees since 1998. Wyant has a diverse background in both the public and private sectors. Previously, he was director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA), a position he held for nine years under the administrations of two governors. Under Wyant's leadership, the MDA pioneered many nationally recognized economic development and pollution programs, which diversified and added value to Michigan's agricultural economy. Wyant holds a bachelor's degree in food systems management from Michigan State University and a master's in business administration from American University in Washington, D.C.