

## Some of our Accomplishments:

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- Promoting the Multicultural Farmers Program, which has reached more than 300 limited resource farmers, to improve their farms, economic viability and connections.
- Developing the Michigan Farmers Market Association which helps farmers markets thrive as marketplaces for local food and farm products.
- Initiating two kitchen incubators in Hart and Bad Axe, which have helped more than 60 agripreneurs develop new products.
- Coordinating the Hoophouse Program to extend Michigan's growing season with Michigan State University (MSU).
- Establishing the Food & Agri Innovation Center, which grew into the MSU Product Center for Agriculture and Natural Resources, and has served more than 1,400 customers and aided nearly 100 new ventures.
- Co-hosting the "Select Michigan Day" farmers markets, which bring 50 vendors and thousands of attendees to the Capitol lawn for local food.
- Coordinating the Meet the Buyers event, where 100 Michigan growers met with buyers to initiate new values-based supply chains.
- Facilitating discussions about state policy and informing legislative decisions on family farms, sustainable agriculture and local food.
- Sponsoring conferences, workshops and seminars that have served more than 4,500 participants over the past ten years.

## Contact:

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**Michigan Food &  
Farming Systems-MIFFS**  
Bringing Farmers & Communities Together



## Why We're Here:

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Agriculture is vital to the economy and to the many cultures that give Michigan its unique personality. Although Michigan is diverse and rich in agricultural traditions, our food system faces sobering economic, environmental and social challenges ...

- The average age of farmers is increasing while the number of farms is steadily dropping.
- Access to mainstream markets has steadily decreased for small and medium-size farms.
- Consumers often don't understand how or where their food is produced.
- Productive farmland is rapidly being depleted for suburban development.
- Policy makers often don't understand how their decisions impact farmers, consumers and communities.
- Many groups that have not traditionally worked together as allies share concerns about economic, environmental and social issues surrounding food and farming.

## What We Do:

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MIFFS is a statewide, nonprofit organization working to advance sustainable food and farming systems practices that will improve Michigan's triple-bottom-line, yielding more productive economic development initiatives, and environmental stewardship practices leading to more prosperous communities throughout the state.

Our Areas of Focus:

- Assisting Family Farmers
- Growing Market Opportunities
- Supporting Agricultural Stewardship
- Informing and Influencing Public Policy

## Member interests include:

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- New production and processing technologies
- Food affordability, quality, safety, nutrition, availability and access
- Leadership for greater economic, environmental, and social well being in agriculture
- Value-added opportunities
- Local (Michigan) food connections
- The next farming generation
- Direct marketing
- Farmland preservation
- Rural disintegration
- Agricultural education

## What's in MIFFS for me?

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We're ready to bet that we work on issues you care about! It takes courage for people and communities to try something new. It may also take financial assistance, new skills, or even moral support. MIFFS provides all these things. Our members say MIFFS is different from other agriculture, food-related and environmental groups.

## MIFFS Membership Benefits:

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- A subscription to the MIFFS Memo quarterly newsletter, a 16-20 page newsletter that goes to all MIFFS members, partners and funders
- Voting privileges at the MIFFS Annual Meeting
- Eligibility for MIFFS and MIFMA group rate for liability insurance
- Discounted registration fees and first notice or preference for conferences, workshops and events (like at Michigan Family Farms Conference registration, workshop and conference scholarships and Select Michigan farmers market spots at the Capitol)
- A free classifieds ad and a 10% advertising discount in the Memo, beginning in 2009
- Belonging to a statewide network of members through the MIFFS Membership Directory and listserv
- Recognition upon joining, renewing or donating in the Memo
- Supporting our organization, its mission, and sustainable agriculture, family farms and local food!

