

*“New Opportunities,
Sustaining Local Agriculture
for the Future”*



January 17, 2009
Lakeview High School
15060 Helmer Road South
Battle Creek, MI 49015



Michigan Family Farms Conference
416 Agriculture Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824



We invite you to the 6th annual Michigan Family Farms Conference on January 17, 2009 at Lakeview High School in Battle Creek, MI.



This year's conference, titled "New Opportunities, Sustaining Local Agriculture for the Future", will address issues facing and opportunities for small family farms and limited resource farmers. Families are invited, and there will be a youth track for children and young adults featuring hands-on educational sessions in the morning and an afternoon trip to Binder Park Zoo.

Lunch, which will take place from **noon to 1:45 p.m.**, will feature local food and allow plenty of time for networking with other farmers and resource professionals and visiting the exhibits and displays.

From **1:45 to 2:35 p.m.**, our keynote speaker is **Wayne Keith**, an Alabama farmer, innovator and energy guru, who will share his knowledge and experience on alternative energy and farming off the grid.



Also, from **2:35 to 2:55 p.m.**, **Senator Debbie Stabenow** has been invited to speak about changes and opportunities in the new Farm Bill.

Exhibits and displays will be set up for your enjoyment to connect you to government agencies, nonprofits and agricultural groups and organizations. Farmers can also sell their own products as exhibitors.

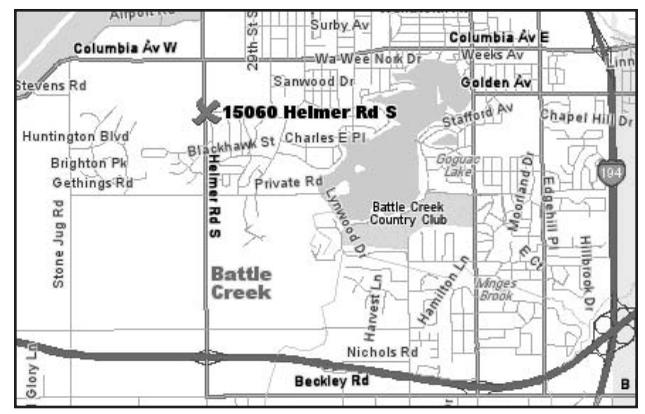
For more information, visit www.miffs.org/mffc or contact the MIFFS office at (517) 432-0712 or miffs@msu.edu. Limited scholarships are available. Contact Barbara Norman at (269) 208-4588 or barbnorman1@gmail.com for more information.

Deadline for registration:
Friday, January 9, 2009

Partners and Sponsors

- Michigan Food & Farming Systems (MIFFS)
- Farm Research Cooperative
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- USDA Rural Development (RD)
- USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA)
- Potawatomi Resource Conservation & Development Council (RC&D)
- Michigan State University Extension
- Calhoun and Kalamazoo Conservation Districts

Map and Directions



Lakeview High School is located at 15060 Helmer Road South, Battle Creek, MI, 49015.

Take I-94 to Exit 95 (Helmer Rd) and turn north. Continue north about 2 miles to the third stoplight, which is the Lakeview High School entrance.

Lakeview High School is a drug-free zone. No alcohol, smoking or other drugs are allowed on the premises.

2009 Michigan Family Farms Conference Sessions

Session 1, 9:00 - 10:20 a.m.

Crop Insurance Products

Jennifer Dammerman, USDA RMA
Lynne Farmer, State Farm Insurance

Your farm needs proper insurance to be healthy and viable for the future. Learn what insurance products are right for your operation.

Beekeeping

Tim Bennett, Turtlebee and Honeytree Farms

Bees are in high demand for both their honey-producing ability and their pollination services. Learn how to keep up a hive of your own.

Vegetable Production Basics: Crop Selection

John Biernbaum, MSU Horticulture Department
Adam Montri, MIFFS Hoophouse Project Manager

Decide what to grow, learn about vegetable families and consider the possibilities, production and handling requirements and marketing opportunities.

Farm Energy Savings Checklist

Truman Surbrook, Aluel Go & USDA RD Staff,
MSU, MSU Extension and USDA RD

Everyone is tired of high energy bills, so learn how to optimize your farm's energy use and what resources are available to help you.

How to Sell at a Farmers Market *

Susan Smalley, C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems at MSU

Farmers markets are growing all over the state as the face of local food and direct marketing. Get the scoop on how to make the most out of selling there.

Farm Bill: Farm Service Agency *

Dale Allen, Eric Fischer & Dave Russ, USDA FSA

Learn from the USDA Farm Service Agency what they can do for you with opportunities in the new Farm Bill.

Session 2, 10:40 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Learning to be Certified Organic

Vicki Morrone, C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems at MSU

Becoming a certified organic grower requires more than just a halt to pesticide application. Learn the steps you need to take to grow organic.

Agriculture Loans

Dave Russ, USDA FSA
Celinda Gilmore, West Michigan Savings Banks

Learn about different kinds of loans for your farm and what is best for your operation.

Vegetable Production Basics: Scheduling and Planning

John Biernbaum, MSU Horticulture Department
Adam Montri, MIFFS Hoophouse Project Manager

How much of each crop do I grow? When and where do I grow it? Find out how productive and profitable vegetable growing incorporates timing, rotations and succession planting.

Selling to a Grocery Store

Warren King, WellSpring Management

Selling your farm products to a grocery store requires additional steps and considerations. Find out what you need to do to tap into this market.

Farm Bill: Marketing & Specialty Crops *

Sandy Penn & Kelly Losey, USDA NRCS and FSA

The new Farm Bill has great opportunities for small farmers, especially in marketing and specialty crops. Find out what they are and how you can get started.

Farm Bill: Rural Development *

USDA RD Staff

Learn from USDA Rural Development what they can do for you with opportunities in the new Farm Bill.

Session 3, 3:25 - 4:45 p.m.

Farm to School

Colleen Matts, C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems at MSU

Collaborate with local schools to get your products on their menu and help keep our kids healthy!

What is my Woodlot Worth?

Jim Bruce, Conservation Resource Management

Woodlots can be a great source of income for farms, so find out how to manage them properly.

Vegetable Production Basics: Soil and Plant Health

Mathieu Ngouajio, MSU Horticulture Department

Learn how to build soil organic matter and minimize weed competition using cover crops and compost with minimal but well-timed cultivation.

How He Did It: Technical Aspects

Wayne Keith, Alabama farmer and keynote speaker

Learn how Wayne Keith converted his truck into a wood-burning machine and his other tricks to being energy-independent.

Preparing to Sell: Business Aspects and Legal Requirements *

Tom Kalchik, MSU Product Center for ANR
Cathy Martin, MDA

Before you start selling your farm products, make sure you have the business and regulatory bases covered. This session will teach you how.

Farm Bill: Natural Resources Conservation Service *

USDA NRCS Staff

Learn from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service what they can do for you with opportunities in the new Farm Bill.

* this session features a Spanish translation

Registration

Name(s)

Organization/Farm Name

Address

City

State

Zip code

Phone

Registration cost, including lunch:

Adults attending: _____ x \$35

Children attending: _____ x \$25

MIFFS Members: _____ x \$30 _____ member #
(Call MIFFS if you don't know your number or want to join)

Total enclosed: \$ _____

Please return this form and a check to:

MIFFS

416 Agriculture Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824

Please make checks payable to MIFFS; note "MFFC" in the memo area. Or register and pay by credit or debit card online at www.miffs.org/mffc. For questions, call MIFFS at (517) 432-0712.

To register as an exhibitor, contact MIFFS. You **must** be an exhibitor to sell any products or goods of any kind.

Limited scholarships are available. Contact Barbara Norman at (269) 208-4588 or barbnorman1@gmail.com for more information.

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