



The Farm Research Cooperative in partnership with the USDA Risk Management Agency present the 5th annual:



Michigan Family Farms Conference



2008



“New Times, New Opportunities”

January 19, 2008

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





The Farm Research Cooperative, in partnership with the USDA Risk Management Agency, invites you to the 5th Annual Michigan Family Farms Conference on January 19, 2008 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Lakeview High School in Battle Creek, Michigan.

This year's conference, titled, "New Times, New Opportunities," is bringing together growing trends in production and marketing, resident experts, and as always, Michigan's small family farmers.

Learn about government programs to help farmers, environmental stewardship, marketing tactics, alternative energy, value-added production practices, grant writing and more! Sessions are detailed, along with a table of sessions, on pages 3 through 13 to help you decide what fits for you and your operation.

Tracks this year include Alternative Energy, Marketing, Production, Management, and a Spanish-Speaking track to cover all the bases when it comes to sustainable agriculture and running the family farm. This year also features a day-long grant-writing track.

Exhibits and displays will be set up for your enjoyment and information from government agencies, agricultural groups and organizations and vendors of agricultural products and services.

The registration cost of the conference is \$30 per person, which includes attendance at all sessions and lunch. The Farm Research Cooperative and USDA Risk Management Agency Partnership is offering scholarships to farmers. See page 15 for more information on how you can apply for a scholarship.

For more information, please contact Barbara Norman at (269) 208-4588 or barbn@lodisnet.com. More information is also available online at www.miffs.org.

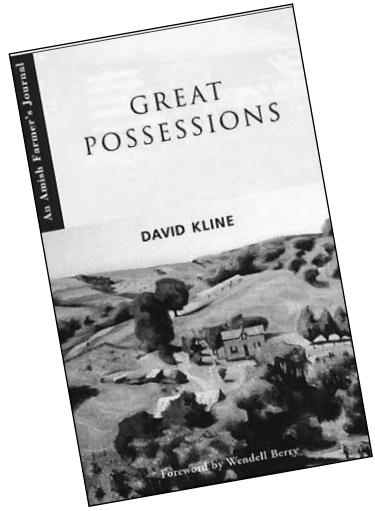
Speakers

Keynote Speaker

This year's keynote speaker will be **David Kline**, an Amish farmer from eastern Ohio. In addition to successfully managing his family farm, Kline is also a bishop, naturalist, writer and the editor of Farming Magazine, for which he wrote the popular "Letter from Larksong."

He has also authored "Great Possessions: An Amish Farmer's Journal" and "Scratching the Woodchuck: Nature on an Amish Farm."

Kline will be speaking after lunch in the BlackBox Theater about his life and experiences on the family farm and the importance of sustainability to today's agriculture.



Session Speakers and Farmer's Experience

Each session is led by an experienced individual or panel, representing farms, agencies and organizations from all around the state. These individuals are the "experts" in the field with a wealth of information to offer.

Each speaker is accompanied by a farmer who knows the ins and outs of each topic, who is working and living it.

Together, these people offer a unique and comprehensive mix of technical, practical and hands-on experience and information.

Alternative Energy Track

With rising oil prices and pollutant fossil fuels, more and more businesses, farms and homes are looking for new ways to pay their energy bills. The Alternative Energy Track explores trends in newer, more environmentally ways to plug power into your farm and charge your energy plan.

Small-Scale Wind Energy

9:00 - 10:20 a.m.

Steve Smiley, *Bay Energy Services*

Like your Energy Bill? Find out if you can harness the wind to fuel your farm or operation.

Exciting Opportunities for Bioproducts

10:35 - 11:50 a.m.

Dr. Chris Schilling, *Saginaw Valley State University*

What are the opportunities for the Bioeconomy? This session will highlight what agricultural products are possible contributors to the fast growing Bioeconomy in Michigan.

Energy Grants

2:15 - 3:30 p.m.

Rick Vanderbeek, *USDA Rural Development*
Carol Terry, *Farmer's Experience*

Learn what energy grants are available and how to apply for these grant through USDA Rural Development.

Farming Off the Grid

3:45 - 5:00 p.m.

Wayne Keith, *Alabama farmer*

Learn how Wayne Keith has got gas prices beat, long before they hit \$3 per gallon. This Alabama farmer not only runs his vehicles from wood, but his farm is off the grid.

Marketing Track

Growing your product is only part of the equation for a viable, sustainable farm. The Marketing Track can help you sell your products to the right markets at the right price, which equals success for you and your farm.

Marketing Hydroponics

9:00 - 10:20 a.m.

Larry, Bridget and Kelly Leach, *Avalon Farms Premium Homegrown*

Learn about hydroponics, growing plants using mineral nutrient solutions instead of soil, from this Michigan family and see how to get started on your own hydroponics operation.

Finding Local Markets: Tips & Tools

10:35 - 11:50 a.m.

Matt Birbeck, *MSU Product Center*

Laurie Arboreal, *Farmer's Experience*

Markets for your products are everywhere if you know where to find them and utilize them. Find out what you need to know to develop your own markets.

Pricing Your Products

2:15 - 3:30 p.m.

Susan Smalley, *C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Agriculture at MSU Farmer's Experience TBD*

Your products could be worth more with the right practices at the right markets. This session can help you evaluate your markets to learn how to appropriately price your product according to quality and the consumer.

Niche Farming

3:45 - 5:00 p.m.

Panel Discussion:

Mark Longstroth, *MSU Extension*

Tim Peterson, *Michigan Department of Agriculture*

Lee Arboreal, *Eater's Guild Farm*

Learn about new crops, agricultural products and how to successfully market them to the right customers from this panel

Production Track

Make your farm as healthy and productive as it can be and pick up some great ideas and practices in the Production track.

Soil Health

9:00 - 10:20 a.m.

Dr. Haddish Melakeberhan, *MSU*
Farmer's Experience TBD

Find out how to improve your production by learning the importance of soil health. Learn what techniques and practices you should know to make your soil healthy.

Integrated Pest Management

10:35 - 11:50 a.m.

Bruce MacKellar, *MSU Extension*
Joanetta O'Bryant, *Farmer's Experience*

Is IPM in your sustainable farming toolbox? This session will give you an overview of IPM and what you need to know to get started.

Getting Started in Pasture Poultry

2:15 - 3:30 p.m.

Pat Henne and Student, *Springport High School Agriscience*

Pasture poultry is a great way to integrate livestock onto your farm for a fraction of the price (and work!) of larger animals. Find out how easy it can be to make pasture poultry a successful venture for your farm.

Managing Water for a Healthy Farm

3:45 - 5:00 p.m.

Jean Gagliardo, *Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Technician*
Farmer's Experience TBD

Water is one of the most precious resources that we have in our state. Learn how to manage and protect the water on your farm.

Spanish-Speaking Track

The Spanish-Speaking sessions features presentations in Spanish about product practices, marketing and government programs to help farmers succeed.

Looking at the Whole Farm

9:00 - 10:20 a.m.

Edwin Almodovar, *USDA NRCS*
Javier Franco, *Farmer's Experience*

Do you know what types of environmental impacts your farm has? This session will help you to look at your farm differently which will allow you to assess your possible environmental liabilities.

Pricing Your Products

10:35 - 11:50 a.m.

Lourdes Martinez, *MSU PhD student*
Farmer's Experience TBD

Your products could be worth more with the right practices at the right markets. This session can help you evaluate your markets to learn how to appropriately price your product according to quality and the consumer.

Developing a Conservation Plan

2:15 - 3:30 p.m.

Heather Medina, *USDA NRCS*
Armando Arrellano, *Farmer's Experience*

What is a conservation plan? How do I get started? Who can help me with my plan? Come to this session to answer those questions and learn the importance of conservation plans for your operation.

Integrated Pest Management

3:45 - 5:00 p.m.

Antonio Castro-Escobar, *Michigan Department of Agriculture*
Farmer's Experience TBD

Is IPM in your sustainable farming toolbox? This session will give you an overview of IPM and what you need to know to get started.

Table of

8:00- 8:45 AM				Reg
All Day				Meet Your Local USDA-NRCS C Trac
8:45- 9:00				Welcome and Intro
	Alternative Energy	Marketing	Production	
Room	<i>Downstairs POD</i>	<i>Downstairs POD</i>	<i>Downstairs POD</i>	
9:00 – 10:20	Small Scale Wind Energy	Marketing Hydroponics	Soil Health	
10:20 – 10:35				Break, Network
10:35 – 11:50	Exciting Opportunities for Bioproducts	Finding Local Markets- Tips & Tools	Integrated Pest Management	
12:00 – 1:20				Lunch in Cafe
1:20 – 1:30				Awards and Reco
1:30 – 2:00				General Sessi Blac
2:00 – 2:15				Break, Network
2:15 – 3:30	Energy Grants	Pricing Your Products	Getting Started i Pasture Poultry	
3:30 – 3:45				Break with Snacks, N
3:45 – 5:00	Farming off the Grid	Niche Farming	Managing water fo Healthy Farm	
5:00				Conf

Sessions

Registration Open			
Conservationist- by the Registration Area			
Trade Show Open			
Productions- Black Box Theater			
	Spanish-Speaking	Management	Grant Writing
	<i>Downstairs POD</i>	<i>Upstairs POD</i>	<i>Upstairs POD</i>
	<i>Looking at the Whole Farm</i>	<i>Looking at the Whole Farm</i>	<i>How to Write Grants: Part I</i>
Marketing, & Trade Show Open			
	<i>Pricing Your Products</i>	<i>Financing for start up operations</i>	<i>How to Write Grants: Part II</i>
Media- Trade Show Open			
Cognition- Black Box Theater			
Keynote Speaker- David Kline			
Black Box Theater			
Marketing, & Trade Show Open			
	<i>Developing a Conservation Plan</i>	<i>Developing a Conservation Plan</i>	<i>Grant Writing One-on-One Assistance</i>
Networking, & Trade Show Open			
	<i>Integrated Pest Management</i>	<i>Developing a Business Plan</i>	<i>Grant Writing One-on-One Assistance</i>
Conference Closes			

Management Track

Managing a successful farm goes far beyond planting crops and fixing equipment. The Management Track addresses conservation, finances and a business plan to make sure you have everything you need.

Looking at the Whole Farm

9:00 - 10:20 a.m.

Jeff Douglas, *USDA NRCS*
Farmer's Experience TBD

Do you know what types of environmental impacts your farm has? This session will help you to look at your farm differently which will allow you to assess your possible environmental liabilities.

Financing for Start-up Operations

10:35 - 11:50 a.m.

Panel Discussion:
Dave Russ, *USDA FSA*
Julie Pioch, *MSU Extension*
Dennis Nyekamp, *GreenStone Farm Credit Services*

Are you looking to start your own farm operation? Hear from these individuals what each can do for you to get your operation going.

Developing a Conservation Plan

2:15 - 3:30 p.m.

Vicki Anderson, *USDA NRCS*
Farmer's Experience TBD

What is a conservation plan? How do I get started? Who can help me with my plan? Come to this session to answer those questions and learn the importance of conservation plans for your operation.

Developing a Business Plan

3:45 - 5:00 p.m.

Speaker TBD
Farmer's Experience TBD

What direction are you going? Not sure? Well, learn how to get your farm in order by learning what a business plan can do for you.

Grant Writing Track

Looking for some extra help to get your ideas going? The extended Grant Writing sessions can help you learn the skills and the resources, and some hands on experience, to successfully write grant proposals.

Grant Writing Assistance Workshop: 9:00 - 10:20 a.m.
How to Write Grants I & II 10:35 - 11:50 a.m.

Deirdre Birmingham, *Michael Fields Agricultural Institute*

Never written a grant proposal? Receiving a grant can help you fund that innovative project you've been wanting to start on your farm. In this day-long track, you can learn how to write a grant and submit proposals to federal agencies to support your work.

The morning portion of this workshop features two parts at 9 a.m. and 10:35 a.m. to help you learn how to effectively write grant proposals

Grant Writing Assistance Workshop: 2:15 - 3:30 p.m.
One-on-One Assistance 3:45 - 5:00 p.m.

Deirdre Birmingham, *Michael Fields Agricultural Institute*

Get some hands-on experience and one-on-one assistance putting a grant proposal together.

The afternoon portion of this workshop begins with sessions at 2:15 p.m. and 3:45 p.m.

Youth Track

Young people are a vital part to our family farms and their success and survival, so we are glad to, once again, be able to offer a youth track in the 2008 Michigan Family Farms Conference.

To register youth, please contact Barbara Norman for a youth scholarship. Read more on page 15.

Morning Youth Track: Educational Sessions

During the morning sessions, youth will learn about agriculture and how they can be involved and succeed on their family farm and beyond.

The program includes an introduction to FFA, which focuses on personal growth and career success through agricultural education, followed by agriculture games and fun for youth. Youth will also learn how they can apply for a Youth Entrepreneurs Grant to turn their ideas into realities.

Afternoon Youth Track: Kalamazoo Nature Center Field Trip

For the afternoon session, we have planned an opportunity for youth to get out and take a bus trip to the nearby Kalamazoo Nature Center. Youth will be able to experience many of the Nature Center's plants and animals and will learn about the importance of conserving natural resources, wildlife and habitats.

The Kalamazoo Nature Center is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to inspire people to care for the environment by providing experience that lead them to understand their connection to the natural world. Today, the Nature Center, recognized by its peers as one of the top nature centers in the country, and has expanded to include 1,100 acres of wooded, rolling countryside

Learn more about the Kalamazoo Nature Center at www.naturecenter.org.

Sponsors



USDA- Risk Management Agency



Farm Research Cooperative

Partners



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Farming Systems-MIFFS**

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Michigan Office

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"New Times, New Opportunities"

Directions

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

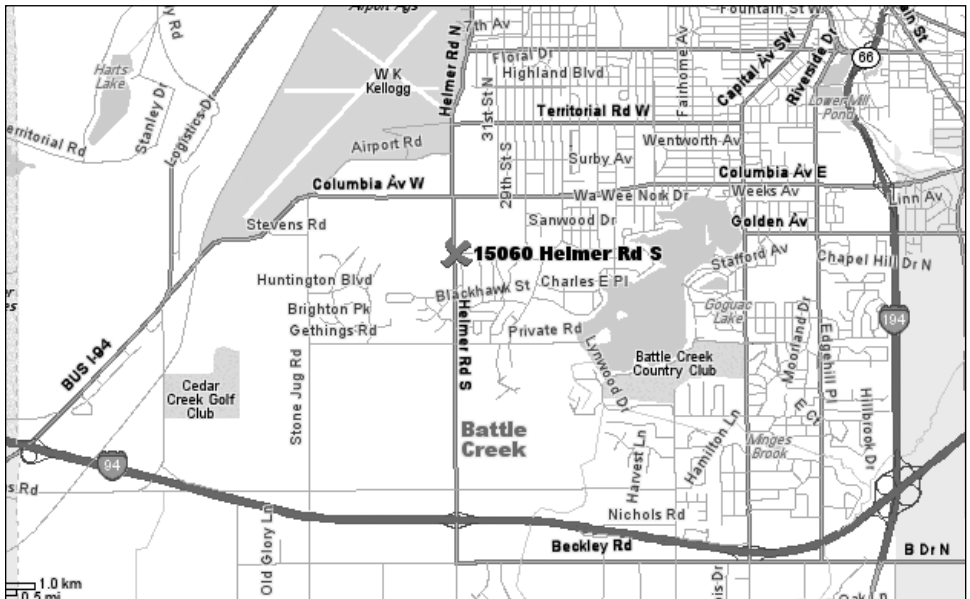
Take I-94 to Exit 95 (Helmer Rd) and turn north. Continue north approximately 2 miles to the third stoplight which is the entrance to Lakeview High School.

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

This year's conference is one day. However, if you are traveling far and would like to stay the night, the Comfort Inn, 2590 Capital Ave SW, Battle Creek, MI, has a block of rooms reserved for conference participants.

The room rate is \$61 plus taxes per room, and the Michigan Family Farms Conference reservation code is 100944. Call the Comfort Inn at 269-965-3201 to reserve your room.

Lakeview High School



REGISTRATION

Name(s): _____

Organization/Farm Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

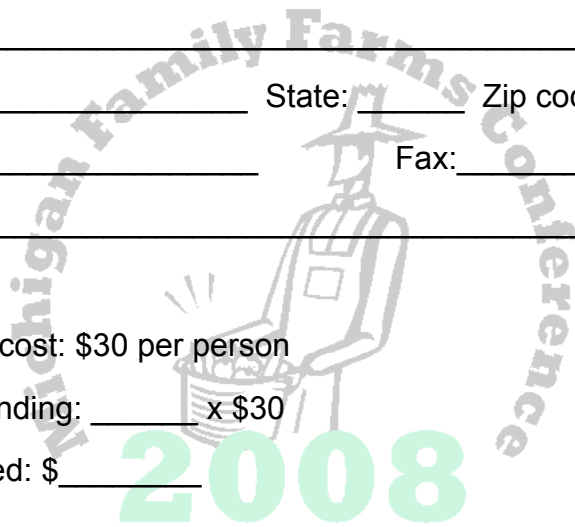
Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Registration cost: \$30 per person

Number attending: _____ x \$30

Total enclosed: \$ _____



Please return this registration 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.

You can also register online and pay by credit or debit card at www.miffs.org. For questions, call the MIFFS office at (517) 432-0712.

To register as an exhibitor, contact MIFFS or visit www.miffs.org. You must register as an exhibitor to sell any products or goods of any kind.

Scholarships and youth scholarships are available!

To apply for a scholarship or receive more information, please contact Barbara Norman at (269) 208-4588 or barbn@lodisnet.com.

If you receive a scholarship, you do **not** need to mail this form or register online. Simply contact Barbara, and she will help you register.



**Farm Research Cooperative & USDA RMA
2008 Michigan Family Farms Conference**

c/o MIFFS

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East Lansing, MI 48824

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