



**Finding Answers in MSUE and eXtension**

**A Guide for Support Staff**

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities. This is our mission and we accomplish it in many ways. One way is to provide reliable, research-based answers to the myriad of questions we receive from our constituents daily, on the phone and in person as they visit our offices around the state. Two powerful sources of information are available to you: MSU Extension and eXtension.

**Where can clients find Michigan-specific information?**

The best source of information related to Michigan is the MSU Extension website: <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/>. At this site clients can find information on many topics under eight broad categories: 4-H & Youth, Agriculture, Business, Community, Family, Food & Health, Lawn & Garden, and Natural Resources.

**How can I find Michigan Specialists to refer clients to?**

MSUE has a database of experts—called ***Extension Expert Search***:[**http://expert.msue.msu.edu/**](http://expert.msue.msu.edu/). This database is searchable by name, county, general interest area, and specialty, and provides contact information for each expert. For now it includes field experts, but campus specialists will soon be added. The link to this is found on MSUE’s main page, <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/>, near the bottom left. It’s a button called “**MSUE Find an Expert**.”

**What is eXtension, and how can clients use it to find information?**

…a national, internet-based collaborative system that enables Land Grant University content experts to exchange research-based knowledge, build knowledge repositories, and link with the public to help solve real challenges in real time. There are three main ways to tap into this resource:

1. Use the Ask an Expert (AaE) system.

***What is AaE?*** AaE is a national online system for asking questions and receiving answers quickly on a broad range of subjects. Experts are Extension Faculty from Michigan State University and from universities across the country.

***How can I use it?*** Use it to find answers to specific questions you are asked if there isn’t an MSUE expert available. The MSUE website has an AaE button under the ‘Find an Expert’ button, or you can find it at the main eXtension site: <http://www.extension.org/>, in the right column. Click it, type in your question, add a picture if you choose, then click “Search for an Answer.” You’ll get a list of links to articles and previous answers that have your search words in them. If none of these is relevant, click “Send to Ask an Expert”. Then fill in the information asked and click “Submit my Question.” You’ll receive an answer by email, hopefully within 48 hours.



1. Search the data base at <http://www.extension.org/>. This contains information contributed by over 46 Communities of Practice. On the right of the orange bar type some key words in the ‘Search’ box.



You can also search by resource area topics under ‘News’, ‘Articles’, and ‘Answers’.

1. Search the data base at <http://www.extension.org/search>. This contains URLs to websites and documents from almost 1,000 Cooperative Extension sites from 74 Universities. Type your key words in the search box.



**Where else can Clients ask Michigan-specific questions?**

* Gardening in Michigan hotline: **888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464)**

*Several Michigan websites have AaE buttons:*

* Questions about **Gardening in Michigan**: [**www.migarden.msu.edu/**](http://www.migarden.msu.edu/)
* Questions about **Land Use in Michigan:** [**http://tinyurl.com/msuelanduse**](http://tinyurl.com/msuelanduse) (left column)
* Questions about **Oil & Gas Leasing in Michigan**: [**http://tinyurl.com/msueoil-gas**](http://tinyurl.com/msueoil-gas) **(**bottom right)
* Questions about **Blueberries:** [**http://blueberries.msu.edu/**](http://blueberries.msu.edu/)
* Questions about **Growing Hops:** [**http://hops.msu.edu/**](http://hops.msu.edu/)

**What are some websites I can refer clients to for more information?**

*See the next page for topic-specific websites recommended by Institute Directors and Program Leaders.*

**Questions?**

Contact Dr. Lela Vandenberg: vanden34@msu.edu, 517-353-1898

**Helpful Research-Based Websites**

*Topic-specific websites recommended by Institute Directors and Program Leaders*

***Agriculture***

* MSUE Agriculture News: <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/agriculture>
* Gardening in Michigan: <http://www.migarden.msu.edu/>
* Junior Master Gardener: [www.jmgkids.us](http://www.jmgkids.us)
* Breakfast on the Farm: <http://www.breakfastonthefarm.com/>

***Health & Nutrition***

* National Institutes of Health: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/>
	+ Portion Distortion: <http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/portion/index.htm>
	+ Body Mass Index: <http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/>
* Nutrition and Physical Activity
	+ eXtension Families, Food & Fitness: <http://www.extension.org/families_food_fitness>
	+ Food & Nutrition Information Center: <http://fnic.nal.usda.gov/>
	+ Center for Nutrition Policy & Promotion: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>
	+ Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics: <http://www.eatright.org/>
* Children’s Nutrition Research Center: <http://www.bcm.edu/cnrc/>
* Food safety, preparation, and preservation
	+ USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning: <http://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/publications_usda.html>
	+ USDA Food Safety & Inspection: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>
	+ Partnership for Food Safety Education: <http://fightbac.org/>
* Family finances
	+ eXtension Personal Finance: <http://www.extension.org/personal_finance>
	+ Financial Education: <http://www.mymoney.gov/>

***Children & Youth***

* 4-H: <http://4h.msue.msu.edu/>
* National 4-H Council: <https://www.my4-h.org/>
* Children’s Nutrition: <http://www.bcm.edu/cnrc/>

***Greening Michigan***

* Finance & Housing
	+ Financial literacy: [www.mimoneyhealth.org](http://www.mimoneyhealth.org)
	+ Home buyer education: [www.ehomeamerica.org/msue](http://www.ehomeamerica.org/msue) (an online course first time buyers)
* Land Use
	+ MSU Extension Land Use Education Services: <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/programs/land_use_education_services>
	+ MSU Land Policy Institute: [www.landpolicy.msu.edu](http://www.landpolicy.msu.edu)
	+ Planning and Zoning Center at MSU: [www.pzcenter.msu.edu](http://www.pzcenter.msu.edu)
* Markets & Food
	+ Michigan Good Food Charter: [www.michiganfood.org](http://www.michiganfood.org)
	+ Michigan Fresh: <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/programs/mi_fresh/>
	+ Michigan Market Maker: <http://mi.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/>
	+ Michigan Farm to School: [www.mifarmtoschool.msu.edu](http://www.mifarmtoschool.msu.edu)
* ‘Green’ Indicators and Climate Resources
	+ Community Indicators Consortium: <http://www.communityindicators.net/>
	+ EPA’s State/Local Government Climate & Energy: <http://epa.gov/statelocalclimate/>
	+ Climate Change: <http://changingclimate.osu.edu/>
	+ Local Governments for Sustainability: <http://www.icleiusa.org/>
* MSU Institute of Water Research: <http://35.9.116.206/IWR/index.asp>
* Forestry
	+ MI Forest Pathways—links, documents, questions & answers: <http://www.miforestpathways.net/>
	+ U.P. Tree ID: <http://uptreeid.com>
	+ Michigan Forests Forever: <http://mff.dsisd.net>