



## Field Crop Production

# Impacting Field Crop and Forage Production Systems

Michigan agriculture continues to be a diverse and thriving segment of the state's economy. When you support MSU Extension, producers learn efficient farming practices that enhance crop productivity while protecting soil and water resources. This education leads to better use of time, money and human capital, which helps retain and create agricultural jobs. Together, these measures strengthen Michigan's economy, encouraging growth of a sustainable and prosperous food and agriculture system.



### THE ISSUE

Michigan is unique in its diversity of fresh water resources, climate zones and soil textures. This contributes to its status as one of the most diverse agricultural states in the U.S. At the foundation of this diversity is a strong and stable field crops sector.

Field crops in Michigan include corn, soybean, alfalfa/hay and wheat, but also important specialty row crops like sugar beets and dry beans. Diversity in the field crops sector allows for longer, multi-crop rotations in Michigan, in contrast to the typical two-year corn-soybean rotation practiced in much of the Corn Belt. Specialty and organic field crops are additional sources of income for Michigan farmers.

Field crops are grown on more than 18,500 (34.3 percent) of Michigan's 54,000 farms, and by the majority of commercial farmers in the state. In terms of sales receipts, field crops as a whole accounted for 42 percent of the market value of Michigan Ag products in 2012. Five field crops – corn, soybean, hay, sugar beets and wheat – are among the top ten commodities produced in the state in terms of gross value. Four of the remaining top-ten are livestock-related – milk, cattle, hogs and eggs. Livestock production in Michigan depends on locally-produced field crops for feed.

### Contact Us

Learn more about MSU Extension field crop programming at:

[www.canr.msu.edu/field\\_crops](http://www.canr.msu.edu/field_crops)

### MSU EXTENSION ACTION

The MSU Extension field crops educators have a long history of providing research-based knowledge to address the needs of field crop producers across Michigan. Twenty-two faculty specialists and twenty-two county-based educators are currently assigned to field crops Extension in Michigan. Faculty specialists are experts in their fields of study, conducting research and sharing recommendations based on their findings with growers. Field educators work side-by-side with producers, delivering educational programming on either a regional or statewide basis. Each educator covers on average 322,000 field crop acres.

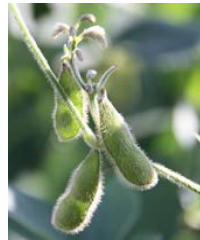


In addition to general field crop expertise, many educators have a special focus that fits their educational background or coverage area in Michigan including commodity specific outreach.

Michigan field crop producers are also supported by a number of commodity organizations that engage in market development, research and outreach. These organizations are valuable partners for the MSU Extension field crops programming, expanding its capacity through grower engagement, financial support, and in some cases direct funding of MSU Extension staff positions.

#### THE IMPACT

To meet the needs of Michigan's field crop sector, MSU Extension focuses on assisting producers in four key areas: improving production efficiency, mitigating production risk, increasing economic activity and enhancing sustainability. Major programming initiatives within these categories are developed and prioritized according to input from advisory groups consisting of growers, agribusiness and public agency partners.



From January 2016 - March 2017, over 209 MSU Extension field crop programs reached approximately 9,256 farmers and agribusiness professionals from 82 counties across the state. As a direct result of these educational opportunities:

- **827 farms and 527,126 additional acres** adopted practices or technology to increase yield, improve quality, or decrease inputs.
  - › Examples include: planting of improved crop varieties, stewardship of fertilizer nutrients and efficient irrigation practices
- **237 farms and 461,572 additional acres** adopted practices or technology to mitigate production risk.
  - › Examples include: pesticide resistance prevention, monitoring of emerging pests, evaluation of niche/specialty field crops



- **Over \$2,341,447 of savings or added revenue was generated.**
  - › Examples include: enhanced crop yields, reduced input costs and beginning farmer development
- **3,682 field crop producers** reported that participation in MSU Extension programs improved their agricultural knowledge and farm management skills.
  - › Examples include: risk management planning, efficient use of inputs and water quality stewardship

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