

Northern Michigan FruitNet 2014 Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Center

Weekly Update

September 23, 2014

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

12/9-11 **Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable & Farm Market EXPO**
DeVos Place, Grand Rapids

2015

1/13-14 **NW Michigan Orchard & Vineyard Show**
Grand Traverse Resort, Acme, MI

3/4 **Winery Development Pre-Conference**
MSU – Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center

3/4-6 **Michigan Grape & Wine Conference**
MSU – Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center

COLD HARDY GRAPE WINES: THEY TRIED IT, AND LIKED IT!

Research surveys of Michigan tasting room visitors and Midwestern wine drinkers indicate low awareness and positive acceptance of cold hardy grape varieties.

Posted on **September 11, 2014** by [Joanne Davidhizar](#), Don Holecek and Dan McCole, Michigan State University Extension and MSU Product Center

[Michigan State University Extension](#) affiliated researchers in tourism, Don Holecek and Dan McCole, sought to better understand winery tasting room customers and regional wine drinkers, and their behaviors, through a 2012 survey of visitors to 15 geographically-diverse Michigan wineries and householders in six Midwest states.

One specific goal of the effort was to establish a baseline of consumer familiarity with cold hardy wines that could be used for comparison with the future expansion of cold hardy grape cultivation in the region. Cold hardy grapes are relatively new with few acres planted in contrast to the more traditional *Vitis vinifera*-based hybrids.

When asked if they were familiar with cold hardy grape wines, more than 50 percent of Michigan tasting room visitors and greater than 70 percent of regional wine drinkers indicated they were not familiar with these wines. Respondent recognition of varietal names, such as Marquette or Frontenac, was very low.

As for tasting cold hardy grape wines, 65 percent of Michigan tasting room visitors and 27 percent of regional wine drinkers had done so. Most reported having tasted a blend of cold hardy and other grape wines.

Despite general low awareness, about 70 percent of Michigan tasting room visitors and regional wine drinkers who have tasted cold hardy grape wines “liked them a lot” or “liked them a little.” Dislike among both groups was less than 3.4 percent.

This study was conducted as part of the [Northern Grapes Project](#), an initiative recognizing the emergence of cold hardy, *Vitis riparia*-based wine grape cultivars in the 1990s creating a new and rapidly expanding industry of small vineyard and winery enterprises in more than 12 states in New England, northern New York and the Upper Midwest, boosting rural economies in those regions. A detailed account of this study may be found at [Northern Grapes Project Newsletter Volume 3, Issue #1](#).

This article was published by [Michigan State University Extension](#). For more information, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu>. To have a digest of information delivered straight to your email inbox, visit <http://bit.ly/MSUENews>. To contact an expert in your area, visit <http://expert.msue.msu.edu>, or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464).

THE 2014 FARM BILL AND THE NEW FARM PROGRAMS: WHAT SHOULD I DO ASAP?

The 2014 farm bill contains new farm programs that will require complex decisions by farmers. There are actions that should be taken now to prepare for the decisions that must be made during the coming months.

Posted on **September 15, 2014**, **MSUE News**, by [David Schweikhardt](#), Michigan State University Extension and MSU AgBioResearch, Roger Betz, Dennis Stein and Adam Kantrovich, MSU Extension

The 2014 farm bill contains new farm programs that will require complex decisions by farmers and landlords in late 2014 and early 2015. While many of the specific rules for these decisions have not yet been released by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), producers and landlords should be aware that there are actions that should be taken now to prepare for the decisions that must be made during the coming months. This paper will examine these upcoming decisions and the actions that should be taken as soon as possible to prepare for these decisions.

The three major decisions for farmers and landlords in the 2014 Farm Bill

The 2014 farm bill includes three decisions that farmers and landlords will be required to make in 2014 and 2015:

1. **Updating Program Yields:** Owners will be permitted to update their program yields based on the farm’s actual production yields from 2008-2012.
2. **Reallocating Base Acres:** Owners will be permitted to reallocate their base acres based on the farm’s actual planted acreage from 2009-2012.

3. **ARC Programs versus PLC Program:** The Direct and Countercyclical Payments (DCP) that were used under the 2008 farm bill have been eliminated. Producers (landowners and tenants) will be permitted to choose between the new Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs that replaced the DCP program.

Though many details on these decisions are not yet available, some important steps in preparing for these decisions can now be taken and some important deadlines are now in place. In addition, the process of collecting information for these decisions should begin now. The final timeline for owner/producer decisions has not yet been announced, but a general timeline is available. Owners will have an opportunity to update program yields and reallocate base acres during the late summer and fall of 2014. Decisions on the ARC/PLC programs are likely to be required during late 2014 and early 2015.

2014 Farm Bill Decisions: What to do ASAP

In August 2014, the FSA started the process of implementing the 2014 farm bill by sending to owners and producers a letter with each farm's "Reported Commodity Crop History Summary" that provides each farm's recorded base acreage, program yields and 2009-2012 planting history. **This information will be a key factor in making decisions during 2014 and 2015.** Owners and producers should do the following as soon as possible to prepare for the upcoming year:

1. **Review** the FSA letter and Reported Commodity Crop History Summary and inform FSA within 60 days of the letter's date if the information is incorrect.
2. **Begin now** to collect information on the farm's actual planting history during 2009-2012 – how many acres of each crop were planted on the entire farm during each year from 2009-2012?) and the farm's actual yield history (what was the yield per acre for each crop planted on the entire farm during each year from 2008-2012?). Evidence from all sources (sales receipts, crop insurance records, etc.) should be collected retained (NOTE: FSA has not yet announced the rules regarding the information required for program decisions. Consequently, all information that could prove helpful in proving actual planted acreage or actual yields could be helpful).
3. **Communicate** with your tenants and/or your landlords. The upcoming decisions will affect the program benefits that a farm collects during 2014 to 2018. **All parties have a common interest in making the best possible decisions for the farm, so good communication and cooperation between landlords and tenants will be beneficial for all parties involved.**
4. **Stay informed** about the upcoming deadlines for decisions in late 2014 and early 2015. Read all emails and newsletters from your local FSA office and consult with your local FSA office and with your tenants or landlords about these decisions.
5. **Be patient but be alert.** The farm bill was passed by Congress and signed by the President at a relatively late date, and the FSA has a major challenge in implementing the new programs in the 2014 farm bill. Landlords will need to become informed about program options and key deadlines and cooperate with tenants. Tenants can often have numerous landlords that they will need to consult and enrollment dates could fall during peak work periods. The new programs are likely to require some complex decisions in late 2014 and early 2015. Landowners and tenants should stay informed about program deadlines and program options to cooperate in the best possible decisions for each farm.

A special ASAP note for winter wheat producers in Michigan

Producers of covered commodities (corn, wheat, and soybeans in Michigan) will be eligible for the new “Supplemental Coverage Option” (or SCO) beginning with the 2015 crop. The SCO is a form of crop insurance that provides an additional form of coverage for the deductible of the producer’s underlying crop insurance policy.

The SCO can be purchased as an endorsement to any of the Yield Protection, Revenue Protection, or Revenue Protection with the Harvest Price Exclusion policies. The Federal Government pays 65 percent of the premium cost for SCO. For example, assume a grower buys a Revenue Protection policy with a 75 percent coverage level (this is the “underlying policy”). The underlying policy covers 75 percent of the expected crop value and leaves 25 percent uncovered as a deductible. Since the underlying policy is Revenue Protection, SCO will also provide revenue protection, except that SCO payments will be determined at a county level. Thus, if the underlying policy is a Revenue Protection policy, the SCO Endorsement begins to pay when county average revenue falls below 86 percent of its expected level. The full amount of the SCO coverage is paid out when the county average revenue falls to the coverage level of the underlying policy (in this example, if the underlying policy level is 75 percent). As noted above, producers of covered crops (corn, wheat and soybeans in Michigan) will be required to elect either the Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) commodity programs for the 2014-2018 crop years. This will be a one-time irrevocable decision that will be required in late 2014 or early 2015. Producers who elect to take the PLC program will be eligible to purchase SCO coverage. Producers who elect the ARC program will not be eligible to purchase SCO coverage.

SCO coverage will be available for the 2015 crop year’s winter wheat. Producers must make a crop insurance coverage decision for fall-planted crops (including SCO) by the sales closing date (generally Sept. 30, 2014). Producers who applied for SCO for their winter wheat for 2015 may elect to withdraw coverage on any farm where they later elect the ARC program for winter wheat by the earlier of their acreage reporting date or Dec. 15 without penalty. If producers withdraw SCO coverage for a farm by the earlier of their acreage reporting date or Dec. 15, they will not be charged a crop insurance premium for SCO. In order to withdraw coverage without penalty, producers must notify their agents of their intended election for ARC by the earlier of their winter wheat acreage reporting date or Dec. 15. This is a one-time exemption that is only allowed for the 2015 crop year’s winter wheat to coordinate with ARC program sign-up rules. Details on the [SCO program](#) are available at the [USDA Risk Management Agency website](#) as well as a [calculator for SCO coverage](#). A map of the [availability of SCO for winter wheat](#) is available on the [USDA website](#). [Michigan State University Extension](#) advises winter wheat producers to consult their crop insurance agent to discuss options and deadlines under the Supplemental Coverage Option. Additional information and useful tools can be found at the [Michigan State University Extension Farm Information Resource Management \(FIRM\) website](#).

This article was published by [Michigan State University Extension](#). For more information, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu>. To have a digest of information delivered straight to your email inbox, visit <http://bit.ly/MSUENews>. To contact an expert in your area, visit <http://expert.msue.msu.edu>, or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464).

CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE STRATEGIC GROWTH INITIATIVE GRANTS

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) Director Jamie Clover Adams announced a call for proposals for the Strategic Growth Initiative grants. All abstract proposals must be received by MDARD by **October 15, 2014**.

“The Strategic Growth Initiative Grant Program provides an opportunity to grow Michigan’s food and agriculture industry by leveraging business development across the state,” said Clover Adams. “With increased business investment, we are fostering opportunities for job growth in high tech and innovative careers within Michigan’s food and agriculture industry.”

This initiative will help focus on economic opportunities for Michigan’s food processors, agri-business, and those in agricultural production by fostering business development, talent, and growth. Additionally, MDARD will coordinate and cooperate with universities and research organizations to bring the latest technology and information to improve Michigan’s food and agriculture industry.

The Strategic Growth Initiative proposals will be evaluated through a competitive process. Applicants for grant funds will be asked to describe how the project potentially impacts and produces measurable outcomes for the food and agriculture industry and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, or individual.

MDARD has updated the process for this cost-reimbursement grant program by implementing a required abstract and if projects are favorably reviewed, applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal in January 2015 and make a 10 minute presentation about their project at the Review Committee meeting in February 2015. An additional request for abstracts by MDARD will be announced in February 2015.

A program overview and abstract form are available on MDARD’s website at www.michigan.gov/mdagrants. Abstracts must be received by 3 p.m. EST Wednesday, October 15, 2014 to be considered for this round of funding.

GET MSU’S RESOURCES FOR GREAT GRAPES

MSU’s faculty and field-based Extension staff pool their expertise and resources at www.grapes.msu.edu. There’s advice for dealing with new and old pests, managing your vineyard with this season’s unique growing conditions, and trying new approaches or technology.

You can also stay up-to-date with emailed digests that send you linksto new articles and updates. Sign up for email digests at: <http://bit.ly/MSUEdigest>.

Fruit and Vegetable Industry Scholarships Available in 2014

The Michigan State Horticultural Society and The Michigan Vegetable Council announce the availability of scholarships for students who intend to pursue careers in the Midwest fruit

industry or vegetable industry, respectively. The awards are made available by these organizations, with the generous support of industry sponsors. In 2013, scholarship awards totaling \$14,000 were awarded with the support of Agro Fresh, Inc. (SmartFresh™), All Fresh GPS LLC, Breckenridge Insurance, Crop Production Services, MACMA Apple Division, Meijer, Nestle/Gerber Products Company, North Bay Produce, Inc, Valent USA, Wilbur-Ellis Company, as well as the support of the following industry publications: *Meister Publications (American Fruit Grower, American Vegetable Grower)*, *The Fruit Growers News*, and *The Vegetable Growers News*.

The target amount per scholarship is \$1,500, but it could be more or less at the discretion of the selection committee. The award is not based on need or academic achievement; however, the selection committee may use these criteria to decide between two or more qualified applicants.

To receive more information or an application contact your guidance office or the appropriate office as follows:

- **Fruit scholarships:** Michigan State Horticultural Society, 63806 90th Avenue, Hartford, MI 49057; phone - (269) 424-3990; or e-mail - MIHortSociety@aol.com. An application is also posted on the MSHS website at www.mihortsociety.org. Applications should be mailed or e-mailed by September 30, 2014.
- **Vegetable scholarships:** Michigan Vegetable Council, P.O. Box 277, Erie, MI 48133; phone - (734) 848-8899; or e-mail - mivegcouncil@charter.net. An application is also posted on the MVC website at www.michiganvegetablecouncil.org. Applications should be mailed or e-mailed by September 30, 2014.

The recipients will be selected in the fall and **the attendance of recipients is expected** at the banquet during the Great Lakes Fruit Vegetable and Farm Market EXPO (December 9-11, 2014) in Grand Rapids, MI (www.glexpo.com).

The Michigan State Horticultural Society and Michigan Vegetable Council invite other companies and organizations to contribute to the scholarship fund. For more information on sponsorship opportunities, please contact Allyn Anthony (269-424-3990) or Dave Smith (734-848-8899).

The Michigan State Horticultural Society and Michigan Vegetable Council are co-hosts of the largest fruit, vegetable and farm market show in the country, the Great Lakes Fruit Vegetable and Farm Market EXPO. Visit the EXPO website at www.glexpo.com.

WEB SITES OF INTEREST:

Insect and disease predictive information is available at:

<http://enviroweather.msu.edu/homeMap.php>

This issue and past issues of the weekly FruitNet report are posted on our website

<http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/nwmihort/faxnet.htm>

60 Hour Forecast

<http://www.agweather.geo.msu.edu/agwx/forecasts/fcst.asp?fileid=fous46ktvc>

Information on cherries is available at the new cherry website:

<http://www.cherries.msu.edu/>

Information on apples:

<http://apples.msu.edu/>

Fruit CAT Alert Reports has moved to MSU News

<http://news.msue.msu.edu>