Michigan Apple Committee
2013/14 Request for Proposals

The Michigan Apple Committee (MAC) announces a call for research proposals for 2013/14!

MAC has an industry mission to improve the profitability of apple growing through improving production information and techniques; developing new markets and new products; and identifying consumer trends and facts. MAC wishes to support innovative research that helps achieve this mission.

In keeping with the spirit of the MAC’s mission, the Michigan Apple Research Subcommittee (MARS) established the following as its charter in early 2009:

To help the Michigan Apple Committee realize its mission by enhancing the reputation of Michigan Apples, improve their share of sales in target markets and aid the profitability and sustainability of Michigan’s apple industry.

STRATEGIC RESEARCH PRIORITIES

MARS evaluates and recommends research projects for final approval by MAC. Following are the 2013/14 priorities of the MAC/MARS. (In priority order.)

- Increase demand
- Improve quality and consistency
- Reduce production costs
- Introduce new or improved varieties
- Prove health benefits
- Improve packaging

To access the complete goals and strategies of the Michigan Apple Committee’s grower-funded research, please go to www.MichiganApples.com/Research.

Note: Researchers should ensure their project is a new idea that has not been previously done at another university or research organization.
PROPOSAL GUIDELINES
Whether the proposal is a continuation of a current project or a new idea, researchers are requested to submit a new proposal. The proposal will be no more than five double-sided page as outlined below, plus an attached cover sheet and budget. You must use provided templates.

- **Cover page**: Completed “MAC Cover Page” (enclosed) should be attached to your proposal.
- **Problem statement**: What is the problem/opportunity and why is it important to the future of Michigan’s apple growers? How does it address MAC’s mission and research priorities?
- **Objectives and hypothesis**
- **Overview of methods and procedures**: Briefly, how will hypotheses be tested?
- **Impact of research on Michigan apple industry**: What does this mean to Michigan’s growers and how will it improve their farm activities economically, environmentally, etc.
- **Budget**: Completed Project Budget should be attached to your proposal including notation of other funding sources from which you have received or applied for funds.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Non-MSU proposals (15 copies) will be due to Michigan Apple Committee, 13750 S. Sedona Parkway, Ste. 3, Lansing, MI 48906 by close of business on Monday, Friday, December 20, 2013.

MSU researchers should submit proposals electronically to Michigan State University AgBioResearch, by emailing to Tonia Dumont at tdumont@anr.msu.edu by close of business on Friday, December 20, 2013. MSU transmittals need to be submitted for this proposal.

PROPOSAL REVIEW AND PRESENTATIONS

MARS members will review proposals in January 2014, and make funding decisions at that time. Researchers may be asked to make a brief presentation or answer questions at the January meeting.

The following criteria will be used to judge the merit of the proposals:

**Evaluation Criteria:**

- Relationship to MAC mission and MARS charter and priorities
- Scientific soundness; appropriateness of methodology
- Leverage of funds
- Potential impact on the Michigan apple industry
- Extent of partnering with apple producers and users
- Appropriateness of budget
FUNDING

- The Michigan Apple Committee will fund all approved projects in the following manner:
  - 25% of the total annual funding will be provided upon notification of project approval.
  - 50% of the total annual funding will be released upon submission of a progress report to MARS approximately six months into the project or at the halfway point of the research.
  - The final 25% of the allocated annual funds will be released after a satisfactory final written report is received; poster prepared for Expo and a project synopsis of proper length and content is presented to MARS.

FUNDING CONDITIONS

- A printed research report and presentation are due to MARS during the Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable, and Farm Market Expo in December 2014. Printed reports and presentations must be sent to MSU AgBioResearch by Friday, November 15, 2014 to provide the subcommittee with time to review the findings before the meeting in December. Final reports for multi-year projects should show each year’s progress. Research reports will be placed on www.MichiganApples.com and will be made available to apple growers.
- MAC requests a poster presentation of each project which will be displayed for review by the entire grower community at the Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable, and Farm Market Expo in December 2014. This poster should be delivered to the Great Lakes Expo.
- Failure to submit timely and quality progress reports or insufficient progress will result in premature termination of a project and confiscation of unspent funds.
- A 150-word summary of the project results suitable for MAC newsletter publication is due mid-December 2014.
- Michigan Apple Committee expects team leaders and/or their representatives to participate in MAC public events, webinars and radio programs that highlight research activities when requested. Failure to participate will result in premature termination of the project.
- Multiple year projects are funded one year at a time and are subject to annual evaluations. Second year continued funding is not guaranteed.
- The Michigan Apple Committee is a grower-funded organization. As such, it is imperative that the Michigan Apple Committee be recognized as a funding source whenever possible.

Please contact Diane Smith, Executive Director of the Michigan Apple Committee with any questions, (517) 669-8353 or Diane@MichiganApples.com. MSU researchers may contact Doug Buhler at (517) 355-0123 or buhler@msu.edu.
Michigan Apple Committee
Research Priorities for 2013/14

Following are the 2013/14 priorities of the Michigan Apple Committee. *(In priority order.)*

1. **Increase demand**
   - To conduct consumer related research that will help sell Michigan Apples more profitably.
     a. Market research
     b. Value – convenience, apples versus snack foods
     c. Consistency (product quality)
     d. Word of mouth & technologies/methods

2. **Improve quality and consistency**
   - To demonstrate how to improve Michigan Apples in terms such as variety, size, taste and appearance.
     a. Growth regulators/thinners
     b. Storage improvements
     c. Varieties
     d. Enhance varietal traits and attributes
     e. Thinning models
     f. Packaging
     g. Michigan “Select” or “Premier” product

3. **Reduce production costs**
   - To help increase grower profitability by improving production efficiency.
     a. Improve packaging efficiency
     b. Mechanization
     c. Technology
     d. Enhance varietal traits and attributes
     e. Consistent cropping
     f. Reducing pesticide delivery costs
     g. Increase yields
     h. Farm management practices
4. **Introduce new or improved varieties**
   - To identify and develop new or improved varieties that can be grown profitably in Michigan.
     a. Michigan “Select” or “Premier” varieties
     b. Heritage varieties
     c. Compatibility of varieties with Michigan’s growing conditions

5. **Prove health benefits**
   - To research, publish and support scientific claims regarding the health and nutrition benefits of apples.
     a. Proof of effect on health conditions or prevention
     b. Summaries of other research

6. **Improve packaging**
   - To demonstrate benefits in terms of cost-effectiveness in packaging that has strong consumer appeal and is packer friendly.
     a. Cost effectiveness
     b. Consumer/Packer friendly
     c. Reduce bruising
     d. Consumer appeal
     e. Lengthens shelf life

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