

MICHIGAN TREE FRUIT COMMISSION

Growers have a decision to make. Do you want a say in your future?



A Michigan Tree Fruit Commission has been proposed to meet the research needs of the apple, cherry, peach and plum industries of Michigan. The Michigan Tree Fruit Commission would utilize the P.A. 232 program system to meet the needs of the collective tree fruit industries through support and funding of research stations, research and extension.

This concept is a proactive approach to supporting the research station, research and extension needs to these industries. Over the last 10 years, MSU funding has seen cuts of over 50 percent. Currently, there is not funding to support the infrastructure and staffing needs of our state. An interim committee was announced by the director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) and includes: Jim Nugent, Mark Miezio, Mike Van Agtmael, Jim Engelsma, Pat Goodfellow, Randy Willmeng, Fred Koenigshof, Rick Sayler, Steve Thome and Nels Nyblad.

Steps must be taken to chart a course that addresses the priorities of Michigan's tree fruit industries.

The Michigan Apple Committee, Michigan Cherry Committee, Michigan State Horticultural Society and MACMA are asking growers consider a plan to address this issue by putting in place a sustainable funding source. Research has been key to the success of our industries in Michigan. Our climate is unique and our growing regions are different from other parts of the country. Research stations and programs here in Michigan ensure our needs will be met into the future. This will not do away with research already being funded by these organizations, but will actually supplement these programs.

- » Growers will drive the direction of the Commission and all the funding.
- » Nine board members from three districts will represent the growers from the apple, cherry, peach and plum industries.
- » Assessment funds would be leveraged with state and federal funds.
- » The group will be asking the state legislature for a dollar for dollar match on all funds raised.

Not only will research stations be preserved, but staff positions will be protected.

Assessment Recommendations:

A sliding scale of assessment rates are recommended to allow the Commission board to raise and/or lower the amount annually as needed. The maximum amounts recommended are:

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| » Apple | Up to \$0.04/CWT - \$0.0004 per pound |
| » Cherry | Up to \$2.50/TON - \$0.00125 per pound |
| » Peach | Up to \$2.00/TON - \$0.001 per pound |
| » Plum | Up to \$4.50/TON - \$0.00225 per pound |

What's Next?

- » Public Hearings - Nov. 25 in Grand Rapids & Nov. 26 in Traverse City
- » Educational Sessions
 - » Great Lakes EXPO
 - » Tuesday, Dec. 10, 9:50 a.m. Ballroom D
 - » Wednesday, Dec. 11, 9:30 a.m. Gallery Overlook Room E&F
 - » Wednesday, Dec. 11, 3:00 p.m., Ballroom D
 - » Ag Commission Meeting, North West Station, December 13, 2013
 - » Orchard & Vineyard Show, January 14 – 15, 2014
 - » Southwest Hort Days, February 5 – 6, 2014
- » Vote – Winter 2014



Questions?

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