

NW Michigan Regional Fruit Grower Newsletter
March 2009

CALENDER OF EVENTS

2009

- 3/5** **Looking Ahead: Managing Apple Pests Without OP's**
Presented by Michigan Apple Association
- 3/5** **Farm Safety and USDA Farm Bill Updates**
NWMHRS
- 3/5** **FarmAbility Program**
NWMHRS
- 3/6** **SE Michigan Spring Tree Fruit Meeting**
Walli's Restaurant, Flint
- 3/6-7** **2009 Michigan Organic Conference**
Local Organic Food: Sustainable Prosperity for Michigan
Kellogg Center, MSU
moffaorganic@gmail.com
- 3/6-14** **Ag & Natural Resources Week**
Michigan State University
www.canr.msu.edu/anrweek
- 3/10-11** **Cider Making Food Safety Course**
Presented by Michigan Apple Association
- 3/10-12** **Pesticide Applicator Recertification Offered**
ANR Week, MSU
- 3/11** **Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) Meeting**
NWMHRS
- 3/11** **Michigan Spring Peach Update**
SWMREC Conf. Center, Benton Harbor
- 3/13** **Young Farmer Leadership Program**
The Cherry Stop, Traverse City
- 3/13-14** **Learn Beekeeping at ANR Week**
MSU
- 3/14** **Women in Agriculture Workshop**
NWMHRS
- 3/16** **Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) Meeting**
NWMHRS
- 3/25** **Grant Writing for Agribusiness**
Michigan Works, Traverse City
- 3/30-31** **Michigan Agri-Energy Conference**
Radisson Plaza Hotel, Kalamazoo
www.agenergy.org

- 4/1 Water Use Reporting Deadline**
- 4/6 Benzie/Manistee Hort Society Farm Tour**
- 4/7 Benzie/Manistee Spring Fruit Workshop**
- 4/9,16,
23, 30 Tractor Safety Training Program**
NWMHRS
- 4/10 Wine Grape IPM Kickoff**
Leelanau County Extension Office
- 4/21 Understanding Plant/Water Relationships**
NWMHRS
- 4/30 Household Hazardous Waste/Clean Sweep Collection**
Traverse City
- 5/1 Antique Apple & Pear Pruning Workshop**
Schmidt Farmstead, Port Oneida Rural Historic District
For more information, contact Kimberly Mann, 231-326-5135 x 501
- 5/2 Tractor Safety Exam**
NWMHRS

NW MICHIGAN ORCHARD & VINEYARD SHOW PRESENTATIONS

Presentations from this year's Orchard and Vineyard Show are now available on the web. You can find them at <http://www.cherries.msu.edu/presentations.htm>

CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER!

Congratulations to Don and Bob Gregory! The owners of Cherry Bay Orchards were selected to receive the 2009 MSU CANR Distinguished Service to Agriculture and Natural Resources Award. This award goes to people that are dedicated to striving to help MSU in their agricultural mission. We are so pleased at the choice for the 2009 award--it could not have gone to two better people.

Don and Bob will be presented the award during ANR Week at a luncheon to be held on Tuesday, **March 10th**.

FARM SAFETY AND USDA FARM BILL UPDATES

Rob Serrine, CED, Leelanau Co. MSU-E

Leelanau MSU Extension will host a Farm Safety Program & USDA Farm Bill Update on Thursday, **March 5** at the NW Michigan Horticultural Research Station. The *Farm Safety Program* will run from 9 am - Noon. The program will cover emergency preparedness on the farm, hazard identification, food security and transportation issues.

The *USDA Farm Bill Update* will run from 1-4 pm. Representatives from the USDA NRCS, FSA and Rural Development will be there to discuss Farm Bill funding for growers in northern Michigan.

The cost is \$10, which includes lunch. Farm Bureau has generously donated the lunch.

PLEASE RSVP BY TUESDAY **MARCH 3rd**, so that we can prepare accordingly, by calling the Leelanau MSU Extension office at 231-256-9888.

2 private/commercial certification credits have been granted.

FARMABILITY PROGRAM

Rob Sirrine, CED, Leelanau County

After more than two years of effort, the Leelanau Conservation District, the Leelanau Conservancy, Michigan State University Extension and the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station will be presenting an innovative new project called “the FarmAbility Program” on **March 5, 2009** from **4:00pm-5:30pm** at the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station, 6686 S. Center Highway in Bingham Township. All farm families are welcome to attend.

According to the program’s sponsoring organizations, “FarmAbility” means doing whatever it takes to support Leelanau farm families who are going strong, today, tomorrow and in the future. This cutting-edge program joins the goal of enhancing agricultural innovation with the goal of supporting farm families to continue farming in Leelanau County. It is the first privately-run program of its kind in the U.S. and will offer non-governmental financial incentives to family farmers in return for them continuing to farm their lands for a 10-year period. These financial incentives include per-acre cash payments and cost-sharing for both workshops designed to enhance profitability and estate or tax planning to help position the transfer of the farm to the next generation of farmers.

Eligible applicants will be considered on a “first-come-first-served” basis until 5,000 acres are enrolled. Those interested in applying can do so in-person at the offices of the Leelanau Conservation District at 112 W. Philip Street in Lake Leelanau from **9am to 4pm** on **March 9**. Thereafter, drop-in hours will be from 9:30 am to 12 noon on Mondays and Wednesdays at the Conservation District Offices and from 1pm to 4pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the offices of the Leelanau Conservancy, 105 N. First Street in Leland. Drop-in hours will continue until 5,000 acres are enrolled in the program.

GAP MEETINGS

Two important Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) meetings will be held at the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station (NWMHRS). These meetings will be held to disseminate the new protocols and rules regarding food safety in the orchard. As many of these rules have changed in the past year, attending these meetings will be important for all growers. The first meeting will be held by MACMA on **March 11**, 2009; the cost is free for MACMA members and \$75 for non-MACMA members to cover the cost of a manual and DVD’s in English and Spanish outlining the GAP program requirements. The second meeting will be held on **March 16** and will be *free* for all growers. At this meeting, growers will not receive a manual or DVD’s and will be responsible for developing their own manual. Both meetings will be held from **10:00-noon** and program content should be similar. Please call the MACMA office (800-292-2653) to RSVP to the 11th meeting and the NWMHRS (231-946-1510) for the March 16th meeting.

PESTICIDE APPLICATOR RECERTIFICATION OFFERED

Michigan certified pesticide applicators have a chance to earn up to 13 recertification credits March 10-12 during classes set for Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Week at Michigan State University.

On **March 10**, applicators can attend a daylong comprehensive core course at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center. This session offers eight Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) commercial or private recertification credits. The comprehensive core class is the only class the MDA has approved for eight credits in one day, and commercial applicators who complete it will earn all the core credits they need for the three-year recertification period.

Private applicators who attend this class can earn eight of the 12 credits they need to become recertified within three years. Previously uncertified applicators can take the comprehensive core class in preparation for taking the initial certification exam.

On **March 11**, a four-hour Private and Commercial Sprayer Calibration class will be held in the Crop and Soil Sciences Research Building. It will offer three credits toward private or commercial core recertification or in commercial categories 1A Field Crops, 1B Vegetable Crops, 1C Fruit Crops, 2 Forestry, 3A Turfgrass, 3B Ornamental or 6 Right-of-Way.

This hands-on class covers calibration of various types of spray application equipment, from boom sprayers to small backpack sprayers. Pesticide applicator record-keeping requirements and other relevant topics are also covered during the course.

On **March 12**, applicators who work with turf and ornamentals can earn two credits in categories 3A Turfgrass and 3B Ornamental in a program that will also be held in the Crop and Soil Sciences Research Building. It will include information on managing turf and ornamental pests, including use of integrated pest management and proper pesticide application practices. Ron Calhoun, MSU Extension turf specialist, will provide an update on research about effectively timing herbicide use.

The registration fee for all three classes is \$150. The fee for the comprehensive core course only is \$100; the sprayer calibration and the turf and ornamental update are both \$40. The registration fee for the comprehensive core course and the sprayer calibration or the turf and ornamental update is \$130. Registrations for all courses include lunch and materials and are due March 3.

For registration information, visit www.pested.msu.edu or contact Carolyn Randall, pesticide education coordinator, by phone at 517-353-5147 or by e-mail at randallc@msu.edu.

MICHIGAN SPRING PEACH UPDATE

The Spring Peach Update will be held at the SW Michigan Research and Extension Center, **March 11**. It is an all day meeting with educational sessions and discussions on growing, packing, and marketing high quality peaches. Some of the topics include new insecticides and insect management strategies, disease control, plum pox update, marketing strategies for peaches, farm marketing of peaches, mechanical peach thinning, new peach varieties, and *Select Michigan*.

Special out-of-state guest speakers include Phil Baugher of Adams County Nursery, PA, and prominent peach growers Bennett Saunders of Piney River, VA and Jim Eckert of Eckert Farms, Belleville, IL. Both growers are progressive and innovative fruit farmers and marketers for their region.

Attendees will be eligible for credits toward their recertification of the Michigan pesticide applicator's license. To register or for more information or directions, call 269-944-1477.

YOUNG FARMER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Nikki Rothwell, District Horticulturist, MSUE

An initial meeting to discuss the proposed Young Farmer Leadership Program for growers in northwest Michigan will be held on **March 13th** at *The Cherry Stop*, downtown Traverse City.

As social, economic, political, and environmental changes have an increasing impact on agriculture and rural communities in Northwest Michigan, it is important that agricultural interests are effectively represented and articulated in the years to come. The Northwest Michigan Young Farmer Leadership Program is designed to identify and train young farmers to assume leadership positions, such that agriculture remains an economically viable, socially responsible, and environmentally sound industry in Northwest Michigan. The Program will help participants: Develop and hone leadership, decision-making, facilitation, communication, teamwork, and problem solving skills; Decipher challenges and opportunities in regards to agricultural commodities, marketing strategies, profitability, the local, state, national, and international economies; Develop a better understanding of public policy, estate planning, and inter-generational farm transfer; and navigate the changing social, economic, and political environment as it relates to agriculture and rural communities. As we are in the initial planning stages for this program, we welcome input from our region's young growers. Please stop by *The Cherry Stop* on Friday the 13th at 5pm. For more information, call Nikki at 946-1510 or Rob Sirrine at 256-9888.

LEARN BEEKEEPING AT ANR WEEK CONFERENCE

Beekeepers from novices to experts will come together to refresh their skills and learn new beekeeping techniques **March 13-14** during Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Week at Michigan State University.

The nearly 100-year-old Beekeepers Annual Conference, sponsored by the Michigan Beekeepers Association (MBA), is open to bee enthusiasts of all skill levels. Sessions will begin at 8 a.m. both days at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing.

Individuals considering beekeeping as a new hobby as well as serious apiarists looking to advance their skills as beekeepers can benefit from attending. Participants can choose from many topics over the two-day conference, including extracting honey for beginners, making beeswax candles, and honey production and marketing strategies and techniques.

"Vendors from all over Michigan and from out-of-state will have booths and items available to purchase," said David Anthony, MBA president. "Catalogs from many of the top beekeeping suppliers will also be given free to attendees."

Registration for the Beekeepers Annual Conference is \$20 for MBA members and \$40 for non-members. Registration fees cover participation in both days and include all materials. For more information, visit the MBA Web site at www.michiganbees.org, or contact Anthony by e-mail at anthonybeefarms@aol.com.

For a complete list of ANR Week programs, conferences and educational opportunities, visit www.canr.msu.edu/anrweek or contact program coordinator Meghan Honke at (517) 353-3175, ext. 229, or e-mail honkemeg@msu.edu.

Free ANR Week program guides with dates, times, locations, costs and event descriptions are available from any county MSU Extension office or the MSU Bulletin Office, 117 Central Services, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824-1001; 517-353-6740.

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

On **Saturday, March 14**, 9:00-4:00 p.m., a one-day workshop for aspiring and veteran farmers, with particular emphasis on women, will be held at the NW Michigan Horticultural Research Station. Spend a day networking with successful growers, researchers, and others in agribusiness to learn how your new or existing farm can thrive.

Topics will include women's perspectives on farming, leadership skills, marketing and business planning, and more. There will be panels offering viewpoints from both experienced and new farmers. See program schedule.

To register, contact the Michigan Land Use Institute at 231-941-6584 for more information, contact Nikki Rothwell 231-946-1510 or Jim Sluyter (MLUI) at 231-889-0199 or visit localdifference.org/getfarming. Cost is \$20 single or \$30 couples. Men are welcome too!

Here is the link to the agenda: http://www.maes.msu.edu/nwmihort/women_in_ag.pdf

GRANT WRITING FOR AGRIBUSINESS

A *free* workshop about grant writing for anyone in agribusiness will be held Wednesday, March 25, 9-7 p.m. at Michigan Works, 1209 Garfield Ave, Suite C, Traverse City. Learn tips, tools and techniques for writing successful agricultural grant applications.

Presenters include Drs Rob Sirrine, Leelanau Co. Extension and Nikki Rothwell, NW Michigan Horticultural Research Station, and Tom Rorabaugh, USDA SARE. To register, call the Michigan Land Use Institute, 231-941-6584.

Benzie - Manistee Horticultural Society FARM TOUR

Date: Monday, April 6, 2009

Time: Meet bus at NW Michigan Hort Research Station at 8:30 am, return by 5:00 p.m.

Tour is open to all growers

Click here for the registration form: <http://www.maes.msu.edu/nwmihort/benmanreg09.pdf>

Tour Agenda:

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|----------------|--|
| 8:00 - 8:30 am | Meet at NW Michigan Hort Research Station for Coffee and Rolls |
| 8:30 - 9:00 | Bus Departs Hort Station for Kalchik Farm |
| 9:00 -10:00 | Steve Kalchik Farm, Northport
We will look at a variety of apple varieties, rootstocks, and training methods |
| 10:00 | Bus Departs for Cherry Bay Farms |
| 10:00 -11:00 | Cherry Bay Farms, Suttons Bay
Francis Otto, Horticulturalist, will share a variety of information related to high density apple plantings, trellising systems, spacing, rootstocks, and grafting from McIntosh to Honeycrisp |
| 11:00 | Bus Departs for NW Michigan Hort Research Station |
| 11:45 | Lunch at Hort Station (provided) |
| 12:30 pm | Bus Departs Hort Station for Ligon Farm |
| 1:30 - 2:30 | Ligon Farm, Old Mission Peninsula
Leonard Ligon will discuss apple training systems, orchard floor management, micro-jet trickle irrigation, and wine grapes |
| 2:30 | Bus Departs for Peninsula Cellars |
| 2:45 - 3:45 | Peninsula Cellars, Old Mission Peninsula
Dave Kroupa will talk about his transition from cherries to wine. Participants will have an opportunity to sample a number of wines during this final stop |
| 3:45 | Bus Departs for NW Michigan Hort Research Station |
| 4:45 | Bus Arrives at NW Michigan Hort Research Station |

**Benzie - Manistee Horticultural Society
SPRING FRUIT WORKSHOP**

Date: Tuesday, April 7, 2009
Location: Blaine Christian Church, 7018 Putney Rd, Arcadia
Time: 8:30 am – 2:00 pm

Workshop is open to all growers

Click here for the registration form: <http://www.maes.msu.edu/nwmihort/benmanreg09.pdf>

Agenda:

- 8:00 - 8:30 am **Registration, Coffee, and Rolls**
- 8:30 - 8:45 **Welcome and Overview**
Dave Smeltzer, President, Benzie-Manistee Horticultural Soc.
Steve Fouch, County Extension Director, MSU Extension-Benzie County
- 8:45 - 9:00 **Farm Labor Resources/Contacts**
Sandra Jurado, Ag Employment Specialist for Benzie, Leelanau, and
Manistee Counties, Dept of Energy, Labor and Economic Development
- 9:00 - 9:45 **High Density Training Systems for Apple Growers**
Phil Schwallier, Fruit District Hort/Marketing Educator,
MSU Clarksville Horticulture Research Station
- 9:45 -10:00 **BREAK**
- 10:00 -11:00 **Water Usage Regulation**
Scott Piggot, Agriculture Ecology Department, Michigan Farm Bureau
- 11:00 - 11:45 **Apple Thinning Recommendations**
Phil Schwallier, Fruit District Hort/Marketing Educator,
MSU Clarksville Horticulture Research Station
- 11:45 - Noon **Questions and Answers**
- Noon **LUNCH (provided)**
Annual Meeting for Benzie-Manistee Horticultural Society
- 2:00 pm **Adjourn**

NEW EXTENSION TOLL-FREE PHONE NUMBER

Until now, calling a Michigan State University (MSU) Extension county office meant picking up a phone book or surfing the Web to find a local phone number. Now, there's one easy-to-remember, toll-free number that can be used to reach any of the 82 MSU Extension county offices.

By dialing **1-888-MSUE-4MI (1-888-678-3464)** and entering the first five letters of the county name, Michiganians are connected with the county office of their choice, where they can get information about programs, educational materials or connecting to the broader university. Instructions for using the number are also available in Spanish.

WATER USE DEADLINES

April 1, 2009- Water Use Reporting Forms are due. Growers should report on each pump they have, if they did not use the pump last year they still need to report 0 usage. Growers need to make sure that pump ID and lat. and long. coordinates are the same as last year. If they have sold, bought, or someone else is reporting a pump that pump ID needs to be the same as in the past.

July 1, 2009- The new Water Withdrawal Tool must be used for all new or expanding pumps. We are currently in the testing phase. Growers should use the tool right now but it is not mandatory. Registering on the water withdrawal tool is not the same as registering with MDA. Users will still need to send in their registration form.

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE/CLEAN SWEEP COLLECTION

The first Household Hazardous Waste/Clean Sweep collection is **Thursday April 30**. Must call GT County Recycling Hotline at 941-5555 to set up an appointment. Pesticides are **Free** of charge to all Michigan residents.



TRACTOR SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAM For 14 and 15 Year Old Youth

Improve your chances of employment this summer by completing a tractor safety training course! If you are a teen, 14 or 15 years old (as of June 1, 2009), then you are eligible to take the Tractor Safety Training Program being offered for youth in the Northwest Michigan area.

Under the U.S. Department of Labor's Hazardous Occupation Order, successful completion of a tractor operation and safety course is required for all youth under the age of 16 who perform farm jobs classified as hazardous. This course will be held at the NW MI Horticultural Research Station, 6686 S Center Hwy, Traverse City.

Course: Chris Garthe, Instructor

*Thursdays, April 9, 16, 23, 30 from 6 – 9 pm and
test Saturday, May 2 from 8 am – 3 pm*

To become certified, participants must attend all five sessions of the course, pass a written test, and pass a tractor driving test. This class will also cover safety on other types of small engines and farm tools. Growers and MSU Extension Educators will be assisting with the hands-on tractor safety training.

Cost for the program is \$60, which is due at the time of registration. *If finances are an issue, please call us as some scholarships are available.* **Registration deadline is Friday, March 20** and space is limited. The cost includes the course manual. Participants should dress to be outdoors. For Saturday, May 2, a pizza lunch and drinks will be provided.

If you have any questions, please contact MSU Extension-Leelanau County at 231/256-9888.

2009 Tractor Safety Registration Form (Please print clearly & copy form as needed)

Name _____

Phone _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Address _____

(Street or PO Box)

(City, State and Zip)

Date of Birth _____ Sex _____ Grade _____ School _____

(Month-Day-Year)

(Male or Female)

Optional: Do you live on a farm? _____

Do you have a disability? _____

Ethnic Origin _____

Return form along with \$60 by **Friday, March 20, 2009**

Mail to:

MSU Extension – Leelanau County

Make checks payable to: MSU Extension

8527 E. Government Center Dr., # 107

Suttons Bay, MI 49682

Registration fee is non-refundable

(unless class is cancelled due to low enrollment)

UNDERSTANDING PLANT/WATER RELATIONSHIPS

N.L. Rothwell, District Horticulturist

A morning workshop will be held to help growers understand the plant/water relationship on **April 21st** at the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station (NWMHRS). Understanding this association is crucial as it impacts irrigation systems and strategies for properly applying water to tree fruit. This three-hour event will provide insight on how plants use water, and how this information will translate into proper water management in the field. We will also discuss new irrigation trials that will be held at the NWMHRS in the 2009 season. The meeting will be held from 9-12, and the cost is \$10/person. Please call the NWMHRS at 231.946.1510 to register.

WINEGRAPE IPM KICK-OFF

N.L. Rothwell, Erin Lizotte, and Duke Elsner

A day-long program to kick off the growing season for wine grape growers and vineyard managers will be held at the *Leelanau County Extension office* on **April 10** from 9-4. We are fortunate to be able to bring in Cliff Ohmart, Sustainable Viticulture Director for the Lodi Wine grape Commission in California. Cliff is an entomologist by training and has spent the last 15+

years developing the sustainability program for the LWC. This accomplishment is no small task as the LWC is comprised of 750 growers in crush district #11. The Lodi sustainability assessment has been used as a template for all other US wine regions, and we are very fortunate to have him here in northwest Michigan. In addition to Cliff, we will be joined by MSU wine grape faculty and extension staff.

We are looking forward to this event, and we hope you will be able to attend this year's kick-off. More details to follow in the next newsletter.