

UPREC Implementation Committee Report – Feb. 2013

The Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center (UPREC) is a unique and relevant research and outreach facility, which has served residents of the Upper Peninsula since 1899. Michigan State University AgBioResearch (ABR) and MSU Extension (MSUE) recently formed a committee to help guide the continued, long-term success of UPREC.

Committee members met with and received considerable input from stakeholders in the Upper Peninsula concerning local needs for knowledge, training and educational opportunities consistent with the missions of ABR and MSUE.

The committee report is available at <http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/uprc/index.html>. It recommends the redirection of research and educational themes under three long-term objectives:

1. Improvement of soil quality to enhance the productivity of UP agricultural lands in a manner that emphasizes health linkages associated with soil, crop, livestock and people.
2. Development of research that demonstrates the costs and benefits of integrated crop livestock systems, including grass-based livestock production. Closer collaboration between UPREC and Lake City Research Center (LCRC) in Lake City to foster complementary research endeavors and to increase the quality and quantity of research results.
3. Development of research tied to the educational needs of regional food systems in the Upper Peninsula that contributes to community sustainability while linking to objectives 1 and 2.

The next step will be to hire a program coordinator to oversee the UPREC research and Extension objectives. This individual will work in close collaboration with Upper Peninsula stakeholders and MSU campus faculty.

Other important short-term objectives include:

1. Formation of an advisory committee for the UPREC, including residents of the Upper Peninsula.
2. Identification of regional needs and development of an appropriate integrated cropping and livestock research system for the UPREC.
3. Development of an incubator-based system for nutrient dense food production at UPREC.

The mission is to work with the residents of the Upper Peninsula to facilitate their goals for the development and success of prosperous local and regional food systems.