

# MSU Extension Ask an Expert

## Overview

This brief report outlines the details for the MSU Extension Ask an Expert process including wranglers, duties, and support.

## Ask an Expert Process

The eXtension Ask an Expert tool is a method for allowing our clients to ask questions through an online question and answer tool. Questions for the state of Michigan are directed to the Michigan Question Wrangler Team. The team members review the questions, add tags based on content area, and re-assign the question to someone within MSU Extension with that specific area of expertise. Questions are re-assigned as soon as possible so the question wranglers often monitor their email outside of work hours including the evenings and weekends (if additional wranglers were included in this group it would be their option to answer questions outside of normal business hours). The wranglers also collaborate in terms of when they are out of the office and make sure someone is available during holidays.

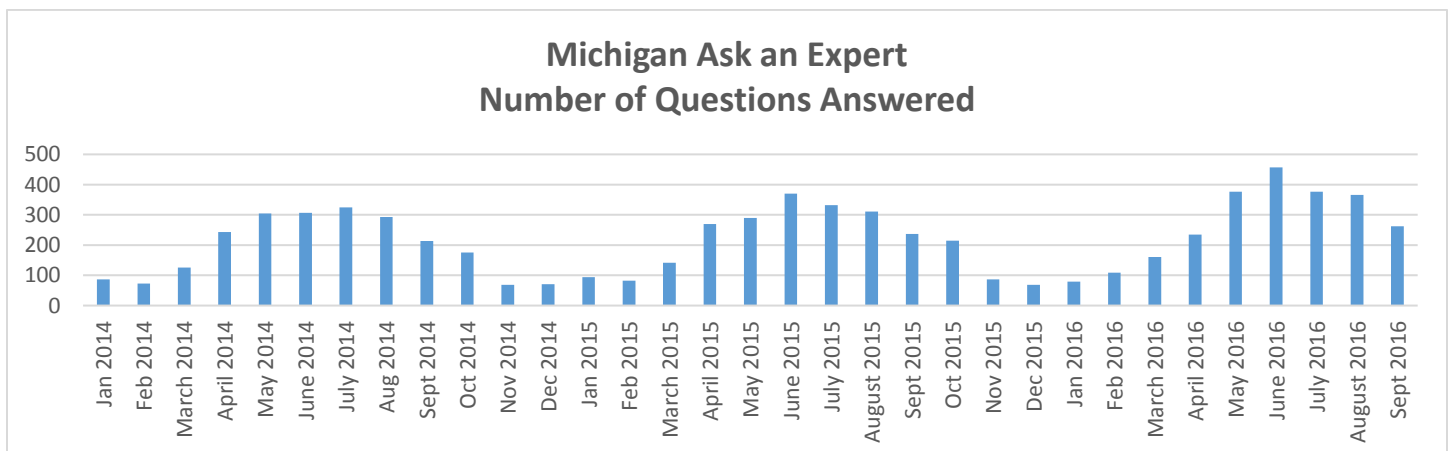
## Michigan Ask an Expert Question Wrangler Team

The Michigan Question Wrangler Team members include the following individuals. The percentage of estimated time spent on Ask an Expert is also listed for each person. Note that this varies based on season as we have a higher amount of questions from April through October due to the higher number of gardening questions during this time. Rebecca and Mary have a higher percentage as well since they work closely with the MI Garden Ask an Expert group.

- Rebecca (5-10%)
- Megghan (2-5%)
- Gwyn (2-5%)
- Mary (5-10%)

## Number of Questions

From January 2016 to date, the MI Question Wrangler team has been assigned 2,061 questions. The total number of questions asked for Michigan during this time period is a little bit higher at 2,430 as some questions are re-assigned by another state or go directly to a topic group. Below is a chart including the number of questions answered since January of 2014.



## Ask an Expert Question Wrangler Duties

The duties of a Question Wrangler include:

- Re-assigning questions when assigned
- Keeping our shared list of experts updated if changes are known (located in Google Drive)
- Having a strong understanding of the MSU Extension institute structure, work teams, and individual experts
- Identifying experts outside of MSU Extension when additional expertise is required
- Communicating with each other when we are unavailable for questions for a long period of time (vacation, conference) and when there are complex questions which are difficult to assign to an expert
- Collaborating with Question Wrangler Team members

## Training/Support Materials

Since the question wrangler team is such a small group of people we do not have formal training sessions. We collaborate through email and periodic meetings. We do have a getting started document that Lela developed.

eXtension does offer monthly Question Wrangler “meet-ups” which are open meetings for wranglers from various states. During the meeting wranglers share questions or issues.

To be a question wrangler a person does need to sign up for an eXtension ID: <https://people.extension.org/signup>.