



Field Crop Production

Field Crop Research and Education Delivered Locally

For more than 100 years, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension has been helping people address critical issues, needs and opportunities by delivering the vast knowledge and resources of MSU directly to individuals, communities and businesses. Seeking to improve lives and the state overall, MSU Extension focuses on four key areas of importance: leveraging natural and human assets, enhancing agriculture and agribusiness, improving health and nutrition for Michigan residents, and preparing Michigan's children and youth for the future.

Michigan agriculture continues to be a diverse and thriving segment of the state's economy. When you support MSU Extension, producers learn efficient farming practices that enhance crop productivity while protecting soil and water resources. This education leads to better use of time, money and human capital, which helps retain and create agricultural jobs. Together, these measures strengthen Michigan's economy, encouraging growth of a sustainable and prosperous food and agriculture system.

In 2015, MSU Extension conducted over 290 field crop programs, reaching approximately 6,600 farmers and agribusiness professionals from 71 counties across the state. This was made possible by county, state and federal appropriations, as well as the support of Michigan commodity organizations and other valuable partners.

MSU Extension field crop educators deliver unbiased, science-based knowledge to assist producers in four key areas:

- Improving production efficiency
- Mitigating risk
- Increasing economic activity
- Enhancing sustainability

Resources in this priority area focus on the following programs.

Integrated Crop and Pest Management Series

Pest populations and crop management recommendations are constantly changing, so producers must stay ahead of the curve to remain profitable. This seminar series, held at seven locations throughout the state, is an opportunity for participants to prepare for the next growing season by receiving the latest research results and recommendations for crop production and pest management from MSU specialists and educators. Insect pests, like the western bean cutworm pictured at right, are an example of the serious integrated pest management (IPM) issues facing farmers.



Nutrient Management Update and Plot Tour

This on-campus event features innovative nutrient management research designed to assist farmers and agribusinesses in selecting the right fertilizer source, rate, application timing and placement to ensure sustainable crop nutrition.

On-Farm Research

On-farm research projects conducted throughout the state in cooperation with Michigan commodity organizations and agribusinesses bring locally relevant, research-based information directly to producers. Each year growers participate, working side-by-side with MSU specialists and educators on locally important issues and concerns. Dozens of trials are annually planted and harvested, and the results are published to provide farmers the resources they need to make decisions for the future. Programs include the Soybean Management and Research Technology (SMaRT) and the Thumb Ag Research & Education trials (TARE).



Great Lakes Forage and Grazing Conference

This annual, day-long conference provides cutting-edge research and information on hay, silage and pasture management delivered by progressive forage growers, researchers and educators from across the Midwest. Michigan's third largest crop of nearly one million acres is forages such as alfalfa, grass, mixed hay and corn silage.

Pesticide Applicator Training

MSU Extension pesticide applicator training and recertification programs improve pesticide use practices in Michigan by ensuring certified applicators receive up-to-date information on pesticide regulation, handling and application.

Irrigation Management and Water Quality Programs

Irrigation management and water quality education delivered by MSU Extension field crop educators helps growers use precious water resources effectively and efficiently.



Field Crops Webinar Series

This annual series of six, one-hour webinars is designed to share key field crop production points from MSU Extension traditional winter meetings with underserved audiences in a condensed, distance-learning format.

Beginning Farmer Webinar Series

This innovative new program featured 20 evening webinars for people wanting to get a start in farming.

Information on the basics of field crop systems, soils, fruit enterprises, emerging livestock systems, organic farming and starting a new business were just a few of the topics covered with new farmers in mind.

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