Next year, we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of Project GREEEN (Generating Research and Extension to meet the needs of our state’s farmers and consumers). Extending to both Economic and Environmental Engineering, it’s exciting to see from our previous track record that we have been successful for nearly two decades since we began this initiative. We set out to create a program that would provide applied research and extension in a timely manner, especially to address the needs of Michigan’s farmers and residents. We have accomplished that and much more with the generous support of the Michigan Legislature and the Michigan state food community organizations. We’d like to thank everyone who has been a part of Project GREEEN into what it is today.

There is a lot of work ahead of us, though. In many circles, science is being challenged and the integrity of our food system is in question. I’m pleased to be involved in creating a new initiative at Michigan State University (MSU) called Project GREEEN+ to address both concerns.

Food & MSU’s summer launch and a public awareness campaign geared at creating meaningful conversations around food-related issues, and Project GREEEN+ will be working closely with MSU Shadyside within the Department of Forestry to create a one-of-a-kind tree care initiative among fruit trees. This fall will be bringing "Your Table" into various communities to highlight how our soils, including its impacts on our health and the planet.

Soil health and sustainability are critical issues that need to be addressed and Project GREEEN+ is focused on identifying and building these research projects. Our team will work closely with MSU Shadyside within the Department of Forestry to create a one-of-a-kind tree care initiative among fruit trees. This fall will be bringing “Your Table” into various communities to highlight how our soils, including its impacts on our health and the planet.

Digital extension media to improve field crop disease management educational program. The program will target field crop disease management knowledge and provide growers with information on the latest crop disease management practices.

Awarded: $34,000 | Leveraged: $125,000

Michigan State University’s Department of Entomology is working to improve the monitoring and management of the spotted wing drosophila (SWD), which poses a serious threat to the fruit-growing industry. The project will focus on developing new tools and techniques for monitoring SWD populations and integrating them into existing pest management programs.

Awarded: $100,000 | Leveraged: $183,000

The project will address the need for more effective and efficient pest management strategies for the changing climate and the increasing pressure of climate change on agriculture. The team will develop and demonstrate new approaches to pest management, including the use of biocontrol agents and the integration of climate-smart agriculture practices.

Awarded: $100,000 | Leveraged: $200,000

The project will develop and demonstrate new approaches to pest management, including the use of biocontrol agents and the integration of climate-smart agriculture practices.

Awarded: $100,000 | Leveraged: $125,000

The project will focus on developing new tools and techniques for monitoring SWD populations and integrating them into existing pest management programs.

Awarded: $100,000 | Leveraged: $115,000

The project will focus on developing new tools and techniques for monitoring SWD populations and integrating them into existing pest management programs.

Awarded: $100,000 | Leveraged: $185,000

The project will focus on developing new tools and techniques for monitoring SWD populations and integrating them into existing pest management programs.

Awarded: $100,000 | Leveraged: $125,000

The project will focus on developing new tools and techniques for monitoring SWD populations and integrating them into existing pest management programs.

Awarded: $100,000 | Leveraged: $190,000

The project will focus on developing new tools and techniques for monitoring SWD populations and integrating them into existing pest management programs.

Awarded: $100,000 | Leveraged: $150,000

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Precocious coning in Fraser fir.

For nearly 70 years, Project GREENEEN has been funding research that addresses some of the most pressing plant agriculture needs. Throughout those two decades, Jill O’Donnell has been an essential figure in the Michigan Christmas tree industry, every ring of the way. O’Donnell, who has worked at Michigan State University (MSU) for more than 35 years, is an MSU senior Extension educator. In 1995, O’Donnell stepped into her present position, which is currently funded by Project GREENEEN.

For over a decade, O’Donnell has been researching Fraser fir, a species that is not native to Michigan. Fraser fir is one of the four leading Christmas tree species in Michigan, alongside Douglas fir, Scots pine and Colorado blue spruce. Fraser fir is one of the four leading Christmas tree species in Michigan, alongside Douglas fir, Scots pine and Colorado blue spruce.

The precocious coning work began with Project GREENEEN, or nearly 20 years, Project GREENEEN would not be possible without these valuable partners: The researchers haven’t determined the exact cause of precocious coning but they have identified some clues. O’Donnell said that high soil pH appears to be the primary limiting factor in successful Fraser fir plantings. This can contribute to rapid cone development and can be difficult to combat, given the multitude of soil types in Michigan.

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