**State Extension and AgBioResearch Council Minutes**

Zoom Conference Call – December 2 / 10:00 am to Noon

**MSU Extension Agriculture and Agribusiness Institute** – *Ron Bates*

*\*Please see presentation slides on website*

* Ag and Agribusiness Staff locations
* 7 work teams - just an organization structure to bring together people from similar background and specialty areas, but great collaborations with faculty positions and with each other.
  + Great collaboration with farmers, government agencies and industry groups
  + Low barrier for collaboration and strong spirit of partnerships
* Ongoing programs
  + Breakfast on the farm - began in 2009 since have had 75,000 people attend
    - 2015: see stats - 3-5,000 people at each (at least) 12 statewide sponsors, and each event has local sponsors (min 25, and some places nearly 100)
    - Breakfast of pancakes and sausage and then people can go on a self-guided tour about the farm and meeting with volunteers who educate about what's going on on the farm
    - Follow up surveys show that 28% increase in trust in the farming community
* Consumer Horticulture
  + 9.9 million in Michigan, 70% are interested in gardening
  + Smart gardening: migarden.msu.edu
  + See slide for resources
  + Vast majority of people have made changes in their gardening as a result of these resources
  + Master Gardener Program: Certificate program, there are about 3,000MG - 14 week classes to attend, there is a test and then an internship. About 600 people enrolled in the classes so far. A MG then joins a community chapter and gets involved with community projects. Examples: parks, civic space, Lawn and Garden Hotline - 5,200 calls, 2,800 contacts via email. Providing current expertise to people across the state. Connecting people with experts across the state. Can provide the public with the best service.
* Ornamental Horticulture:
  + Protecting Pollinators in Ornamental Landscapes Conference -
  + Bio-controls for Indoor Environments - Ontario Canada.
* Fruit and Veg Teams
  + Pest Scouting and Disease Monitoring
    - Collecting pests and take back to diagnostic lab for information on impacts on industries
    - Gets reported back to growers through articles in MSUE news, direct contact through phone banks, grower meetings, email listservs, Robust news service.
    - Swede Midge found by Extension in a timely way and we'll be setting up more monitoring for this disease this year.
    - Extensive disease monitoring
* Business Management
  + Farm Bill - meetings, software and planning,
  + Annie's project
    - Empowering women in agriculture
    - New class starting this winter
    - msue.anr.msu.edu./topic/info/farm\_management
* Beginning Farmer's Webinar
  + Jim Isleib, Coordinator
  + Using distance technology to reach a broad group of people so that they do not have to travel
  + Over 1,000 people who have participated.
* Nutrient Unitization and Water Quality
  + Expansive educational programs on nutrient utilization and reduced nutrient leaching
  + "What's new with Poo" - program put on by folks across the organization and multiple agencies
* MSU Agriculture Innovations
  + New era beyond Ag Expo
  + MSU CANRR Event - led by AABI
* MSU Agriculture Innovations: Focus on Soils at the new Saginaw Valley Research Station
  + Celebration of Agriculture to take place of Ag Expo
  + Campus and field staff
  + Commodity folks
  + Press release going out soon
  + A 3 year planning cycle - looking for ideas for 2017 and 2018 - any ideas within your industries, please let them know - contact Ron Bates or anyone on the planning committee.

**AgBioResearch Update –** *George Smith*

Philosophy

* How to take the funds: enhance and strenghten the capacity of our scientists and balance with funding for new projects and positions for maximum impact on the environment.
* How to position most optimum resources
* Appreciative of the Council support, and appreciative of the budget climate of the 1.5 % increase.

Global Impact Initiative

* MSU has an initiative campus wide to hire 150 campus faculty
* Compete for funding for positions. ABR is strategically positioned and expect great results.
* These new faculty position partnerships:
  + Fundamental plant sciences and plant stress
  + Gain faculty in food and health
  + Hiring initiates in the animal and plant genomic field
  + Hiring new researchers to address anti-biotic resistance - plant, animal, and human health implications
* Hopefully will allow to increase our impact further

Signature Grants Programs

* Project GREEEN
* Request for proposals has been issued and will be due in January
* Small Grants Animal Ag
* Michigan Alliance for Animal Ag
* Extension of prior program
* Small grants program to provide targeted function to commodity groups and stakeholders linked to animal ag
* Funding 16 projects to scientists and Extension Educators,
* Successful programs ongoing:
  + Research on Bovine TB
  + Antibiotic resistance
  + Environmental issues such as odor

Other Updates

* Tom Zabadal has stepped down, there will be an interim director and a search
* Brian Graft assistant to the director focused on field operations and infrastructure - supporting south campus and on campus research facility. Plan and strategize for needs be a liaison.
* National recognition nationally - Fellows of American Association for the Advancement of Science - KBS director and Zach Burtan, Biochem

**MSU Extension Update –** *Ray Hammerschmidt*

Project GREEEN

* Annual Meeting of the Plant Coalition: department charis, MDARD, industry leaders, CANR administrators all met
* Annual call for proposals to faculty and Extension across the state - January 11 due date.
* Look for sound science and good outreach and Extension, the priorities within the proposals must line up within industry priorities as well and industries match part of the funding.

EXTENSION

* 4 institutes had done strategic planning and created staffing plans
* Budget situation getting better and people being placed
* Issue ID process - face to face listening sessions
  + 1/2 completed
  + 4400 responses for the online survey, also translated into Spanish and Arabic
  + March 30, Jeff Dwyer and Doug Buhler will report out on the results of the survey
* Strengthen connections with the academic departments and their use of being able to distribute their research across the state through Extension
* District 9 Coordinator Position (held by Deanna East) search is underway. Interviewing 2 of the finalists this afternoon, position will be effective January 1.
* Jeff spending time getting out and about around the state to connect with the work being done across the state.
  + If there are groups, feel free to reach out to Jeff about coming to visit.
* Dean's search
  + Doug Buhler will be interim Dean in January hopefully only for a 6 month period.
  + Dean's search underway - candidates coming in for the next couple of weeks

* Partnership with Schoolcraft County - no Extension presence for the past 4 years, and Jim Lucas and other have been working hard. The local school district has stepped up and wants to support MSUE programming - school district is offering space, secretarial support, the county wants to see Extension programming come back although dealing with tough financial circumstances. Starting January 1 4-H beginning - not a full investment on both part, but is a step in the right direction and each year both parties will revisit and see if they can contribute more.

State Council Member Updates

District 1 – Joe Bonovetz

* Smaller counties struggling to take advantage of 4-H and Extension programs
* Engaging in tree research - new ways to find forest issues
* Dining with Diabetes, and baby sitting classes being offered
* Nutrition and Ti-Chi balance class - Social Emotional
* Stress less and alternatives to anger
* Tech wizards program going well
* 4-H program going well in Gogebic
  + Team building
  + Snow Shoes
* Trying to partner in Gogebic
* Handing out surveys as much as they can
* Programming is excellent, but the turn out is scarce. Need to have better program promotion.

District 3  - Bernie Ware

* Finished Issues ID focus groups, had 3 meetings
  + 85 people participated and went extremely well
  + Next District 3 Council meeting they will be compiling ad analyzing the results
* County budgets going along well and no surprises
* Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference in January -
  + anticipated 1200 plus -
  + From the Ground Up: Whole Food, Whole Health, Whole Farms
  + All volunteer conference

District 6 – Katherine Methner

* Making it in Michigan: impressed by producers

District 7 – Nora Balgoyen-Williams

* Issues ID On way to district 7 quarterly meeting to review the ID Events had in November
  + Great turn out to issues ID - close to 60-70 people there
  + Honing down the suggestions, targeting top 10 areas and will have that soon to report
* Allegan County - Ag Expo February 19-20 at local tech center, the first day targeted to large producers and the second day will be targeted to the general public. Any suggestions?

District 8 – Lynn Mason

* Kudos to Don Lehman and his staff for the planning and success of our two issue id sessions, approximately 40 at each event, from students to business owners, and beyond.
* District 8 meets tomorrow to review.
* Dec. 15 @ MSU Pavilion Integrated Crop and Pest Management Update.
* Budgets in all 7 counties are complete. Ionia County will have additional funds for a now full time 4H Coordinator.
* Parent-Child Play and Learn Groups are happening @ Clinton County RESA. Children ages 0-5.
* Michigan 4-H Youth Conservation Council is a pre-college program and leadership opportunity for youth 13-19. Takes place January to April.
* 4-H Rabbit and Cavy Show January 30.

District 10 – Jim Will

* Food Matters
* Healthy food at local schools - reading books and doing a series on exercising with kids
* Ag Education - harvest - prices low, creates a little extra work for everyone
* County commissioners voted to not fund Extension in Tuscola, will be working on getting a millage passed, March election date to get ready for

District 11 - Wayne – Sue McFadden

* Great programs, lower participation, better job of advertising
* Master Gardeners
  + new collaboration with the Wayne County Health Department and Environmental Health happening this month
  + Master Gardener coordinator position is vacant
  + Master Gardener potluck and gift to charity
* Focus Hope expanding Extension office space
* Hiring new government and public policy educator this month

District 12 – Londa Pickles

* New electronic enrollment process for 4H
* Issues ID
  + Meeting as a council in January to put together issues I

Gary Voogt

* Michigan Cattleman's Association Voted to resurrect the in state beef check off. Helped by MSUE and MDARD staff. Hope to resurrect the old law it opens up the beef industry to contract with educational institutions to help fund animal and beef research.
* Farm certified as a bird habitat on the Voogt farm - spring on a new research plan directed by the USDA Forest service looking at birds

Mark Torregrossa

* Saginaw Beet and Bean Research Farm: 11,000 square foot education building done by summer
* How much nitrogen the early beets need - research to show how much less nitrogen will need to put on the early dig beets.

Ben Kudwa

* The find of Sweet Midge was an important find - this insect known to exist in Ontario - Ron - how did this get into Michigan?
* DeVos Center - Dec 8-10 the Great Lakes Expo in Grand Rapids. Extension staff and educational programs - very well done and coordinated
* Thanks to Ron and his staff for everything they do.

Doug Lewis

* Issues ID process
  + Great group, grateful to have background knowledge, great cross section of input - producers to a banker

**Final thoughts:**

Thank you to Wayne Hecht and Candiss VanOverbeke for your service to the MSU Extension and AgBioResearch State Council. Thanks to Scott Ferry for being the chair, looking forward to Amy Coleman as Chair and Joe Bonovetz as Vice Chair.