

November 2003 NW Michigan Regional Fruit Grower Newsletter

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2003

- 11/3 **Public Forum on Farmland Preservation**, 7pm
Black Star Farms
- 11/7, 11/21, **Guiding Your Future in the**
12/5, 12/19 **Fruit Business**
NWMHRS
- 11/11-13 **Seeds of Prosperity Conference**
Crystal Mountain Resort, Thompsonville
- 11/12 **MAEAP Tour**, 1-3 pm, at Paul
Hubbell's
- 11/12-13 **National Blueberry Conference**
Grand Rapids
- 11/20 **Deadline for NAP or Crop**
Insurance Sign-Up
- 12/2 **Pesticide Certification Update &**
Exam, NWMHRS
- 12/4 **Pesticide Certification Update &**
Exam, Banks Township Hall,
Ellsworth
- 12/9-11 **Great Lakes Ag Expo**
DeVos Place Convention Center
near Amway Plaza, Grand Rapids
- 12/12 **Annual Farm Income Tax Update**, 2-4 pm
NWMHRS
- 12/16-12/18 **Telfarm Check-In**
NWMHRS

2004

- 1/20-21 **NW Michigan Orchard &**
Vineyard Show
Grand Traverse Resort
- 3/1-4 **IDFTA Tour/Conference**
Bolzano, South Tyrol, Italy
- 3/30-4/1 **53rd Benzie - Manistee**
Horticultural Show,
Crystal Mt Resort, Thompsonville

Guiding Your Future in the Fruit Business

by Jim Bardenhagen, Leelanau County Extension Director & Jim Nugent, District Horticultural Agent

On November 7th, MSU Extension will be offering a special program for fruit growers called **Guiding Your Future in the Fruit Business** (formerly called *Positioning Your Fruit Business for the Future*). This 3½-day program over six weeks will look at goal setting, financial assessment, fruit markets outlook, risk management tools, evaluating orchard alternatives and strategic planning for fruit orchard growers.

Please see the attached program [brochure](#) for all the details and registration form.

Please help us get the word out for this unique program. Some great MSU Extension Campus and Field Staff resources have been assembled. The program is sponsored by the MSU Extension Fruit and Farm Management Teams. There is only room for accommodating 20 farm operations in the program so register quickly if interested.

If you have any questions, please contact Jim Bardenhagen (231-256-9888) or Jim Nugent (231-946-1510).

Certified Pesticide Applicator Review and Test Sessions

Duke Elsner, Extension Agriculture Agent, Grand Traverse County & Stan Moore, MSU Extension Director, Antrim County

December 2 - Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station (NWMHRS)

December 4 - Banks Township Hall, Ellsworth

9:00 a.m. – Noon	Core Manual review and related topics
Noon – 1:00	Lunch on your own
1:00 – ?	MDA certification exams

Re-certification credits have been applied for from the MDA, and it is likely that two credits will be offered for attending this session. If you are planning on taking the private applicator exam, please note that the fees have gone up to \$50, a check or money order should be made payable to “State of Michigan”.

If you are planning on attending the December 2nd session at the Research Station, please RSVP to Jackie Baase at (231) 946-1510 by November 28, and please also let her know if you will be taking the MDA exam on that date. For those of you choosing to attend the December 4th session in Ellsworth, please RSVP to the Antrim County MSU Extension office at (231) 533-8818.

Farm Income Tax Session

By Jim Bardenhagen,
Leelanau MSU Extension Director

The Annual Farm Income Tax Update will be held on Friday, December 12 at 2:00 pm at the NW MI Horticultural Research Station. Larry Borton, MSU Ag Economics Department and Director of the MSU Telfarm Department, will be on hand to cover income tax changes for 2003 including special considerations for agriculture. Larry runs MSU Income Tax Schools throughout Michigan for those individuals and businesses that prepare tax returns for individuals and organizations.

If your farm uses a tax preparer, please invite them to join us so they are aware of all the items that can affect agriculture tax returns.

The cost is \$5, which covers conference room charges, handouts and refreshments, payable at the door.

Two Northwest Michigan Farms complete Farmstead Verification through the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program

By Dan Busby, MI Groundwater Stewardship Program

The Kobernik family in Frankfort and the Hubbell family in Williamsburg received verification of their farmstead through the Michigan Department of Agriculture's, Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP), on Wednesday, October 15. These are the first two farms in Northwest Michigan to achieve farmstead system verification and are the 4th and 5th in the state! Congratulations to Alan and Cheryl Kobernik and Paul and Keith Hubbell for their outstanding achievement!

State and Federal environmental laws and the MDA's Right-to-Farm and the applicable Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices (GAAMP's) are the backbone of the new Farm*A*Syst and the MAEAP verification process. This program, in a nutshell, is set up to assist Michigan producers in achieving complete compliance on the farm with applicable state and federal regulations. From pesticide, fertilizer and fuel storage and mix/load areas to Worker Protection Standards, drift management plans, emergency plans, and wellhead protection, the new Farm*A*Syst and the MAEAP are here to help your farm reduce risk to your family and the environment and to assist your farm operation in compliance efforts.

So what does it take to have your farmstead verified through the MAEAP? It requires that you attend a MAEAP Phase I educational session to learn more about the program. A Phase I educational session is scheduled for the first day of the Northwest Michigan Horticulture Show at the GT Resort on Tuesday, January 20. A farm field day is scheduled for Wednesday, November 12 from 1:00-3:00 at Paul Hubbell's Orchard View Farms. You must complete a Farmstead Assessment (Farm*A*Syst) and a Farmstead Improvement Action Plan (FIAP) with your Groundwater Program Technician. A Farmstead Improvement Action Plan is completed during a Farm*A*Syst appointment and identifies possible risks on the farm and an action or a practice that will help to reduce that risk. Your farm's FIAP will identify action items you need to address on the farm and gives you a timeline showing when you would like to complete these risk reduction items. Once the action items are completed, the farm can request MAEAP verification.

What are the benefits associated with MAEAP Farmstead System Verification? The most important benefit is the piece of mind knowing that your farm operation is in compliance with applicable state and Federal rules and regulations. You receive a sign for the front yard, which states that you have voluntarily participated in a environmental risk reduction program and that you are qualified as such. The township in which your farm is located in receives a verification letter from MAEAP. You may qualify for a reduction in insurance premiums for the farm. You may be eligible to receive funding under the Conservation Security Program, an incentive type farm bill program which is set up to reward those farms that are in compliance and reduce risk to the environment.

To schedule a new Farm*A*Syst and learn more about the MAEAP, contact Dan Busby at the Grand Traverse Conservation District office at 941-4191. Dan Busby is the groundwater program technician for Benzie, Leelanau, Grand Traverse, and Antrim counties. Cost share on groundwater protection practices is still available. Please call for more information or to schedule a Farm*A*Syst appointment.

Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program

Farmstead System Verification Tour

By Dan Busby, MI Groundwater Stewardship Program

Learn more about what it takes to get your farmstead verified through the Michigan Department of Agriculture's - Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program. Hosts Paul and Keith Hubbell invite you to attend this on-farm educational session, which will be held at Orchard View Farms –10937 Elk Lake Road in Williamsburg. The session will be **Wednesday, November 12 from 1:00 – 3:00**

Agenda:	1:00 – 1:10	Paul Hubbell	Introduction
	1:10 – 1:25	Dan Busby	The New Farm*A*Syst
	1:25 – 1:40	Tom Adams	Conservation Plans
	1:40 – 2:10	Josh Appleby	MAEAP and Farmstead Verification
	2:10 – 2:30	Mark Doughetry	IPM and Nutrient Management
	2:30 – 2:45	Paul Hubbell	Wrap-up
	2:45 – 3:00	Q & A	Cider and doughnuts

One Restricted Use Pesticide recertification credit has been applied for through the MDA. Orchard View Farms will supply fresh apple cider and doughnuts for the question and answer session at 2:45. For more information call Dan Busby at 941-4191.