

UP Ag Connections

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NEWS & VIEWS

By Frank Wardynski, MSU Extension Educator

I am about fed up and disgusted with the state of our national politics. Both sides seem to be more worried about their unilateral victories than finding bipartisan compromise. The republicans are blamed with shutting down the government while democrats appeared entrenched in not changing any of the largest legislation passed and only reluctantly negotiated amongst them after colossal failure startup. Three years with no approved budget from the senate and a republican party that seems split and unyielding even between themselves. Judging by poll numbers, odds are good that you're as upset as I am. The low approval ratings of congress and the president appear to be at all-time lows. It seems to be such a mess; it's hard to believe the government still functions.

I started thinking about this and compared it to how we operate locally. I personally believe that regardless of how dysfunctional Washington becomes, we will remain strong in this country because of the methods we use to operate locally. It's a combination of our village, township and county boards along with the multitude of other bodies and organizations that keep our communities so strong. Just the various agricultural organizations alone are large in number.

So many times when you look at the membership of the various organizations, it's so many of the same people. Not just the same board members but the true membership. That's because we are all affected by the happenings of the local boards and organizations. It's because this is our home and these are our neighbors.

While we will always find ourselves arguing or at least strongly debating decisions and policy, we usually are going to make decisions based on the best interest of our community. And hopefully we can compromise to find middle ground and the best solutions. I've used the most recent Washington situation to look inside and ask if I try to be that way. Certainly I always think my way is the best way and will fight hard to get there. I do hope that when others have better ideas that I'm willing to consider opposing positions and work together towards the best solutions. I know that's not always the case. I have a tendency to be stubborn, opinionated, etc.

I've observed farmers serving on boards and various organizations. While not all farmers think alike, my experience tells me that they are usually very strong assets to any given body. Farmers tend to think well with innovative ideas to solve problems. They do it on a daily basis. They simply apply their experience of day to day operations of managing a dynamic entity called the farm.

While our elected leaders seemingly annihilate the democratic process at the highest level, local decision makers continue to keep the system strong at the most important level.

~Frank

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MARKET REPORT (11/22/13)

By Frank Wardynski, MSU Extension Educator

Market Ready Prices

Choice Steers	\$115-\$135	per 100 lbs.
Holstein Steers	\$105-\$120	per 100 lbs.
Hogs	\$48-\$64	per 100 lbs.
Lambs	\$158-\$170	per 100 lbs.
Cull cows	\$65-\$84	per 100 lbs.
Calves	\$80-\$125	per 100 lbs.
Goats	\$80-\$120	per 100 lbs.

Breeding and Feeder Animals

Grade Holstein cows	\$1900 - 2200	per head
Grade Holstein bred heifers	\$1400 - 1700	per head

Feed Prices across the U.P.

	Avg. \$/cwt	Avg. \$/ton	Price Range
Corn	\$14.40	\$288.00	\$220-356
Soymeal	\$32.02	\$640.50	\$480-801
Oats	\$16.85	\$337.00	\$268-414
Barley	\$15.27	\$305.50	\$215-396

Average price/100 wt. for 1 ton lots

Wanted & For Sale Listings

Personal ads will be removed monthly. We reserve the right to edit your ad. Free ads must be no more than 110 spaces. Please respect the space requirements. You can always purchase an ad if more space is required. Please call or email your ad no later than the 15th of each month. Call the Ontonagon County MSU Extension office at 906-884-4386 or email msue66@msu.edu.

For Sale—4X5 Net wrapped Round Bales 1st and 2nd cutting—
No Rain 906-482-8734 or 906-370-1074

For Sale Young Ram Call 906-563-9408

Save the Date!

2014 U.P. Agriculture for Tomorrow Conference

The next U.P. Agriculture for Tomorrow Conference will be held at Bay College, Escanaba on Tuesday, March 11, 2014. Agriculture for Tomorrow offers the opportunity to attend educational sessions on a variety of topics, view displays from sponsors, and network with others. We are excited about the topics we will be offering this year around farm maintenance, local food systems, livestock, and plants/crops. Several sessions will again qualify for MAEAP Phase I credit. New this year is there will be an opening session with the keynote speaker to kick off the day, leaving more time during lunch to view the displays and network.

Registration for the conference will open in January. We will again have the option for on-line registration and payment by credit card. You can also register as usual, by sending in your check and registration form, or paying by cash or check at the door. Look for a more information in the January U.P. Ag Connections newsletters. If you would like more information about registering for the Agriculture for Tomorrow Conference, contact the Alger County MSU Extension office at 906-387-2530.

Selecting the perfect Christmas tree:

Tree types

As the holidays draw near, here is a guide to help you select the right Michigan-grown tree for your home.

Posted on **November 14, 2013** by **Bert Cregg**, Michigan State University Extension, Departments of Horticulture and Forestry, and Jill O'Donnell, Michigan State University Extension

As many people know, Michigan is one of the leading Christmas tree-producing states in the United States. Michigan consistently ranks third in the country in the number trees harvested each year. In addition, Michigan's climate and soils allow our Christmas tree growers to produce a wider variety of trees than almost any other state. So whether you look for a pre-cut tree at a local tree lot or bundle up the family for the choose-and-cut experience, you will find a wide array of tree types that offer something for everyone. [Michigan State University Extension](#) has put together a brief guide to the main types of trees grown in Michigan.

The mainstays

These traditional Christmas tree species can be found at nearly every tree lot or choose-and-cut farm.

Fraser fir has grown in popularity by leaps and bounds over the past 20 years for good reason. Fraser fir has blue-green needles with silvery undersides. The branches are stiff and hold up well to ornaments. The trees have a pleasant scent and needle retention is excellent.

Scots pine has long been the traditional choice for many Michigan families. Scots pines are dense trees with dark-green needles. Stiff branches hold up well to ornaments and needle retention is excellent. Scots pine is also an economical choice.

Douglas fir is a dense tree with light green needles. The needles are very soft. The branches are not as stiff as some other species, so you'll need to stick with lighter-weight ornaments. This is also another good choice for budget-conscious consumers.

Blue spruce is a popular choice because of its bright blue needles. Branches are stiff to hold ornaments. Needles are extremely sharp, which can make the tree difficult to handle, but good for keeping small children and pets at bay.

Black hills spruce are known for their traditional appearance. The needles are shorter and softer than Colorado blue spruce. Black hills spruce needles have excellent color, typically a gray-ish green to bluish-green. Branches are stiff and hold up well to ornaments.

Additional choices

Here are some great but lesser-known trees than many Michigan tree farms are growing.

Concolor fir has long, bluish-green needles. The needle color provides the initial attraction, but the big draw for this species is the strong, citrus-like scent of its needles.

White pine is a large, fast growing tree. It is also one of two Michigan native conifers commonly used for Christmas trees – balsam fir is the other. This is a dense tree with soft, green needles. This is an economical choice, especially for consumers looking for a large tree.

Korean fir has dark green needles with silvery undersides. This is an exotic conifer that is increasing in popularity. Nice form and a unique texture add to this species' appeal.

Balsam fir is a traditional Christmas tree species in much of the United States. It has dark green needles and a strong characteristic Christmas tree scent.

Canaan fir is closely related to Fraser fir and balsam and is often described as a hybrid between those species. It's not, but it does combine many of the characteristics of balsam fir with the improved needle retention of Fraser fir.

Milk and Grain Marketing Series

Date: December 10, 2013 - August 12, 2014

Time: 10 a.m. - noon

Location: Isabella County Building, 200 N Main St, Mt Pleasant, MI 48858

Contact: Paul Gross, 989-772-0911, Ext. 302 or 989-560-1371, grossp@msu.edu

Cost: \$250/farm for series

Agriculture markets are more volatile than ever. For most farms, profits are largely determined by how well you market your production. Now more than ever your farm's future success depends on your ability to understand the markets and use the basic marketing tools.

Fred Hinkley, retired MSU Extension Educator and Marketing Specialist will provide insight and outlook on the milk and grain markets, and suggest strategies to minimize financial risk.

Integrated Pest Management Academy Online

The Integrated Pest Management Academy Online webinar series is now available to you for free and requires no registration. No registration or fees!

This series of prerecorded webinars are available for viewing at any time and from any location. A computer with internet connectivity, a web browser and speakers are required.

To view the webinars simply click on the titles of your choice. The following 30 minute webinar sessions are currently available:

- Introduction to Integrated Pest Management
 - Entomology 101
 - Plant Pathology 101
 - Soil Science 101
 - Plant Science 101
 - Pesticides 101
- Insect Scouting in Fruit Crops

Go to <http://bit.ly/ipmwebinars> to access the webinars or email taylo548@msu.edu to receive this information via email.

Earning credits

Viewers may earn up to 4 Michigan pesticide recertification credits. Further instructions on claiming credits are available on the webinar page.

To learn more . . .

Contact Erin Lizotte at taylo548@msu.edu or (231) 944-6504. *Accommodations for persons with disabilities may be requested. Requests will be fulfilled when possible.*

Registration now open for the 2014 Integrated Pest Management Academy!

Looking to brush up on your pest management skills? Register now to ensure your spot at this pioneering workshop designed to serve specialty crop, field crop and landscape professionals.

Michigan State University Extension is pleased to announce that the 3rd annual Integrated Pest Management Academy will be held February 18-19 at the Okemos Conference Center in Okemos Michigan (located just outside of East Lansing). The 2014 Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Academy is a two day workshop packed full of information to help you improve your integrated pest management practices on farm and take advantage of all the great resources Michigan State University has to offer. The presenters at this program include a number of MSU's best and brightest research and extension faculty, offering a rare opportunity to hear from experts working in a variety of disciplines and cropping systems at a single event. The first day of the program will cover fundamental topics including: IPM strategies for disease and insect control; promoting and protecting pollinators; alternative weed control strategies; pesticide basics; the impacts of weather on pesticides; invasive pests; and IPM resources from MSU. On the second day of the workshop participants opt into two, half-day sessions focused on the topic of their choice

Registration

The cost of this event is \$225. Please note that snacks, lunch and parking are included. Participants also receive a notebook with program material and a complimentary IPM-related MSU bulletin. Michigan pesticide recertification credits will be available, the exact number will be based on session selection but participants can expect at least 6 credits (private or commercial core available). For more information on the program, a full agenda or registration visit <http://bit.ly/ipm-academy14>. For more information or to register by phone contact Betsy Braid at braidbet@msu.edu or 517-884-7081.

This program was developed with support from the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture — National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

MSU Extension programs and material are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, or veteran status. Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Accommodations for persons with disabilities may be requested by contacting the Betsy Braid at 517-884-7081 two weeks prior to the start of the event. Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

Michigan Wine Grape Vineyard Establishment Conference will quench a thirst for knowledge

The January 2014 Wine Grape Vineyard Establishment Conference will provide essential elements for those exploring entry into Michigan's expanding winery industry.

Posted on **November 8, 2013** by **Joanne Davidhizar**, Michigan State University Extension, Michigan State University Product Center

The Michigan winery industry, valued at \$286 million in 2005 with 45 wineries, has grown to more than 100 wineries today. While the state's wine grape acreage increased from 1,500 in 2003 to 2,650 in 2011, according to the USDA, the Michigan Grape & Wine Industry Council looks to reach 10,000 acres by 2024.

Many existing fruit growers and new entrants to agriculture regard Michigan's wine industry as a growth business. Nearly half of the participants in the 2013 Winery Development pre-conference indicated that they will start wineries, and invest \$5.45-12.45 million in real estate, vineyards and related expenses by 2016. Increased grape growing knowledge was cited as a need by this audience.

A wine grape establishment conference will be held by Michigan State University Extension on Jan. 21-22, 2014 at three locations using a webinar hybrid format to address this interest. The program agenda calls for speakers from five states to address basic topics such as marketing, site selection, varieties, establishment costs, planting stock, site preparation, planting and care, trellis construction, and pest management in Benton Harbor, Traverse City and Novi. An optional informational pre-conference session will help new grape growers better understand the basics of how the plant grows, pest management concepts, soil fertility and terminology.

The registration fee is \$115 for the basic conference and \$25 for the pre-conference introduction. Space is limited, so pre-registration and payment is required by Jan. 10, 2014 or until full. No walk-in registrations will be accommodated. The Wine Grape Establishment Conference is sponsored by Viticulture and Enology Science Technology Alliance (VESTA), and the MSU Product Center and the MSU Institute of Agriculture Technology.

This article was published by Michigan State University Extension. For more information, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu>. To contact an expert in your area, visit <http://expert.msue.msu.edu>, or call (888-678-3464).

Pesticide Applicator Training and Exams

A 4-hour review of the National Core Manual for certified pesticide applicators will be held at the MSU U.P. Research and Extension Center in Chatham on December 4. The program is intended as a brief review of the basic pesticide applicator manual in preparation for state pesticide applicator exams. It is also valuable to those interested in earning educational credits in order to waive recertification exams, or who simply want to brush up on pesticide application information. Private applicators (farmers) must earn 16 educational credits during their current, 3-year certification period in order to waive recertification exams. Commercial applicators must earn 8 'core' credits and 8 credits in each category in which they are certified to waive the exams. Regardless of how a person recertifies (exam or credits), a fee of \$50 for private and \$75 for commercial applicators is required by the State of Michigan.

Details:

What: Pesticide Applicator Core Manual Review & MDARD Testing

When: Wednesday, December 4, 2013, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Where: MSU Research and Extension Center
E3774 University Drive, Chatham, MI 49816

4 recertification credits available for "Private" or "Commercial" Core

- Review Nat'l. Core Manual (Jim Isleib, MSUE): 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- Lunch break 1:00 – 1:30 p.m. (lunch is not provided)
- MDA Applicator Exams: 1:30 p.m.
- Exam Fee: \$50 private; \$75 commercial; check payable to State of Michigan

\$5.00 Registration Fee – Pay At Door

Includes morning refreshments

Register by calling Alger County MSU Extension at 906-387-2530 or e-mail at msue.alger@county.msu.edu

Notice to Veterans:

The State of Michigan is now waiving the \$50 private applicator certification fee for honorably discharged military veterans (copy of form DD214 discharge papers required)

Call Jim Isleib, MSU Extension Crop Production Educator, at 906-387-2530 or email at isleibj@anr.msu.edu with any questions.

Malting barley varieties compared at Chatham

A malting barley variety trial was developed and conducted at the MSU Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center (UPREC) in Chatham in 2013. The project was funded by a grant from Project GREEN and the work, including grant-writing, seed procurement, field work, sample processing, data analysis and report writing, was done by MSU Extension crop production educator Jim Isleib and UPREC research assistant Christian Kapp. Nineteen barley varieties, including publicly available and privately owned seed lines, were tested. The malting barley variety trial was set up in small plots, replicated 4 times to allow for statistical analysis.

Results are included in the table below:

Variety	Type	Bu/a	Tst Wt
		14.5% mst	14.5% mst
Oddyesey	2-row	57.21	49.8
NSA 1820	2-row	52.35	50.1
Pinnacle	2-row	52.08	48.7
Conrad	2-row	49.66	49.1
Genie	2-row	49.62	50.2
Merit 57	2-row	48.48	47.6
Overture	2-row	48.18	49.8
Voyager	2-row	43.1	48.4
Merit	2-row	40.93	47.8
Conlon	2-row	40.28	49.7
Innovation	6-row	55.47	47.1
Lacey	6-row	53.98	49.5
Rasmusson	6-row	53.65	48.5
Celebration	6-row	52.86	47
Tradition	6-row	51.89	47.4
Stellar-ND	6-row	51.77	46.6
Quest	6-row	50.61	47.8
Robust	6-row	50.45	47.7
Legacy	6-row	48.07	46.9

MEAN	50.03	48.4
CV (%)	16.5	1.5
LSD _{0.05}	ns	ns

Table 1: Yield and test weight corrected to 14.5%

Grain quality for malting was measured at North Dakota State University, with the following key results:

- Harvest moisture was too high (16-17%). This lowers germination rate and causes sprouting.
- DON (measure of vomitoxin contamination caused by fusarium head scab) were acceptable for 15 of the 19 varieties. All varieties with higher than desirable DON levels were 2-row types. All plots were sprayed with Prosaro fungicide to control head scab.

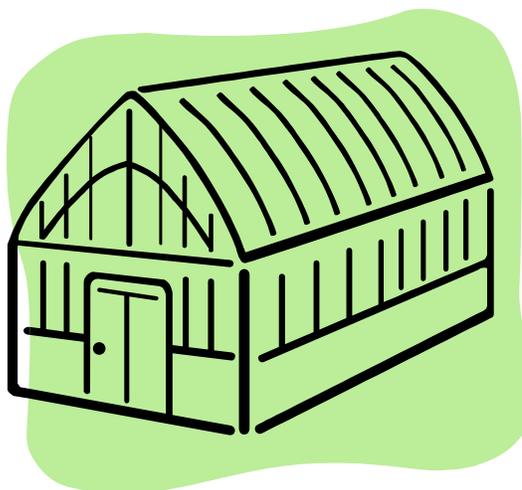
Grain quality for malting was measured at North Dakota State University, with the following key results, continued.

- Grain protein levels were generally higher than desirable, with exception of four 2-row types.
- Test weight was generally good and seed plumpness was good for all varieties. Standard barley test weight is 48 lbs per bushel at 14.5% moisture.

Conclusions:

1. Yield and test weight of all varieties was close to normal, local averages. There were no statistical differences at the 0.05 level of significance.
2. DON levels were generally acceptable, or very nearly so, with the exception of Voyager.
3. Protein levels for composite samples were generally too high. Nitrogen fertilizer adjustment could contribute to a solution for this problem.
4. Seed moisture, germination and sprouting were generally unacceptable. Grain was harvested at too high moisture content. Late planting and very cool mid-summer and harvest conditions probably contributed to this. Earlier planting, more timely harvest and post-harvest aeration could help correct these problems.
5. Additional MSU work with malting barley is needed. A more comprehensive malting barley research proposal has been submitted by the Michigan Brewer's Guild to MDARD for the 2014 Strategic Growth Initiative Grant Program. The proposal has strong partners, including the Michigan Brewer's Guild, MSU AgBioResearch, and MSU Extension. It includes expanded variety testing in the Upper Peninsula, northwest and northeast lower Michigan, the 'thumb' area of Michigan and the Gratiot/Isabella county area. It also includes a component to develop malting and brewing testing facilities for local malting barley destined for Michigan craft brewers, and an educational component to share project results with farmers, maltsters and craft brewers.

A complete report including grain quality details can be viewed on-line at 'http://msue.anr.msu.edu/resources/crop_production_in_the_up' or contact Jim Isleib at 906-387-2530 for a mailed copy.



USDA HISTORICAL AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

The United States Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency has been collecting aerial photography of the United States for over half a century. These aerial photos were originally collected to support federal farm programs throughout the United States. This historic film is now stored at the USDA's Aerial Photography Field Office (APFO) in Salt Lake City, Utah. USDA aerial photos are high resolution images taken during the growing season and clearly show features such as roads, buildings, vegetation, trees and waterways. Most of these projects covered entire counties over large parts of the U.S. at least once a decade. The APFO believes that these historic photos would be of great interest to the general public. These photos and scans start as low as \$13.00 each. Photos can be certified for use as evidence in court for an additional small fee. If you are interested in obtaining aerial photography you can inquire at your local Farm Service Agency Service Center.

RECONSTITUTIONS – This Could Effect Your Payments!

For FSA program purposes, tracts having the same owner and the same operator are grouped under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution is necessary. The reconstitution -or recon- is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by August 1 for farms enrolled in specific programs. The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon:

Estate Method – the division of bases, allotments and quotas for the parent farm among heirs in settling an estate;

Designation of Landowner Method – may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred;; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method the land sold must have been owned for at least 3 years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding;

DCP Cropland Method – the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract;

Default Method – the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

DON'T MISS THE DEADLINE – Upcoming Crop Reporting Dates

- January 2, 2014 – Honey (Certifying number of colonies)
- January 15, 2014 – Apples, Blueberries, Cranberries
- February 1, 2013 – Maple Sap (Number of eligible trees and taps)

GREAT INTEREST RATES : Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)

Remember: these loans are now available for Hay/Forage Storage as well as traditional grain storage!

November Interest Rates:

- ◆ 2.000 percent for 7 years with a loan of \$100,000 or less
- ◆ 2.625 percent for 10 years with a loan of \$100,000 - \$250,000
- ◆ 2.875 percent for 12 years with a loan of \$250,000 - \$500,000

Contact your local FSA county office for December's interest rates.

Still time to soil test hay fields

Soil testing can be done any time of the year and economic markets indicate that hay fields should be tested sooner rather than later.

Posted on **November 15, 2013** by **Jerry Lindquist**, Michigan State University Extension

Soil test samples can be pulled anytime of the year that the ground is not frozen. Various experts advise to try to soil test at the same season of the year to have a more accurate trend line when you compare fertility levels over long periods of time. But in today's hectic world, a soil test taken any time of the year is better than not taking one at all.

According to [Michigan State University Extension](#), there is still time to pull soil samples this year, especially on hay fields. If you have not soil tested in recent years, now may be a great time to still get them done.

In recent years many farms cut back on the fertilization of hay and pasture fields. Fertilizer prices were high and the price of forage was low. In many instances baling hay was not profitable, especially if you were trying to sell it, so many farms quit fertilizing and soil testing hay fields all together.

The times have definitely changed – hay prices for the upcoming winter season are running \$115 - \$240 per ton. Most of the dairy quality alfalfa hays are selling for more than \$180 per ton. The other part of this changing equation is that fertilizer prices in last quarter of 2013 have fallen. Potash, 0-0-60, one of the key nutrients for alfalfa hay, has fallen 18 percent in price from one year ago to the \$450 per ton range across Michigan retail markets. International markets for potash are showing weakness and many feel these markets will stay low for the spring and may even move lower.

The impact of these two price swings makes alfalfa hay one of more promising crops for 2014 from a profitability standpoint. But in order to optimize yield fertility levels must be optimum as well. "We have too many alfalfa hay fields across Michigan that are low in potassium" warns Kim Cassida, MSU Forage Specialist. "When potash was high priced farms backed off on their annual topdress rates and their alfalfa stands are showing it." Alfalfa is less drought tolerant and less winter hardy when it is low in potassium.

Now is the time to get hay fields and pastureland soil tested and beat the spring rush. If we put off doing it now it may not get done in time for the upcoming growing season. In this upcoming season the reward could be significant.

For more information contact me at lindquis@anr.msu.edu or 231-832-6139 or MSU forage specialist Kim Cassida at cassida@msu.edu.

This article was published by [Michigan State University Extension](#). For more information, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu>.

To contact an expert in your area, visit <http://expert.msue.msu.edu>, or (888-678-3464).

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Meetings & Events Calendar

December

Dec. 4th Pesticide Applicator Core Manual and Testing, Chatham, MI For information call 906-387-2530

Dec. 10th Milk & Grain Marketing Series starts(see page 3 for more information)

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Dec. 10th—12th Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market Expo held at DeVos Place Convention Center, 303 Monroe Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 for more information visit www.glexpo.com

Dec 11th MMPA - Western UP—Menominee—Vacationland local meeting Ferdinand's Mexican Restaurant, 1318 Ludington St., Escanaba, MI

Dec 12th MMPA Chippewa Meeting at the Rudyward Christian Reform Church, Rudyard, MI 12:00 Noon

January

Jan. 2nd Deadline to Report Honey Crop to FSA

Jan. 10th Deadline to sign up for 2014 Wine Grape Establishment Conference held in Benton Harbor, Traverse City or Novi. Call to pre-register 888-678-3464.

Jan. 15 Deadline to report Apples, Blueberries and Cranberry Crop to FSA

U.P. Agriculture Connection

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