

Contacts: John Baker, MSU AgBioResearch Associate Director, (517) 355-0123
Stephen B. Lovejoy, MSU Extension Associate Director of Programs, (517) 355-2308

Release date: Jan. 14, 2013

MSU research facility in U.P. receives new name, will see some program changes

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Michigan State University AgBioResearch, in conjunction with MSU Extension, will continue operation of its Upper Peninsula Research Center (UPRC) in Chatham, Mich., under a new name: Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center.

The name change, which is effective immediately, acknowledges the significant contributions made by MSU Extension to the facility's operations.

Research and Extension activities at the facility will focus on livestock, plant and local food systems. The center, located on a 1,262-acre site, will emphasize collaboration and integration across the three key programmatic systems.

"These changes are a real opportunity to make the facility in Chatham more of a focal point for Extension educational programming in the Upper Peninsula," said Stephen B. Lovejoy, MSU Extension associate director of programs.

Three MSU faculty members have agreed to serve as faculty coordinators:

- Jason Rowntree, Department of Animal Science (livestock systems).
- Kim Cassida, Department of Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences (plant systems).
- Matt Raven, Department of Community, Agriculture, Recreation and Resource Studies (food systems).

They will oversee both research and extension activities at the center.

An on-site center coordinator will also be named. This individual will provide an important link between faculty coordinators and the implementation of programs and oversight of operations at the center and throughout the U.P. The individual will also work to increase visibility of the center and build relationships with stakeholders.

"There are expectations for the center coordinator to form community partnerships and establish relationships with U.P. universities and community colleges in the U.P.," said John Baker, MSU AgBioResearch associate director, "and to coordinate research with similar field stations in Wisconsin (Spooner) and Minnesota (Grand Rapids)."

The new name and program changes were recommended by a review committee (the recommendation is available in its entirety at <http://AgBioResearch.msu.edu/uprc/index.html>). The research facility, which has been in operation since 1899, will receive another formal review in five years.

“We’re proposing integration of programs across these three theme areas and that activities in the areas must have relevance to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan,” Baker said, “and a five-year period to implement changes and measure outputs of success.”

The UPRC is one of 13 research centers operated by MSU AgBioResearch. Because of budget cuts, AgBioResearch is reviewing all of its facilities. The Muck Soils Research Center in Laingsburg closed Dec. 31, 2012.

MSU AgBioResearch engages in innovative, leading-edge research that combines scientific expertise with practical experience to generate economic prosperity, sustain natural resources, and enhance the quality of life in Michigan, the nation and the world. It encompasses the work of more than 300 scientists in six MSU colleges -- Agriculture and Natural Resources, Communication Arts and Sciences, Engineering, Natural Science, Social Science and Veterinary Medicine -- and has a network of 13 research centers across the state.

Since its beginning, Michigan State University Extension, (MSUE) has focused on bringing knowledge-based educational programs to the people of the state to improve lives and communities. Staff members, in concert with on-campus faculty members, serve Michigan citizens with programming in food and agriculture production, nutrition and food safety, community and natural resources development, youth development and renewable energy. Today, MSUE’s goal remains the same: To give Michigan residents meaningful access to the latest life-changing research.

###