

## How Firewise On The Farm Serves You....

- Helps protect your home, outbuildings, agricultural structures, and property from wildfire.
- Helps protect people, pets, and livestock.
- Helps protect against crop loss and damage.
- Helps protect against soil erosion.
- Helps prevent environmental pollution and contamination.
- Helps provide fire emergency pre-planning, response, and recovery.
- Assists with MAEAP compliance.
- Assists creating an agricultural fire management plan for your farm.
- Identifies local, state, and federal fire regulations and guidelines applicable to your farming operations.
- Provides farm specific, township and county wildfire risk assessments.
- Reduces risk and liability.

Farm machinery (sparks, exhaust, overheated shafts, belts, and pulleys) can easily ignite a wildfire.



Flying embers from a wildfire over a mile away can easily ignite agricultural buildings and crops with devastating result.



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## FIREWISE ON THE FARM

### A Guide to Keeping Michigan Agriculture Safe From Wildfire



An April grass fire in Michigan first claims this farm's outbuildings, then barns and eventually the home. Simple Firewise principles would have prevented this loss...



## Living With Fire... a Firewise Approach

Michigan experiences nearly 10,000 wildfires per year, and the problem here, as with much of the nation, is predicted to get even worse. A lack of natural fire in the ecosystem, development, and climate change are just a few of the contributors. Additional hazards often found in Michigan agricultural settings include:

- Older highly flammable wooden farm structures, often in close proximity to each other.
- Livestock corralled or fenced—unable to escape a fire.
- Flammable livestock bedding materials.
- Hay storage and composting.
- Flammable liquids storage and use.
- Close proximity to fire prone fields and forest lands.
- Machinery, electric motors, fences, and belt driven equipment.
- Open burning for crop management.
- Open burning for debris/trash removal.
- Remoteness from fire departments and water supplies for fire fighting.
- Laborers and public working and/or smoking in fields and buildings.
- Lightning risks.
- Hazardous materials.

Have a “safe-zone” or evacuation plan for livestock and animals.



## Fire Management Plan for the Farm

- Identifies your agricultural fire uses, best practices, and applicable regulations.
- Reveals fire risks to your property.
- Identifies fire hazards on your property and reduces your risks and liabilities.
- Defines fire prevention and mitigation measures.
- Creates a plan to prepare for, respond to, and recover from fire.
- Helps keep people, livestock, crops, and property safe from fire.

Older farm structures are particularly vulnerable to fire.



## MAEAP and Wildfire



The Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program is a great step toward environmental responsibility and reducing your risk and liability. However, a fire is a worst case scenario, releasing stored petro chemicals, pesticides, herbicides, and other contaminants into both the air soil and groundwater. Additionally, farm workers and first responders are at greater risk in fire environments. Implementing Firewise and fire safe practices strengthens your MAEAP compliance to meet the new threats of fire in agriculture.

Properly train and equip farm workers for fire control.



## Resources for Farm Fire Defense

Increasingly, fire departments may not be able to immediately assist during wildfire events. Having an emergency pre-plan, action plan, and recovery plan is the best way to prepare for fire on the farm. Knowing how to understand “fire weather”, and where to get fire weather forecasts is crucial to successful farm operation and safety. Creating fuel breaks, water supply points, livestock evacuation, and safety areas, and applying Firewise principles to your property will all help insure your farm’s survival before and after fire strikes.

During a fire, tractor plows, sprayers, pumps, irrigation systems, and hand tools can be utilized as well as employees properly trained and equipped to defend against fire.

After a fire, it is important to know what to do ... and what **not** to do. Prevailing practice is to water crops immediately after fire exposure, however, moisture mixed with ash can pH shock certain crops and take them out of production for years. Wine grapes easily “smoke taint” unaffected fruit and ruin high value wine products. Erosion risks are also high following fire. To learn proper procedures for the crops and livestock on your farm, please contact the staff listed on this brochure.

Tractors, plows and sprayers are useful fire fighting tools if properly equipped and used.

