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## **Michigan Sugar Company launches 2016 Young Farmer Program**

*Bowling event brings more than 80 farmers, ag  
leaders together to kick off training program*

BAY CITY – **Michigan Sugar Company** recently kicked off its **2016 Young Farmer Program** in Caro, with more than 80 young farmers and agricultural leaders together for a night of bowling and networking. Launched four years ago, the program invests in the next generation of sugarbeet growers by providing agronomic and business management training, and opportunities to meet with other emerging leaders in the sugarbeet industry.

“Michigan Sugar’s Young Farmer Program is a way for our company to share the ideals and traditions that have made us a successful agricultural icon for more than 100 years,” said Executive Vice President **Jim Ruhlman**. “Through education, encouragement and collaboration, we hope to inspire Michigan Sugar Company’s future family farmers.”

**CEO Mark Flegenheimer** noted that Michigan Sugar relies on more than 1,000 farm families to produce sugarbeets for processing at the company’s locations across the region – and the next generation of farmers are critical for the company’s future success. The program emphasizes technical training in agronomy, operations, finance, marketing, policy leadership and other critical aspects of modern farming.

“We have to focus on the future of our cooperative, and that means providing a leg up for those who are going to lead the way in coming generations,” said **Flegenheimer**. “We’re proud of the young people who have made this program a great success for four years running and look forward to this year’s program.”

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*Headquartered in Bay City, MI, Michigan Sugar Company is a grower-owned sugar cooperative and the third largest beet sugar processor in the United States, producing an annual average of more than 1 billion pounds of sugar. We sell our products in wholesale and retail quantities under the Pioneer Sugar and Big Chief Sugar Brands.*

*For more information, visit [www.michigansugar.com](http://www.michigansugar.com).*