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by Mark Flegenheimer, President and CEO

**The Foundations for Our Future**

This edition of *The Newsbeet* is focused on the “next generation” of growers, employees, and future leaders of our business. When our cooperative was formed ten years ago, we concentrated on short-term goals and concerns; having successfully made it through our first decade as a grower-owned company, we have shifted our focus to longer-term objectives and issues.

During the past 12 months, we have spent over \$20 million on strategic, long-term, capital projects in our factories and at our piling grounds. These improvements will provide positive returns for decades. Another portion of our long-term planning is development and implementation of succession plans throughout the company. Our workforce is aging and over the next ten years we will see numerous retirements of skilled and experienced employees. Plans need to be in place now in order to have a smooth transition.

Another sector of our business that is not getting any younger is our shareholder group. Successfully preparing the next generation of growers to become owners and leaders in our industry is something we feel is very important for the health and success of our cooperative; therefore, we are proactively developing and implementing programs to assist and educate young farmers.

In 2012, we made an investment in Saginaw Valley State University’s (SVSU) Stevens Center for Family Business. The Center focuses on the various issues family businesses face, including how to transition businesses from one generation to the next. In this issue of *The Newsbeet*, Heidi Bolger, from Rehmann, writes an insightful article about the best way to tackle the challenging task of planning for the transfer of a farming operation.

Nearly 50% of our agriculture department will retire in the next five to ten years; thus, developing the next generation of our agriculture staff is critically important. As high school graduates from throughout our growing region head off to college, fewer and fewer of them plan on having a career in agriculture. This is a serious problem for us as a cooperative, both in our agriculture department and on the farms of our shareholders.

We have taken a number of steps to combat this concern. This has involved creating an agriculture internship program (see Page 26), working with SVSU on a new 2+2 program (see Page 28), and supporting various scholarships (see Page 34). **The Young Farmers Program** was also launched this year for growers 18-35 years old. This new program will give the participants insight into our business and industry which will prepare them to become future leaders in the sugar industry.

These programs, we feel, will help keep young, bright, enthusiastic, and successful individuals working for the Co-op and on the farm, growing sugarbeets for the next generation and beyond.



**THE NEWSBEET**

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**The record-setting crop of 2012 may be hard to beat with our late start to this year's crop, but we fully believe we can reach our goals for 2013.**



## What a Difference a Year Makes!

Wow! What a difference one year can make. In 2012, 60% of our crop was planted in March and all fields were planted by mid-April. This year, our first field was planted on April 4 and only 8,508 acres were planted in all of April! There was a very small window of opportunity to plant a few acres of beets between April 4 and April 8 before the rain arrived and would not go away. In total, we recorded anywhere from 4.69" – 8.75" of rainfall in April with 20 different days of measurable precipitation somewhere in our beet growing area.

The month of May arrived and, for many, there was still no field work completed. Fortunately, there was a window of opportunity without precipitation in early to mid-May when all the beets were planted. Rainfall arrived again on May 10 for some, and May 20 for everyone, and once again field work came to a screeching halt. By the end of the month, rainfall was recorded on 17 different days in May as well.

So, for the months of April and May, we recorded rainfall on 37 out of 60 days with totals averaging anywhere from 7.38" – 12.97" of rainfall. Unbelievable!

What is even more amazing, growers took advantage of every available moment to plant 161,427 acres of beets. Emergence looks very good and we

are cautiously optimistic about the potential of this 2013 sugarbeet crop. In many fields, we are counting stands in excess of 200 beets per 100' of row. There is some concern for seedling diseases with the wet conditions and hot temperatures. Even if we lose a few beets to disease, we should still have stand counts approaching 200 beets.

The record-setting crop of 2012 may be hard to beat with our late start to this year's crop, but we fully believe we can reach our five-year average yield of 26.58 tons per acre and average sugar of 18.27%. Initial stand counts on the early planted fields are encouraging, and everyone is hoping for a good summer growing season.

It was our goal to produce 4.5 million tons of beets for processing this year. We started with an allocation of 98% and increased our acreage allowance to 102% with the delayed planting season. Only time will tell where we land come harvest time, but we have our sights set on starting harvest September 3 and reaching our goal of 4.0+ million tons of beets. Our varieties have the potential, and we have the expertise to nurture this crop and reach our goal. All we need is a little help from Mother Nature! ■

***Growers took advantage of every available moment to plant 161,427 acres of beets. Emergence looks very good and we are cautiously optimistic about the potential of this 2013 sugarbeet crop.***





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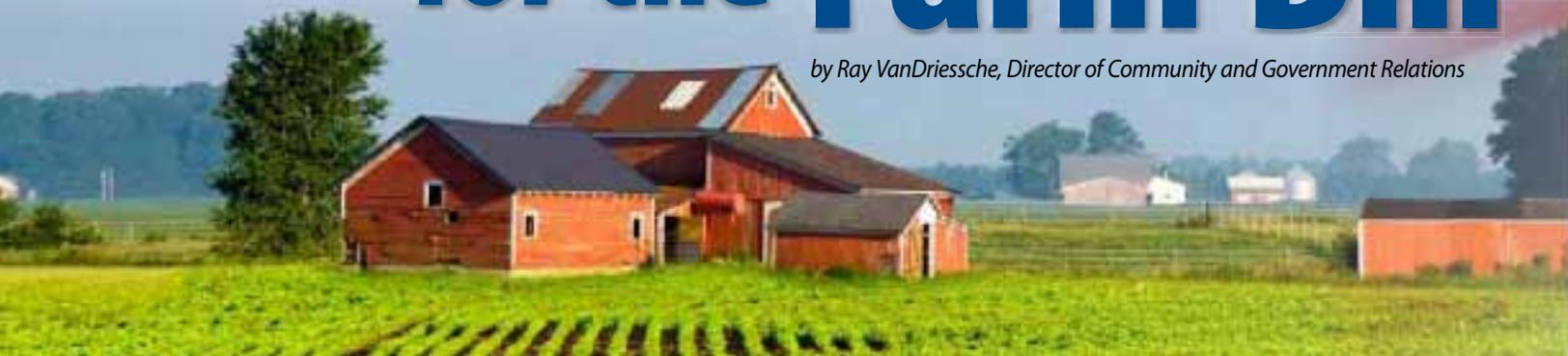
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# Update: Washington

# Stormy Weather for the Farm Bill

by Ray VanDriessche, Director of Community and Government Relations



## Nutrition Program Cuts Delay Passage of Farm Bill

House Speaker John Boehner and the House leadership took a considerable amount of heat for blocking passage of the 2012 Farm Bill in the last congressional session. As a result, they wasted no time in giving the Farm Bill priority in the 2013 schedule. The green light incentivized the Senate Agriculture Committee to move quickly in mid-May to approve a Farm Bill, which was very similar to the bill the Senate passed in 2012, amounting to \$24 billion in savings to the budget.

The wide gap between the Senate bill including Supplemental Food Assistance Program (SNAP) program cuts to the nutrition program of \$4 billion and proposed cuts by the House to the nutrition program of over \$20 billion equated to nearly insurmountable roadblocks ahead for passage of the bill. The first House floor Farm Bill vote, which took place on June 20, was a totally different story from the bi-partisan Senate vote and was defeated by a wide margin. Non-passage of the Farm Bill for the first time in U.S. history came as a shock to many and was an embarrassment to House leadership, as they had recommended passage before the vote took place. The battle lines were drawn over the deep cuts to the Supplemental Food Assistance Program (SNAP) and the deal breaker for passage was an amendment by Congressman Steve Southerland (R-FL) that would have allowed states to apply federal welfare work requirements to food stamps. Shortly after the vote, House Ag Committee Chairman Frank Lucas said he would make another attempt to move the Farm Bill, but did not know under what circumstances.

In an effort to get the Farm Bill passed, Chairman Lucas reluctantly brought the bill to the House floor for a vote again on July 11, minus the SNAP program under pressure from House leadership to separate the nutrition portion away from the Agriculture portion of the bill. Subsequently, the vote which was extremely contentious and partisan, with no consideration for the nutrition program, passed by a vote of 216 to 208 with not one Democrat voting in favor of the bill and 12 Republicans voting against it. Now, the looming question being asked by many is, "How do you conference the Senate-passed Farm Bill which includes the SNAP program provisions with the House bill which does not, and will the vote take place before the extension of the 2008 Farm Bill expires on September 30?" Chairman Lucas has stated that conferencing the House and Senate Farm Bills will have to wait

until the House figures out what to do with the standalone food stamp measure with the goal to have that accomplished by the summer recess in August.

To no one's surprise, the Sugar User's Coalition was again behind anti-sugar amendments sponsored by Senator Jeanne Shaheen of New Jersey on the Senate side, and by Congressman Joe Pitts of Pennsylvania on the House side, during the Farm Bill process. The amendments would have stripped out the updates to the sugar provisions that were approved in the 2008 Farm Bill. Both amendments were defeated by margins too close for comfort and yet the defeats were remarkable — especially on the House side, given the negative environment of the House Farm Bill vote. The victories for the sugar industry could not have been accomplished without the hard work of growers and industry representatives educating and working closely with legislators about the benefits of a domestic sugar industry. Industry representatives are well aware that we have not yet crossed home plate and we cannot let our guard down until the bill has been signed into law.



**Ray VanDriessche**, Michigan Sugar Company's Director of Community and Government Relations, is also a third-generation farmer in mid-Michigan. He travels to both Lansing and Washington D.C. often to follow and advise on political activity that will affect agriculture in Michigan.



## Labeling, Imports and Trade Agreements

**Labeling of Bio-Tech Foods:** Senator Bernie Sanders (Vermont) offered an amendment that would require labeling of foods produced with bio-technology traits. The amendment would have allowed individual states to implement and enforce their own labeling laws. Under the leadership of Senate Ag Committee Chairwoman, Debbie Stabenow, the amendment was soundly defeated. Senator Stabenow stated, "The amendment would interfere with FDA's science-based process to determine what labeling is necessary for U.S. consumers."

**Imports From Mexico:** Mexico continues to use the U.S. sugar market as a "dumping grounds" for their excess production. As a result of an unusually large crop, and unrestricted access to our market, the USDA estimates that Mexico will export 1.9 million tons of sugar into the U.S. in the 2012/13 marketing year. Meetings between the two governments, as well as industry representatives, are ongoing, trying to find a resolution to keep the North American sweetener market in balance. The U.S. market is already severely oversupplied and Mexico has started to ship some minor amounts of its surplus sugar to the world market so as not to further depress U.S. sugar prices. There has been some talk by Mexican government officials of possibly converting some of their excess sugar into ethanol, but it remains to be seen just how committed they are to this option to dispose of their surplus sugar.

**Trade Agreements:** The Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) continues to gain momentum with Canada and Mexico formally accepted as new partners in the trade talks, and Japan expected to be integrated into the partnership in the coming months. Once all interested parties are formally accepted as trading partners in the agreement, the TPP countries will account for nearly one-third of all world trade. Our industry will continue to monitor the discussions closely as interested parties seek additional access for their sugar in to the U.S. market. Countries involved in the partnership are: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam. ■



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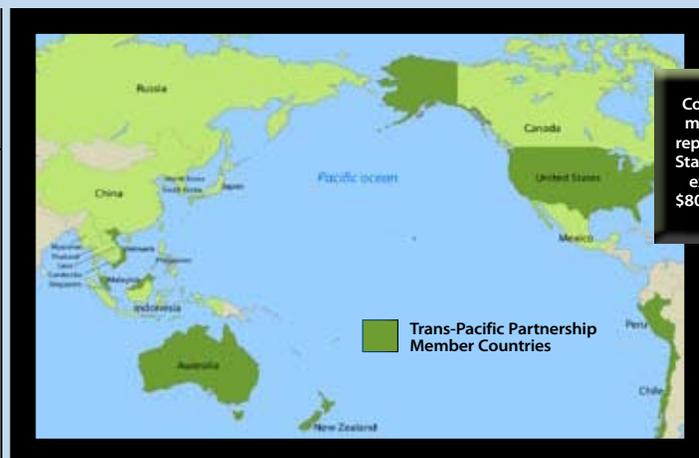


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Combined, the TPP member countries represent the United States' fourth-largest export market — \$80.9 billion (US/TC).

## Get to Know Our Newest Board Members

by Julie Perry, Executive Assistant of Administration

**Michael McCormack**, of Sunfield, Michigan, was appointed to Michigan Sugar Company's Board of Directors last December to serve the balance of Loren Humm's term in the West District (Region 2) of our growing area. Loren passed away last October.

Mike farms with his brother, John, in the southern area of Ionia and Clinton counties. John handles the dairy side of their partnership with his two sons, Justin and Jason McCormack, while Mike handles the crop side (sugarbeets [500 acres], cucumbers, corn, and alfalfa), with the help of his stepson, Eric ("Louie") Bullen. Pam, Mike's wife of 12 years, is a retired legal secretary, and now helps with the operation. Mike refers to her as the "Topper Chick." Outside of farming, Mike serves on the Danby Township Board of Appeals and their Planning Commission.

There had been a 45-year gap in sugarbeet production in Mike's area of the state. About ten years ago, the McCormacks had an opportunity to grow for Monitor Sugar Company. They needed more diversity in their operation and Mike felt a more "high-end" crop would reward them for the extra effort they put into it. He says, "Sugarbeets are very responsive to management. Once we started raising sugarbeets, we became better farmers." He shared that it is a "great privilege" to be able to grow sugarbeets as "they are our mainstay."

Injuries from a 1985 car accident require Mike to use a wheelchair, but Mike and Pam are not idle souls by any means. Pam has climbed Kilimanjaro and Mike has been skiing in the Himalayans. Skiing is one of the things he enjoys most. He said it "provides a sense of freedom and speed that I don't experience in other ways." He is a ski mentor, both for the able-bodied and disabled.

In addition to sugarbeets, which Mike says is truly one of his passions, and skiing, he loves flying his Cessna Cardinal that he purchased in Salt Lake City. Mike had "stopped" at an airport in Ionia on June 23, 1991, and one thing led to another. He received his pilot's license in 1993.

**Clark Gerstacker**, of Midland, Michigan, was elected to Michigan Sugar Company's Board of Directors, at its annual meeting in January. Clark represents Region 3 of the West District, replacing Gene Meylan, who retired from the Board.

Clark and his brother, Kirk, grow 1,500 acres of corn, sugarbeets (200 acres), soybeans, and dry beans in Midland and Bay counties. It is a fourth generation, centennial farm operation, founded in 1892. Sugarbeets have been grown on their farm for 50 years. Clark is married to his wife of 16 years, Jennifer, and they have a daughter, Peyton (13), and a son, Hudson (8).

In addition to farming, Clark has served on the Michigan Corn Growers Association Board; Corn Marketing Program of Michigan; and the National Corn Growers Association. He has a B.A. from the College of Business, at Michigan State University.

Clark has been involved in sugarbeet production since his involvement in 4-H as a youth. When asked about the upcoming generation of farmers, he shared this bit of advice — "Don't give up on getting your kids back on the farm. With technology, there are opportunities we haven't had in the past. I spent seven years with Frito-Lay, in Allen Park, as a manufacturing manager. Then, in April of 1997, I moved back home, got married and changed careers — all in the same week!"

Clark says, "I am excited about the opportunity to work with the Co-op in this capacity, on the Board of Directors. We are all working to ensure that the opportunity to grow sugarbeets is there, not only for us, but as an industry and a cooperative." He feels it is also a way for him to give back to the industry that provides his livelihood. "Being a Board member means weighing decisions that affect the future and success of this cooperative and industry, whether it is through making policies or involvement in Washington. "We don't have anything given to us. We have to go out and make it happen. We are here to make sure this opportunity is here — not for us, but for the next farmers coming up!" ■



◀ **Far left: Mike and Pam McCormack. Left: Clark and Jennifer Gerstacker.**

**Julie Perry** is the Executive Assistant of Administration and Editor of *The Newsbeet* at Michigan Sugar Company. She has been with the company for 15 years.



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# Transferring the Family Farm to the Next Generation

by Heidi Bolger, CPA, ABV, MAFF, CMAP, CGMA

**Assuming your farming operation has become a passion and a livelihood for your younger family members, there will come a time when the lead generation will need to “hand over the keys to the barn.”**

Through decades of working with business owners, I have seen many become so overwhelmed by the prospect of transitioning their businesses that they fail to do the necessary planning. As a result, the multiple options available to them often shrink to only a few.

When you consider the outcomes of this momentous decision, it is clear that all options should be explored. As we work to design transition plans, some of our key objectives include:

- ensuring that parents have plenty of money to support a comfortable lifestyle in retirement
- providing a process for choosing and grooming one or more successors that will protect and build good relationships among the management team allowing parents to create a transition “story” they will be proud to share... the tale of how they did it all their way, and with tremendous success

In addition, there are many leadership and financial considerations that can make the difference between a successful and not-so-successful transition of ownership from one generation to the next. This article is intended to provide the reader a clear idea of what is involved, along with a big picture view of the transition planning process.

## **WHAT’S INVOLVED: Balancing Needs of the Generations and the Business**

Completing a successful ownership and leadership transition involves balancing the needs of the lead generation, who will be exiting the business, and the needs of the next generation, who will perpetuate the business. The needs of both generations have to be further aligned with keeping the business in good financial health so as not to “kill the golden goose.”

To achieve these goals, there are several questions that must be considered:

### **Lead Generation**

- When and how would the parents like to phase down their day-to-day involvement in the farming operation?
- What are their income/cash flow needs post-retirement?
- Who do they see as the successor leaders and what grooming still needs to occur?

### **Next Generation**

- Are they prepared to step into bigger roles?
- What kind of talent will they need to hire to fill in the gaps as their parents exit?
- What are their income expectations as they assume the roles of their parents?
- Are they committed to expanding their business and leadership skills to ensure the continued success and growth of the business?

# Making A Smooth Transition



## Farming Business

- Is there sufficient cash flow to continue reinvesting in farm assets to keep the farm competitive while also funding a buy-out of the lead generation?
- How should the organizational structure be modified to best take advantage of the skills of the next generation of leadership?
- How will the transition plan be shared with key employees and customers to ensure a smooth, stable transition?

These are very tough, emotional questions to address without some assistance from your business advisors. Getting the answers “right” requires time to contemplate and analyze the options. A knowledgeable, trusted advisor will present a number of alternatives for your consideration and help guide you to ensure that a solution is tailored for your specific situation. An overview of the process we use with clients in developing plans that address both the human and financial aspects of transition is included at right.

As the diagram indicates, we start with a big picture look at the business’ vision and strategy and extensively involve both the lead and next generation family members to build consensus on the best approach. Advisory skills that are important to the process include expertise in leadership and organizational development, tax and financial planning and, most importantly, experience in working with family farming operations. These skills are augmented with insurance and legal advice as required along the way.

Given that transition planning is a process, you can get started by contemplating some of the questions discussed above and begin formulating a vision of how you might like to proceed with your transition process. I hope you find our process overview helpful in laying the groundwork for a transition that is as enjoyable and successful as it should be. ■



**Heidi Bolger, CPA, ABV, MAFF, CMAP, CGMA** is a founding principal of Rehmann Consulting and advises clients in the areas of succession planning and business sales.



# How Does a Young, Beginning, or Small Farmer Get Started?

by Wayne Sevilla, FSO, GreenStone Farm Credit Services

With land prices at all-time highs, machinery that costs more than your parent's first farm, and commodity prices that are better compared to a roller coaster ride than a stable market, it can seem daunting for a young person to get their start in farming. As a young person myself, I can relate to the thought of taking on such a large financial commitment. Rest assured that beginning a career in farming is possible, and as a financial services officer with GreenStone Farm Credit Services, I regularly help clients navigate the challenge of making their dream operation a reality.

GreenStone is committed to being the first choice for financing for young, beginning and small farmers, and we place an emphasis on serving these unique demographics. In order to assist these operators, we allow for more liberal underwriting standards that require lower owner equity, working capital, and less collateral. To offset these flexible credit standards, we work closely with the Farm Service Agency (FSA), and utilize the FSA Guarantee Program through the United States Department of Agriculture. The most popular example of this program is called the 50/45/5 program, which allows GreenStone to finance 50 percent of a real estate purchase, while the FSA lends 45 per-

cent of the land cost, and the producer provides only 5 percent down, plus any closing costs. Currently the FSA's portion of the financing is done at a 1.5 percent fixed interest rate for 20 years, making this program even more appealing. Producers are encouraged to act early in the year, if interested in taking advantage of this program, because the FSA has limited annual funds available for this particular type of financing.

Aside from credit approval requirements, there are numerous steps that a young farmer can take in order to prepare for financing their farm operation. First, producers must create a habit of good financial management, and most importantly, maintaining a sound credit history. The second step is completing an annual balance sheet. This process allows you to see your progress and track it over time. Finally, the last step — which is equally important as the other two — is to compile good financial information on the acres you are currently farming. For example, answering the following questions will help the loan application process go more smoothly: What are your costs of production? What is your marketing plan? How much do you need to pull out of the farm for your family's needs?

To contribute to the financial well-being of your operation, it is also critical to employ proper risk management tools. Utilizing property insurance, life/disability insurance, and crop insurance is key to helping ensure the success of a young, beginning or small farmer. Many times, those starting out in farming tend to see the cost burden that comes with insurance rather than the benefits of having it. Often, that is because they have not had to deal with challenging situations where a safety net is beneficial. Another important contributor to an operation's financial success is taking advantage of the historically low interest rates that are currently being offered in the marketplace. Interest rates have not been this low since the 1930s, and working with a lender that can lock interest rates is very important to hedging against interest rate risk.

GreenStone is committed to being the premier source of credit and financial services to all farmers in Michigan and northeast Wisconsin. Stop by any of our 37 locations to inquire about how we can help you get your farming operation started. We not only understand your challenges, we share your vision and have decades of experience assisting operators just like you. ■



**Wayne Sevilla** is a Senior Financial Services Officer with GreenStone Farm Credit Services, in Bay City, Michigan. Wayne has been with GreenStone for five years.

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# Sugarbeet Advancement Research Update

by Steve Poindexter, Senior Sugarbeet Educator  
Sugarbeet Advancement, MSU Extension

Michigan Sugar Company achieved a new milestone in both yield and quality in 2012. Certainly, environmental conditions, such as early planting and adequate moisture, are key components of record yields; however, research, education, and ultimately the adoption of newly learned information/technologies also play an important role. Michigan Sugar Company has invested heavily in production research, including USDA, Michigan State University, University of Guelph, along with the company research program. Each research program performs a unique role which includes basic research (futuristic), evaluation of new products, varieties and techniques, as well as field applied research and demonstration.

The Michigan State University Sugarbeet Advancement program concentrates on education and field applied research and demonstration. Almost all research is conducted as replicated strip trials on grower farms utilizing grower equipment. Research to be conducted in 2013 will include over 24 trials in Michigan and Ontario. These trials perform a valuable role in field validating previous small trial research or newly approved products.

Each year Sugarbeet Advancement conducts seven variety research trials. These trials are conducted as field validation trials or second tier testing. Michigan Sugar Company conducts the first tier of testing, looking at genetic potential from new varieties submitted by the seed companies. These varieties are tested for two years and must pass the criteria set forth for approval. Once approved, Sugarbeet Advancement will place up to 12 varieties in growers' fields for fur-

ther evaluation. This type of testing provides growers additional information of how the varieties perform under less than perfect (actual) growing conditions. Producers who attended last year's seed week meetings and participated in the evaluation felt that this two-tiered testing, on average, helped them improve yields by three tons per acre.

This year, Sugarbeet Advancement will also be testing some new products in our war to control Rhizoctonia. These strip trials are conducted in fields with high inoculum levels and are evaluated with natural Rhizoctonia infections. Small research trials are usually artificially inoculated and may or may not perform the same as natural field conditions. Michigan Sugar has been known as the industry leader in testing and developing strategies for Rhizoctonia control. Based on this research, about 90 percent of Michigan Sugar growers are using Quadris at least once for Rhizoctonia control. A recent evaluation also indicates over 40% of the growers are applying Quadris twice. Those respondents feel on average they have increased tonnage by 2 ¼ tons/acre.

New seed treatments are being approved for use on sugarbeets at a relatively fast pace. Field research will be conducted at several locations looking at Metlock Suite seed treatment. This product may be helpful for broad spectrum control of seedling diseases, such as Rhizoctonia, Fusarium and Pythium. Seedling diseases are generally most damaging when planting conditions have been warm and wet. Control of seedling disease is important to help ensure adequate populations are established.

Sugarbeet Advancement will also be conducting various other field validation trials, including Cercospora control trials. Trials will evaluate early applications (DSV 35) of EBDC materials prior to our normal fungicide spray beginning. Preliminary research, conducted by Michigan Sugar Company, indicates that this early application may improve Cercospora leafspot control and resistance management.

Other research will be continued including clover cover crop, nutrient, and non-traditional products. Nitrogen rates following a clover cover crop are being investigated to help growers gain the benefits of the clover without reducing quality. Non-traditional products such as Carbon Boost, Lucros and Serenade are also being evaluated in this year's trials.

The Research & Education Advisory Council (REACH) has been at the forefront in giving research and education direction along with promoting a team approach in our efforts. Similar research conducted from a variety of sources should be considered complimentary and not repetitive. This has allowed the grower the use of a larger source of information in order to draw conclusions. Based on historical yield and quality gains, and the rapid adoption of technologies, Michigan Sugar Company's research and educational efforts (REACH) have worked well! ■

*Clover/soil health strip trial*



*Rhizoctonia control strip trial*



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## Managing Glyphosate-Resistant Weeds in Michigan

by Greg Clark, Agronomist

The occurrence of glyphosate-resistant weed populations in Michigan has unquestionably increased since the initial discovery of glyphosate-resistant horseweed (marestail) in 2007 (Image 1). Populations of glyphosate-resistant waterhemp and Palmer amaranth (Image 2), the other weed species in Michigan confirmed to be resistant to glyphosate, will likely spread across much of the state during the next few years, further complicating postemergence weed control. No novel herbicide active ingredients for postemergence control of broadleaf weeds in sugarbeets are likely to be commercialized, so managing herbicide-resistant weed populations of sugarbeets will become increasingly challenging in the foreseeable future.

Although everyone would prefer a simple solution to glyphosate-resistant weeds, adding diversity to our weed management programs in other crops is the key. Diverse practices provide additional benefits since many of these practices improve the overall level and consistency of weed control, add flexibility in scheduling applications, and reduce the risks of yield loss. Overall, we must manage the intensity of glyphosate use to reduce the potential for resistance.

### Weed management practices in other crops that can help avoid constant and exclusive use of glyphosate, lessening the potential development of glyphosate-resistant weeds:

- Apply a full rate and not half-rates (according to label guidelines for soil type and organic matter content) of a soil-residual herbicide no sooner than seven days before planting.
- Implement control practices before horseweed plants exceed six inches tall.
- Encourage neighbors to control horseweed before it reaches the reproductive stage. Horseweed seed is easily moved by wind and seed produced in a neighboring field can easily reintroduce the species into surrounding fields.
- The initial postemergence herbicide application must be made when waterhemp is three to five inches tall.
- Rotate between Roundup Ready® and conventional crops or crops with other types of herbicide resistance. Use Roundup Ready® crops and glyphosate in your crop rotation where they have the greatest economic and management value.
- Rotate herbicides with herbicides that have different modes/sites of action. Herbicide labels now list an herbicide group number that refers to the site of action of that herbicide. Herbicides with different numbers have different sites of action.
- Apply herbicides with multiple sites of action in sequential, premixed, or tank-mixed applications.
- Clean tillage and harvest equipment before moving from fields infested with resistant weeds. The movement of equipment from infested fields to other fields is the quickest way to spread herbicide-resistant weed seeds or buying equipment from southern states that have other glyphosate-resistant weed species. Also, be cautious about buying manure from farms that have resistant weeds. Resistant seeds can easily be transported by this application.

- Use cultivation and other mechanical weed management practices, when appropriate. For example, preplant tillage would be an option to help manage winter annuals, biennials, and perennials that may develop resistance.
- Apply a residual herbicide before glyphosate or tank mix another herbicide with glyphosate.
- If glyphosate is used as a burndown treatment and in-crop in the same year, tank mix the glyphosate applied in the burndown treatment with an herbicide that has a different mode of action. The in-crop glyphosate application should still be rotated with other herbicides in other years.
- Scout fields regularly, identify the weeds present, and record their locations on maps to allow a quick response to changes in weed populations.

The dynamic and adaptable nature of weeds has, again, demonstrated how different it can be to adequately manage weeds, long-term, with a singular approach. Weeds need to be managed in all rotational crops so that resistance is eliminated or greatly reduced. Sugarbeets are a minor crop and there are not a lot of alternative herbicides to even consider. We do, however, have many other chemical classes that we can use in corn and soybeans and other rotational crops which will help with weed resistance management.

Growers need to take a total “system approach” to managing weed resistance. We can manage resistance if everyone does their part and we do not abuse the benefits given to us with Roundup Ready® sugarbeets. Let’s all do our part rotating our chemicals and managing chemical resistance to weeds. ■

Image 1: Roundup® resistant horseweed



Image 2: Roundup® resistant Palmer amaranth

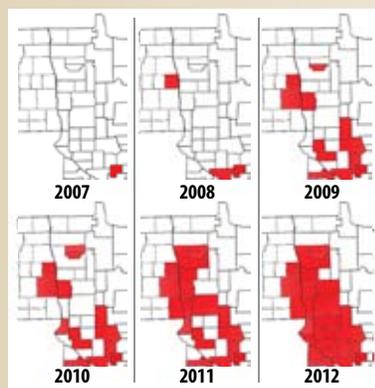


## Resistance in the Red River Valley

Field of soybeans with glyphosate-resistant Kochia, Richland County, 2012

by Mike Metzger, Research Agronomist  
Minn-Dak Farmers Cooperative

Within the Red River Valley (RRV), resistance to many common herbicide compounds (such as atrazine and ALS inhibitors) has been quietly developing over the past two decades and unfortunately, so has the resistance to glyphosate. To date, of the 21 different weed species in the world that are resistant to glyphosate (10 grass species and 11 broad leaves), four of them now call the RRV “home” — Common ragweed, Giant ragweed, Waterhemp and Kochia. The follow maps (compiled by NDSU) show the documented progression of these four weed species in our sugarbeet growing area over the past six years:



The maps above naturally beg the question, “What are our sugarbeet growers doing to prevent weed resistance on their own farms?” Several key strategies that have proven effective in the RRV include:

**Lengthening the Crop Rotation:** A longer crop rotation will provide a greater opportunity for herbicide diversity. **Rotate Herbicide Tolerant Traits:** Alternate herbicide tolerant traits or use herbicide tolerant stacks for a more efficient rotation of both non-selective and selective herbicides. One of many excellent examples is utilizing the SmartStax System on corn by applying Roundup for the first application and Ignite (Liberty) for the second. **Rotate Modes of Action:** Rotating modes of action is essential to improve resistance management. Rotating and using multiple modes of action reduces the selection pressure caused by overusing a single chemistry. Using a residual herbicide before glyphosate and/or tank mixing other herbicide modes of action with glyphosate on Roundup Ready crops is becoming a necessity. While not a popular option, conventional corn and soybeans actually offer the widest range of herbicide options. **Utilize Mechanical Weed Control:** Since a single glyphosate resistant waterhemp plant can easily produce over 1,000,000 seeds (and have been documented to produce nearly 5,000,000) in only a single season, 100% weed control must be achieved if a resistant weed population is present. Use row crop cultivation and hand labor when/as necessary. **Max Out the Glyphosate:** Know the maximum usage rate(s) allowed by label for each crop and utilize them. The maximum amount of glyphosate that can be used from sugarbeet emergence to the 8-leaf stage in the Roundup Ready Sugarbeet System is currently limited to 1.96 lb ae/A with the maximum amount for a single application in the same growth stage limited to 1.125 lb ae/A. ■



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# Research = Results

by *Jim Stewart, Director of Research and Lee Hubbell, Agronomist*

## 2013 HIGHLIGHTS

- 2,800 OVT plots
- 20 Farm Locations
- 125 Acres
- 85 Trials

Michigan Sugar Company conducts an extensive agricultural research program designed to increase sugarbeet yields and quality and to improve efficiency and income for our shareholders. Official Variety Trials (OVTs) have a high priority and are planted at eight locations throughout the growing region annually. Typically, we evaluate 40 to 50 varieties each year in the OVTs, and each variety is replicated eight times at each site.

This translates into 2,800 individual plots. The plots are planted thick with a modern research planter and hand thinned to around 175 beets per 100 foot of row. Seed for new varieties is often of poor quality and overseeding is necessary to achieve good stands. We also make visual evaluations of each plot and the plots are harvested with a plot harvester. Planting is very efficient, but thinning and harvesting are very time consuming.

This year, we will evaluate the OVT varieties for emergence, pile storage, tolerance, pests and diseases. Also, Michigan Sugar Company is conducting three emergence trials, four Cercospora trials, three Rhizoctonia trials, two storage trials, and one nematode trial. Aphanomyces, root aphids and Rhizomania trials are conducted by other researchers.

Our main focus for the past ten years has been on improving sugarbeet yields, which have increased dramatically since the year 2000 (Figure 1). The values in the graph include early harvest data. In the past few years, early harvest has been expanded significantly and yields and quality for recent years would actually be higher without the increased proportion of early harvested beets.

Our focus is now shifting to sugarbeet quality and after two decades of static sugar levels, we are beginning to make progress. In 2012, we had an average sugar content of 18.7 percent, and we are committed to reaching 19 percent sugar within two years.

Information from the Official Variety Trials determines which new varieties are approved and can be planted by our growers. The variety approval system was modified a few years ago to accommodate higher yielding Roundup Ready varieties. We have made significant yield and quality gains in recent years due to the incorporation of these high-producing varieties. Cercospora and Rhizoctonia tolerance is improving, and we have made great strides with nematode tolerant varieties. Several popular varieties (mostly nematode tolerant) still have poor disease tolerance, but the new nematode tolerant varieties have better disease tolerance.

Every year we cooperate with MSU and USDA-ARS personnel by providing help with planting, care and harvest of their trials. Our assistance allows them to conduct research trials that they would not have the time or resources to do otherwise. This year, we are working with Dr. Linda Hanson, Dr. George Bird, Dr. Randy Beaudry, Dr. Willie Kirk, and Dr. Haddish Melakeberhan with research on Rhizoctonia, Cercospora, Sugarbeet Cyst Nematodes, and storage.

We also conduct numerous trials for chemical and seed companies to evaluate new products. Michigan Sugar Company is compensated by these companies for doing this work. Most of these companies do not have staff available to conduct the trials needed to make recommendations for their products in sugarbeets.

The research team has also been concentrating on Agronomic improvements including 2X2 fertilizer placement, lime applications, early planting dates, higher sugarbeet populations, narrow row spacing, and other agronomic trials. Improving sugarbeet yield and quality is an incremental process and many factors contribute to improvements. Row spacing trials conducted from 2009 to 2012 demonstrated that sugarbeet yields increased by 3.5 tons and sugar content increased by 0.5 percentage points by changing to narrower rows. Recent trials have also shown that growers will lose about one ton per week when planting is delayed beyond the optimum planting period. Similar trials have shown the benefits of higher plant populations, 2X2 fertilizer placement, and lime applications. It is apparent that sugarbeet yields and quality have improved by following Michigan Sugar Company's best management practices.

A significant amount of effort is also expended on disease control. The BeetCast program has improved Cercospora control considerably, and the use of Quadris has helped to manage Rhizoctonia. Close to 100 trials have been conducted in the past ten years to determine the relationships between application methods and timings, product rates, geographical zones, and variety tolerance with respect to disease control. The BeetCast program was offered to us with a single recommendation of 55/55 DSVs. After considerable research, we have developed an intricate program that considers weather factors, geographical zones, variety tolerance and fungicide choices to control Cercospora leafspot.

Trials conducted by Michigan Sugar Company identified strobilurin resistance in our area before widespread field failures occurred. We are now challenged with the loss of this group (Headline and Gem) of fungicides and further work will be required to adjust application timings using less effective fungicides.

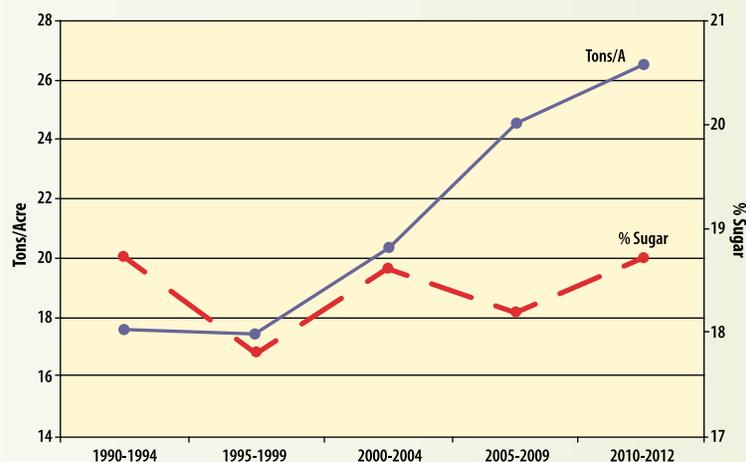
When Quadris was introduced, there were few recommendations about how to use it. Multiple trials have demonstrated the best ways to apply Quadris, including T-band and foliar timings, rates, band widths and variety influences.

Sugarbeets are considered to be a small market crop and chemical companies do not invest very much money to develop products for our market. As a result, sugarbeet companies' agronomists need to do this work to develop recommendations for newly labeled products like Quadris.

We are working on 20 different farms this year and have established 85 trials on over 125 acres. That doesn't sound like a lot of land, but when the planter and harvester stop every 40 feet to change seed varieties or measure yield, it becomes a significant amount of work.

The end result is that growers have better varieties to plant and have access to the best available management practices which ultimately results in higher yields and quality and increased profits for growers and the Cooperative. ■

**Figure 1. Sugarbeet Yield and Quality Trends in Michigan (1990 to 2012)**



**Jim Stewart**, Director of Research, coordinates the agricultural research activities at Michigan Sugar Company and specializes in weed, disease and pest control, soil fertility, and other sugarbeet production practices. He has been employed with the company for 14 years.



**Lee Hubbell**, Research Agronomist, is a specialist in sugarbeet variety and agronomic testing and has been with Michigan Sugar Company for over 27 years.



**Narrow Rows:** 22" rows (top) versus 30" rows (bottom) allowed us to compare row closure in the different row widths and whether there is an advantage to collecting more sunlight in wider rows.

**Cercospora:** Cercospora nursery looks at the resistance difference within varieties (top). Strobilurin poor control and Super Tin better control; from same trial showing Cercospora resistance to Strobilurins (bottom).

**Rating Rhizoctonia Nursery:** The nursery shows different resistance levels (top). We look at every root and give a rating in this nursery (bottom).

**Planting and Harvesting:** Our variety planter (top) gives us extremely accurate spacing for all the seed varieties we are testing. Harvesting a test plot (bottom).



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# SVREC: Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

by Megan Hirschman, Associate Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations at Michigan State University

In April 2009, the Michigan State University (MSU) Saginaw Valley Research & Education Center (SVREC) was relocated to just north of Frankenmuth. It replaced the 120-acre Saginaw Valley Bean and Beet Research Farm established by Michigan State University AgBioResearch in 1971.

The new location, a 310-acre farm and facility, has already expanded research opportunities, improved grower accessibility and strengthened agri-business partnerships as it continues to focus on improving cultivation of dry beans and sugar beets. It is one of 15 specialized research facilities across the state that make up the MSU AgBioResearch system.

Specialty crop production such as: sugarbeets, dry beans, white wheat, pickles, etc. are very important to Michigan's Saginaw Valley and Thumb regions. Most of the dry bean and sugarbeet production in Michigan, as well as a significant amount of wheat production is located in the Saginaw Valley and the Thumb area. Michigan is the No. 1 producer of black beans, the No. 2 producer of all dry beans, and the No. 4 producer of sugarbeets in the country. The Saginaw Valley and Thumb Region is one of the best production areas for Soft White Wheat in the nation. MSU is dedicated to continuing Soft White Wheat Research through the Soft White Wheat endowed programming.

Research at the center has allowed Michigan producers to be national leaders in a variety of commodities by offering growers the latest information on crop management and tillage techniques, new variety trials, and pest and weed control with minimal environmental impact. In addition to dry bean and sugarbeet research, studies at the 310-acre site explore other important rotational crops, including corn, wheat, and soybeans.

## The Project

With the relocation of the SVREC from Thomas Township in Saginaw County to the current location just north of Frankenmuth, an opportunity exists to enhance community education and outreach in the region and throughout the state.

The SVREC will be used to educate people from local, regional, state, and national agricultural communities with a wide variety of interests in agriculture. Additionally, it will accommodate agricultural industry meetings, as well as MSU teaching, research, and outreach activities in partnership with area colleges. This will be

accomplished through distance-learning classes, field-oriented education programs, and hands-on demonstrations.

The project is expected to include the construction of an approximately 11,000 square foot building with a 200-person meeting room and a large overhead door to allow entry of large farm and commercial application equipment. The building will also include a 40-person classroom, a multi-purpose area with reception and educational display space, a small number of offices, bathrooms, and a preparation area for catered events.

## The Need

Currently, the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, MSU Extension and AgBioResearch are in need of a facility that can host annual education and open houses to showcase research, serve as a site for agricultural business product training, host local and national legislative tours, and serve as a home for the 4-H Sugarbeet Project tour for students to learn about the industry.

Last year alone, the SVREC hosted more than 2,000 visitors. It is the only AgBioResearch Center in the state that is regularly open to the public.

With an Agricultural Center on its campus, SVREC would serve to represent MSU in the thumb region of Michigan. A new partnership between MSU and Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) will see students begin a degree in agriculture studies at SVSU, then transfer to MSU for the completion of the degree. The Agricultural Center at

SVREC can serve as a conduit for more young people to study agriculture, the state's second largest industry.

Additionally, the SVREC would serve as the central point from which commodity and specialty crop research is sent not only statewide, but worldwide. With an Agricultural Education Center that is connected globally, allowing researchers and students to reach beyond the confines of our state and into portions of the world where their findings continue to change lives.

Other community activities would include teaming up with the Frankenmuth community to serve as an agritourism location as well as developing a portion of the Harger Rail Trail (a 10-mile trail that stretches from the north edge of M-15 to Towerline Road in Buena Vista, half a mile north of East Holland Road in Saginaw County) to inspire future agriculture students.

An Agricultural Center at SVREC would also serve as a hub for agriculture industry safety and awareness training. It would also feature sustainable landscaping and incorporate renewable energy in the building design.

## Why MSU?

MSU has the good fortune to have one of the most beautiful — and significantly large — campuses in the world. Our physical spaces need to reflect our expectation of excellence as well as the changing space requirements of the 21st century. Strategic modernization of facilities is important to support the learning and research environments. The educational and research activities that reach across disciplines and physical



Architectural rendering of the proposed >> Saginaw Valley Research & Education Center

# TIME TO LIME!

We are excited to announce that we currently have commitments and pledges to the Saginaw Valley Research & Education Center (SVREC) of nearly \$800,000! The goal for completion of the project is \$3MM by April 15, 2014. The \$3MM in funding support will complete the construction cost (\$2MM) and will provide an endowment that will be used for maintenance and special projects of the facility (\$1MM). The endowment funding will ensure the use and upkeep of the building for generations to come. ***We need your help to get there! With support from generous donors we can help complete the SVREC.***

boundaries will require different space configurations and ones with greater flexibility. The need for new types of physical work spaces must also support global connectivity and reach out via electronic medium.

## An Example to Consider

When Michigan State University experts partnered with Michigan Sugar Company — a grower-owned cooperative — to revive Michigan's declining sugarbeet industry, the result was sweet success. Today, Michigan is the nation's fourth-leading producer of sugar beets.

Brought to the United States from Europe, sugarbeets — grown specifically for their sugar content, sucrose, which is chemically identical to cane sugar — have been grown in Michigan for more than 100 years. But yields of Michigan beets began to decline in the early 1990s. By the mid-90s, yields had fallen to an unprofitable level of production.

"People from the sugar industry approached us to help them study the problem and come up with solutions," says Steve Poindexter, senior educator with MSU Extension and MSU AgBioResearch, who likens the appearance of the sugarbeet to a white carrot on steroids. "If production and profitability weren't increased, the alternative was losing the industry completely."

As a result, the Sugarbeet Advancement Program was born. MSU spearheaded the partnership with Michigan Sugar Company, which owns the brands Pioneer Sugar and Big Chief Sugar. MSU scientists, industry representatives, and sugar beet farmers worked side by side to reinvigorate production and yield.

Most of the nation's sugar is produced domestically, and Michigan produces one billion pounds of sugar annually. The state is home to four sugar factories — all owned by growers — and supports more than 1,000 farm families located in 21 counties in Michigan (Mainly centralized in the Thumb region).

Researchers from MSU Extension and AgBioResearch, Michigan Sugar Company, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture determined the scope of the problem — or, more accurately, problems that included diseases, parasites, poor soil conditions, and unfavorable weather patterns.

One of the first orders of business was to address planting.

"About 65 percent of seeds planted by farmers come out of the ground in a good year," says Tom Wenzel, research assistant with MSU Extension. "Prior to seed

and tillage advancements in the last 15 years, emergence of less than 30 percent was a common problem."

The team from MSU worked on-site with farmers to change tillage practices and planting times, as well as to switch to pregerminated seeds. Within a couple of years, farmers gained a few tons of beets per acre. With additional benefits from advances in disease and pest control, by 2008, farmers yielded 29 tons per acre, nearly double the yield harvested at the lowest point in the previous decade.

Today, Michigan's sugarbeet industry has a direct net economic impact of \$550 million annually, giving the state an indirect economic boost of well over \$1 billion.

Poindexter points out that without the cooperation and collaboration involving MSU, Michigan Sugar Company, and farmers, the industry wouldn't be where it is today and, perhaps, wouldn't exist.

"It's one thing to do research," says Poindexter. "But MSU is uniquely positioned to educate growers and agri-business. The majority of our research happens with growers right in their fields. They see what we're doing as it happens and, therefore, they learn to trust the research. Our credibility level is extremely high with them."

It is through partnerships with industry, alumni, individuals and donors that research at MSU is changing the world. Though situated in the Saginaw Valley and rural Thumb of Michigan, the Saginaw Valley Research & Education Center can provide education, research, and outreach that stretches beyond the borders of our state around the globe.

If you have any questions please contact Megan Hirschman, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, Michigan State University, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources: (517) 353-5507, hirschm8@msu.edu. ■



**Megan Hirschman** is the Associate Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations at Michigan State University. Hirschman entered her fundraising career with MSU eight years ago as the FFA Foundation Director. She helps support major gift fundraising for the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and has been actively involved with the Michigan Agribusiness community. Hirschman's goal is to help ensure, through fundraising, a productive, healthy and safe food system for generations to come.



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# What's New for Beet Receiving

by Paul Pfenninger, Vice President of Agriculture

In 2013, we were able to receive and store a total of 4,752,048 tons of sugarbeets. To do so, we took our first load of beets in Croswell on August 20. We had 60 days of scheduled early delivery and then began building long-term storage on October 20. This year, our calendar date to start receiving is Tuesday, September 3, with open pile on or about October 21. What improvements and changes have we made to help us get the job done once again?

## Construction of additional piling grounds in Caro

We were able to buy property adjacent to our Caro piling ground in 2012 and have built two additional piling grounds this year with the capacity to hold an additional 75,000 – 85,000 tons of beets in Caro.

## Conversion of two pilers to additional stackers

We will place a stacker on both new piling grounds in Caro. This will allow us to accommodate the 13 Maus operations and “stack some beets” in Caro where they will be sliced. We will continue to “Maus” beets directly to all the factory sites during harvest, but having the two stackers in Caro will allow everyone to do more pile management on a timelier basis.

## Purchase of two Kringstad super pilers

One new super piler will be placed in Caro and another new super piler will arrive in Bay City. Each piler has the capacity to receive 375-400 tons of beets per hour, or about 80,000-100,000 tons each over the course of a harvest season.

## Move Piler #21 from Bay City to Albee and Move Piler #1 from Albee to Breckenridge

This will increase the capacity to receive beets in Albee from 200 tons per hour to 275 tons per hour with this piler and allow additional ventilation of beets in Albee. Breckenridge will receive a piler with a capacity of 200 tons per hour and will replace Piler #3, the double drive-over, which had a capacity of only 120 tons per hour.

## Increase tons in storage over vents

We received Board approval in April to add additional vents for long-term storage of beets. We will add 10,000 additional tons over vents in both Albee and Caro by extending the existing vent piles. The major increase will be in Croswell where we will combine piling grounds #3 and #4 into one large pile of vented beets. In total, we will add over 50,000 tons of vented beets to Croswell Proper. This project will give the Croswell factory approximately 35 days of slice with vents — a strategic goal of the Cooperative.

Overall, the increased capacity to receive and store this crop and all future crops will be a big benefit to our cooperative. With the improvements in beet receiving equipment and a good maintenance program, we are confident that we can receive and store a 4.5 million ton crop. ■



**Paul Pfenninger, Vice President of Agriculture,**  
has been with Michigan Sugar Company for 32 years.

# New Opportunities for Field Clamps

By Richard List,  
Ag Operations Manager

Storing sugarbeets in grower fields until Christmas? As cleaning/loading (Maus) operations have increased over the past few years, Michigan Sugar Company has had an increase in the number of tons delivered directly to the factories. In most situations, this would be good news, since beets going directly to the flumes should result in fewer costs for the Co-op; however, when the majority of our beets are delivered this way during long-term piling and continuing to Thanksgiving, managing our long-term storage piles (recovering pile shoulders and ends) at our factory sites can be a problem. To alleviate some of these issues, Michigan Sugar Company will have two new stackers ready for harvest in Caro.

In the future, if more cleaner/loader operations are allowed and the flumes of our factories are full, buying more property at our factory sites or converting more pilers to stackers are possible options. Another solution could be to leave a certain percentage of the cleaner/loader operation's sugarbeets in small piles (clamps) in grower fields for a few extra weeks. A cleaner/loader could deliver beets to the factories on a scheduled basis from Thanksgiving to the middle of December or later. Since our factories slice around 20,000 tons per day, there would be the potential to store 600,000 tons (20,000 x 30 days) in clamps in grower fields.

This past year, we did our first testing of clamp storage at two different locations. We left two clamps in a field near Ruth, one covered with straw and the other left uncovered. Most factory managers are very hesitant about allowing straw to enter their factories, but the cleaner/loaders did an excellent job of removing the straw. Another test was done in a field east of Sandusky. One clamp was covered with a special blanket material (used in Europe on some of their clamps) and the other was left uncovered. Sugars and purities were taken on the beets when they were harvested in mid-November. In early January, the remaining beets from the clamp were cleaned, loaded and again these sugarbeets were tested for sugar and purity. Tests showed almost no difference between early (at harvest) and late (from clamps) samples, as seen below.

STRAW COVERED	SUGAR	CJP	DELIVERED
Baseline	20.50	96.10	11/16/2012
Covered	20.60	96.04	01/03/2013
Uncovered	20.50	96.10	01/03/2013

TARP COVERED	SUGAR	CJP	DELIVERED
Baseline	19.02	95.33	11/12/2012
Covered	19.40	94.68	01/02/2013
Uncovered	19.40	95.02	01/02/2013

The comparisons are the results of only one year of testing. If this is the direction Michigan Sugar Company wants to go, we must continue to look at sugars, purities, and shrinkage in clamp piles. Tonnage losses will be difficult to measure. By leaving beets in clamps until mid-December, we should alleviate lines at some of our piling stations.

If Michigan Sugar Company can accurately compare sugars, purities, and dehydration of sugarbeets stored in clamps to sugarbeets delivered during regular harvest, growers may be willing to leave their beets in clamps until Christmas.

There are a lot of "ifs"; however, these challenges could be part of the new direction at Michigan Sugar Company. ■

*At right, top to bottom: Uncovered clamp in field; >> covering a clamp with a tarp; straw-covered clamp.*



**Richard List**, Ag Operations Manager for Michigan Sugar Company, has been with the company for 17 years.



# You were meant to shine!

***In order to shine, in many cases, you need to be in a good environment, and Michigan Sugar Company offers that in many ways! We have a culture here where we are not afraid to fail.***

*by James Ruhlman, Vice President, Administration*

Every year we hold a celebration event for our loyal and committed employees who graciously share their time and talents with us most every day. As current employees, we owe a great deal of gratitude to those who laid the foundation for us over the past 100+ years that we have been in business. It is our hope and dream that we make our great company "better today than it was yesterday," building on the cornerstones set by our forefathers.

It is sometimes difficult to find a theme for our banquet as we are so diverse, in so many ways. We are white collar and blue collar. We come from all walks of life, and from many different nationalities. Yet it seems that every year lately, we have been able to pull from the best of our uniquenesses, differences, and strengths to smash records and set the bar higher than it has ever been before. The impact of the human element is as vividly apparent today, as it was 100 years ago.

With all of this in mind, I chose a theme that was based on a quote that I heard from the movie "Coach Carter." It is a movie that my kids and I have watched at least 20 times and every time I hear the quote, it strikes me. In fact, I send it to my kids when they need a boost, or words of inspiration. The quote is actually an excerpt from a poem written by Marriane Williamson and it goes like this: "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. We are all meant to shine as children do, it's not just in some of us, it's in all of us. And as we let our own light shine,

we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same as we are liberated by our own fears ... our presence automatically liberates others."

Our theme this year was "You Were Meant to Shine." When I look back at our history and observe where we were, and where we are today, I think it's AMAZING, but I also think, that's the way it's supposed to be! We were all given special talents, unique qualities, and extraordinary gifts. It is up to all of us to use them to our full potential.

As I look at people who shine the brightest, they commit to something or someone that they love. Whether it's a job, a team, their children, or a significant other, they have an unwavering commitment. When I say they commit, I mean to say "all in" — heart, body, mind and soul. They let their inner passion be known to those around them.

People who shine are those that are confident and feel respected. They have a demeanor that is warm and approachable. They have a support group around them that catches them when they fail, and encourages them when they fail.

People who shine realize that they can't do things on their own. They have a "best friend" who can see when they're struggling even though they might not want to admit it.

When you dig a little deeper, you realize that in order to shine, in many cases, you need to be in a good environment, and Michigan Sugar Company

offers that in many ways! We have a culture here where we are not afraid to fail. We are empowered to make decisions, and know we can celebrate our successes and recover from our failures and I think that is one of the biggest reasons we've shared in so many successes in recent history.

At the awards banquet, every year, we issue the Ernest Flegenheimer Award. An award created in the honor of the man who led our company for more than 30 years. The award stands for Wisdom, Integrity, and Character and is presented to an employee every year who demonstrates the same qualities. This year's recipient was Mr. Eugene Stewart, from Sebewaing's Packaging and Warehousing Maintenance Group.

Mr. Stewart has been instrumental in fine-tuning our packaging machines to record-setting performances, and has been a reason for the recent successes achieved by that department. A special thank you goes to Eugene for his stellar performance and for demonstrating the qualities that Ernest stood for.

When you look at recent grower returns, employee group successes, and our rich tradition, one can argue that we are the best beet sugar processing company in the nation. I think growers and employees alike should be proud of that. We have been noticed by many for our innovation, our technology, our financial successes, and our ability to adapt. Some will say we were lucky. Some may say we had good weather. Some will say we had good prices. I choose to say, "It was meant to be that way. We were meant to shine!" ■



**Jim Ruhlman**, Vice President of Administration, is responsible for Packaging & Warehousing Operations, in addition to overseeing the Safety, Human Resources and IS Departments, and has been with Michigan Sugar Company for 30 years.

# Michigan Sugar Company - 2013 Service Awards Recipients

## 5 YEARS of SERVICE

Ronald Meyer	Agricultural Manager	Ag	Bay City
Manuel Reyes	Sugar End Foreman	Operations	Bay City
Keith Pahl	Beet End Foreman	Operations	Bay City
Troy Enciso	Lead Mechanic	Operations	Bay City
Tricia DeGroat	Factory Maintenance Coord.	Operations	Bay City
Michael King	Environmental Technician	Operations	Bay City
Joe Bladecki	P&W Shift Superintendent	Operations	Bay City
Rick Bowker	Maintenance Tech	P&W	Bay City
David Redmond	Maintenance Tech	P&W	Bay City
Brandon Zeilinger	Dock Operator	P&W	Bay City
Tamara Doman	Dock Operator	P&W	Bay City
Brian Jones	Dock Operator	P&W	Bay City
Harold Westran	General Foreman	P&W	Bay City
Antonio Smith	Specialty Operator	P&W	Bay City
Kurt Lee	Industrial Painter	P&W	Bay City
Thomas Kent	General Sugar Packer	P&W	Bay City
Craig Wieland	Team Leader	P&W	Bay City
Josiah Amthor	Production Dist. Tech	P&W	Bay City
Richard O'Rourke	General Sugar Packer	P&W	Bay City
Nathaniel Fowler	Specialty Operator	P&W	Bay City
Andrea Jacobs	General Sugar Packer	P&W	Bay City
Robert Snellenberger	Specialty Operator	P&W	Bay City
Cordal Morris	Silo Attendant	P&W	Bay City
Kenneth Amthor	Industrial Cleaner	P&W	Bay City
Brandon Birdsall	Team Leader	P&W	Bay City
Vincent Brown	Silo Attendant	P&W	Bay City
Linda Kreger	Industrial Cleaner	P&W	Bay City
Larry Sampson	Specialty Operator	P&W	Bay City
Jamie Britton-Raines	Team Leader	P&W	Bay City
William Trepkowski	General Sugar Packer	P&W	Bay City
Jerry Aikens	General Sugar Packer	P&W	Bay City
Richard Alderton	Industrial Cleaner	P&W	Bay City
Daniel Sartain	Specialty Operator	P&W	Bay City
Lisa Tuzas	Specialty Operator	P&W	Bay City
Robert LeClair	Specialty Operator	P&W	Bay City
Jodi Sheneman	General Sugar Packer	P&W	Bay City
Carl Martin	Specialty Operator	P&W	Bay City
James Heckard	Dock Operator	P&W	Bay City
Timothy Schwartz	General Sugar Packer	P&W	Bay City
Jesse Beaushaw	General Sugar Packer	P&W	Bay City
Camden Becker	Dock Operator	P&W	Bay City
Andrew Haynie	General Sugar Packer	P&W	Bay City
Steve Szukhent III	Industrial Cleaner	P&W	Bay City
Christopher Boughner	Industrial Cleaner	P&W	Bay City
Lisa Przygocki	General Sugar Packer	P&W	Bay City
James Gallaher	Specialty Operator	P&W	Bay City
Melissa Garzell	Specialty Operator	P&W	Bay City
Reginald Bryant	Industrial Cleaner	P&W	Bay City
Brian Bedell	Dock Operator	P&W	Bay City
Nicole Badour	Team Leader	P&W	Bay City
Vincent Neal	Specialty Operator	P&W	Bay City
Chad Panko	Industrial Cleaner	P&W	Bay City
Jonathon Zuzga	P&W Maint. Supervisor	P&W	Bay City
Enoch Sayers	Welder	Operations	Caro
Chad Justice	Shift Maint. & Crew Leader	Operations	Caro
Francisco Gonzales	Liquid Sugar Operator	P&W	Caro
Philip Allen	Project Engineer	Operations	Corporate
Carol Jankowski	Purchasing Assistant	Purchasing	Corporate
Steven Schanhals	Elect/Instrum Apprentice	Operations	Sebewaing
Jason Martens	Elect/Instru Journeyman Tech	Operations	Sebewaing

Daniel Fritz	House Mechanic	Operations	Sebewaing
Wendy Weisenbach	Cleaner	P&W	Sebewaing
Debra Sy	Dock Fork Truck Oper.	P&W	Sebewaing
Cheryl Simmons	Specialties	P&W	Sebewaing
Daniel Lacko	Cleaner	P&W	Sebewaing
Christy Eicher	General Packaging	P&W	Sebewaing
Randy Story	General Packaging	P&W	Sebewaing
Randall Hallock	Cleaner	P&W	Sebewaing
Rodney McCallum	Specialties	P&W	Sebewaing
Joshua Gaeth	General Packaging	P&W	Sebewaing
Karen Furness	General Packaging	P&W	Sebewaing
Andrew Wolf	Specialties	P&W	Sebewaing
Lori Pommerenke	General Packaging	P&W	Sebewaing
Scott Weisenbach	Warehouse Mechanic	P&W	Sebewaing
Scott Finkbeiner	General Packaging	P&W	Sebewaing
Roger Apley	Specialties	P&W	Sebewaing
Matthew Terrill	Silo Attendant	P&W	Sebewaing
Kendall Sprague	Specialties	P&W	Sebewaing
Carol Shaltonis	General Packaging	P&W	Sebewaing
Meagen Phelps	General Packaging	P&W	Sebewaing
Thomas Pluto	General Packaging	P&W	Sebewaing
Brian Miller	Cleaner	P&W	Sebewaing
Earl Davis	General Packaging	P&W	Sebewaing
Mark Kemler	Specialties	P&W	Sebewaing
Ronald Lesoski	Specialties	P&W	Sebewaing
Anthony Mullins	Specialties	P&W	Sebewaing
Michael Fritz	General Packaging	P&W	Sebewaing
Richard Campbell	General Packaging	P&W	Sebewaing
Jason Goslin	Specialties	P&W	Sebewaing
Fredrick Venturino	General Packaging	P&W	Sebewaing

## 10 YEARS of SERVICE

John Mix	Lead Mechanic-Agriculture	Ag	Bay City
Arnel Negranza	Environ. & Desug. Engineer	Operations	Bay City
Edward Rose	Dock Operator	P&W	Bay City
Gregory Dixon	Janitor	Operations	Caro
John Churchill	Welder	Operations	Caro
Margarita Gonzalez	General Accountant	Accounting	Corporate
Brian Haraga	Chief Financial Officer	Accounting	Corporate
Tanya Richard	Senior Network Technician	IS	Corporate
Jon Alexander	Programmer/Analyst	IS	Corporate
Paul Hill	Ag Mechanic/Loader Operator	Ag	Crosswell
Robert Witkovsky	Ag Mechanic/Loader Operator	Ag	Crosswell
Dennis Flanagan	House Leader	Operations	Crosswell
Edwardo Pesina Jr.	Shift Maint. & Crew Leader	Operations	Crosswell
Bradley Bucher	Warehouse Manager	P&W	Findlay
William LaBuhn	House Mechanic	Operations	Sebewaing
Randall Matthews	Elect/Instrum Apprentice	Operations	Sebewaing
John Calvert	Shift Superintendent	Operations	Sebewaing
Maria Garcia	Gen. Packaging-Seb.	P&W	Sebewaing
Michael Frost	Cleaner	P&W	Sebewaing
Jeffrey Kovach	Specialties	P&W	Sebewaing
Patrick Nitz	Gen. Packaging-Seb.	P&W	Sebewaing
Gloria Vasquez	Gen. Packaging-Seb.	P&W	Sebewaing
Odile Karle	Gen. Packaging-Seb.	P&W	Sebewaing
Shery Bedore	Dock Fork Truck Operator	P&W	Sebewaing
Susan Mardlin	Dock Fork Truck Operator	P&W	Sebewaing
Scott Kain	Specialties	P&W	Sebewaing
John Alegria	Gen. Packaging-Seb.	P&W	Sebewaing

## 15 YEARS of SERVICE

Roger Helmreich	Beet Receiving Mechanic	Ag	Bay City
Victor Ramos	Asst. Sugar End Foreman	Operations	Bay City
Dolores Salcedo	Sugar Boiler	Operations	Bay City
Jonathan Bickham	Sugar End Foreman	Operations	Bay City
Jeremy Amthor	Centrifugal Forman	Operations	Bay City
Michael Vaillancourt	Control Room Operator	Operations	Bay City
Michael VanHove	Asst. Sugar End Foreman	Operations	Bay City
Neil Gaeth	Instr/Electrical Supervisor	Operations	Bay City
Lionel Snyder	General Sugar Packer	P&W	Bay City
Sheila Mobley	Specialty Operator	P&W	Bay City
Charlene Thompson	General Sugar Packer	P&W	Bay City
Joseph Garbacz	Lift Truck Operator	Operations	Caro
Ronald Fields	Electrician	Operations	Caro
Tim Rokosz	Controller	Accounting	Corporate
Linda Forgash	Payroll Clerk	Accounting	Corporate
Matthew Tucker	Quality Assurance Supervisor	Operations	Corporate
Darlene Westfall	Account Manager	Sales	Corporate
Michael Levitte	Sugar End Leader CL/CN	Operations	Crosswell
Douglas Hollenbeck	Drier Leader CN/SG/CL	Operations	Crosswell
James Hering	Elect/Instru Journeyman Tech	Operations	Crosswell
William Woodruff	Sugar End Leader CL/CN	Operations	Crosswell
James Bolzman	Janitor	Operations	Sebewaing

## 20 YEARS of SERVICE

Joseph Racey	Electrical Engineer	Operations	Bay City
Mark Timko	Electrician/Instrum Tech	Operations	Caro
Lisa Wagner	Warehouse Manager	P&W	Caro
Tracy VanCamp	Welder	Operations	Crosswell

## 25 YEARS of SERVICE

Kenneth Makovics	Electrician	Operations	Bay City
JoAnn Jackson	Office Manager	Accounting	Caro
Kenneth Justice	Shift Maint. & Crew Leader	Operations	Caro
Randy Elizando	Factory Superintendent	Operations	Caro
Michael Millershaski	Technical Services Manager	Operations	Corporate
Jeffrey Elston	Agriculturist	Ag	Sebewaing
Harold Knox	Asst. Maintenance Manager	Operations	Sebewaing
James Damm	Dock Fork Truck Oper.	P&W	Sebewaing

## 30 YEARS of SERVICE

Dave Pembroke	Shift Superintendent	Operations	Bay City
Joann Hayes	Specialty Operator	P&W	Bay City
Harry Torzynski	Dock Operator	P&W	Bay City
Craig Wilder	Mobile Mechanic	Ag	Caro
Christine Gough	Warehouse Manager	P&W	Carrollton
James Ruhlman	VP Administration	Executive	Corporate
Paul Schultz	Dock Fork Truck Operator	P&W	Sebewaing
Lloyd Haag	Warehouse E/I Technician	P&W	Sebewaing

## 35 YEARS of SERVICE

Dean Sequin	Asst. Master Mechanic	Operations	Bay City
Thomas Gracias	Electrician	Operations	Caro
Luis Rivera	Utility Maintenance	P&W	Carrollton
Priscilla Owens	Human Resources Generalist	HR	Corporate

## 40 YEARS of SERVICE

Jesse Mancillas	Dock Operator	P&W	Bay City
Myron Kelley	Shift Superintendent	Operations	Caro
Gerald Grevel	Electrical Engineer	Operations	Corporate
Robert Trowhill	Shift Superintendent	Operations	Crosswell



# Preparing for a Strong Future

by Greg Clark, Agronomist

**Michigan Sugar Company summer internship program provides undergraduate students with a unique and extensive career experience that introduces all aspects of agriculture**



which includes contemplation for research demand from beginning to end, field management, and establishing trials for quantitative research.

Michigan Sugar Company uses internships as an effective way of advertising its employment opportunities to students. Graduate job surveys show that almost half of all employers hire at least 20% of their former interns. It is highly likely that graduates will return to the company that hired them as an intern for full-time employment after leaving college.

The idea of hiring former interns after graduating is particularly appealing to Michigan Sugar Company due to the fact that these graduates already know the company and the job they will be doing, thus requiring little or no training when hired full time.

Michigan Sugar Company would like to extend a warm welcome to our two interns who are working closely with the Research Department and the Agronomist. The two interns are Andrea Schuette and Kent Schriber.

Andrea Schuette is from a family-run, cash crop farm located in the Thumb of Michigan. Schuette's farm is diverse in agriculture in terms of putting silage up for a local dairy farm as well as growing sugarbeets, wheat, hay, soy beans, corn, and dry beans. Andrea stayed involved in agriculture through FFA, the Michigan Sugar Company Youth Program, and other activities.

Currently, Andrea is studying agribusiness management and minoring in agronomy at Michigan State University. In the Fall of 2013, Andrea will be starting her junior year. After graduation, Andrea plans on a career in agriculture that allows her to be interactive with growers and a part of the overall agricultural industry.

Kent Schriber grew up on a small cash crop family farm just north of Caro. The Schriber's family farm raises corn, soybeans, wheat, and edible dry beans like small red beans and black beans. Kent never raised sugarbeets; however, Kent

**Top of page:** Andrea Schuette weighs sugarbeet seeds while Kent Schriber (far right) discusses a concern with Lee Hubbell, Research Agronomist (left), and Jim Stewart, Director of Research (center). **Above:** The interns discuss their focus for the day with Lee Hubbell.



**Top:** Greg Clark, Agronomist, shows Andrea and Kent some things to look for when studying a field. **Above:** Kent Schriber carefully measures some of the chemicals the Research department is testing on fields.

has always been around sugarbeets in neighboring farmers' fields and helping them in their field operations.

Kent is currently a sophomore attending Michigan State University seeking a degree in Crop and Soil Sciences. After graduation, Kent would like to be an agronomist. Kent is not sure which crop interests him the most. He is keeping his options open and hoping his time at Michigan State University will give him the education he needs to pursue his desired career. What Kent would like to gain from this internship is to learn about field plot research and more about sugarbeet production. Kent has already learned how the Research Department manages itself. Kent also added that he "never realized how much work went into planning and designing trials."

Summer internship experiences provide an invaluable opportunity to share one's skills with a prospective employer long before the hiring process. Michigan Sugar Company's summer internship program is the perfect opportunity for undergraduates to get their "feet" in the door while networking within the agricultural industry. ■



**Greg Clark** is an Agronomist at Michigan Sugar Company. He has 15 years of experience in agronomy. He specializes in entomology, plant physiology, and plant pathology. Greg joined Michigan Sugar Company in October 2010.

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## SVSU to Help Prepare the Next Generation of Michigan Agricultural Students

*Dr. Marty Arford, Associate Professor of Geography, SVSU*

SVSU is excited to be expanding our programs to include a formal Agricultural Studies minor, and a pathway toward a degree from MSU's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources after completing two years of instruction at SVSU. We are currently the only four-year university in Michigan, after MSU, to offer an agricultural studies degree. Surrounded by thousands of acres of fertile, farmed soils, in an area abounding with agriculture-related business, and next door to Michigan Sugar Company in Bay City, SVSU seems the perfect place to contribute to the education of future agriculturists. We look forward to increasing our ties to the local and regional Agri-business community, and to provide graduates who will be prepared to enter careers in agriculture locally and regionally. Previously, SVSU offered a "pre-agriculture major" which allowed students to transfer some course credits to MSU; however, our new agreement with MSU provides for a more focused transfer program. In addition, students at SVSU can add a minor in Agricultural Studies to their existing SVSU major.

### History of the New Programs

In 2005, SVSU added two hoop house greenhouses on campus and developed a program for hands-on learning and local outreach programs to include sustainability and urban agriculture. Included were recycling of SVSU's dining waste into compost using worms (vermiculture), and wind/solar energy generation. The greenhouses also provided students with experience growing and propagating plants.

Discussions at the local and state level led to SVSU receiving a grant in 2010 from the Michigan Department of Education to (1) assess the needs for additional agriculture programs, (2) develop a partnership with Michigan State University, and (3) begin new agricultural programs at SVSU focusing on agricultural business and communication. Unique advantages SVSU can provide students include access to a wider range of students, smaller class size, a more rural environment, lower tuition costs, and a supportive agricultural community! The agreement we reached with MSU, signed in April 2012, creates a way to work on

increasing agriculture related programs, transfer of credits, financial aid, and other ways to help students succeed in agricultural education.

In April 2012, SVSU dedicated the new Boutell Memorial Greenhouse, made possible through a generous gift from the Arnold and Gertrude Boutell Foundation. This new facility, attached to the Doan Science Building, will provide further opportunities for students interested in plant science.

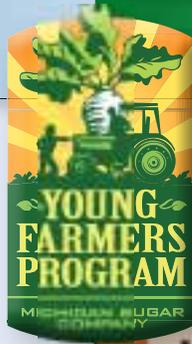
### Current Options for Students

Students interested in agricultural studies now have two options at SVSU. First, students can take two years of classes which will transfer to MSU's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. These include general education classes and science courses, as well as some newly developed ones: Introduction to Soil Science, Decision-making in the Agri-food Systems, and Agricultural Accounting Information. In the future, SVSU would also like to include courses offered through MSU's Institute of Agricultural Technology, which would already bear MSU credit. This 2 + 2 option will serve students who wish to achieve a four-year degree with an agricultural or natural resources focus by first attending SVSU, then transferring to MSU. Program options at MSU include Crop and Soil Science, Animal Science, Forestry, Horticulture, Fisheries and Wildlife, and Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics, to name a few. Transferring students will have to meet MSU's transfer admission requirements.

The second option for SVSU students is to complete a minor in agricultural studies. This option includes all the courses listed above, and many other existing SVSU courses. It is hoped that courses offered by MSU's Institute of Agricultural Technology may later be incorporated into this minor. Students who prefer this option will take 9 credits of core courses, then focus additional courses in areas such as Plant/Animal/Natural Resources or Power/Structure/Technical Systems. This will allow students who cannot or wish not to attend MSU to enhance their marketability in their desired area of the agriculture and agribusiness.

« *Ray VanDriessche, Director of Community and Government Relations, gives Saginaw Valley State University agriculture studies students a tour of the Bay City facility.*





*Vice President of Marketing, Jerry Coleman, discussed the sugar market with attendees of the Young Farmers Program one-day seminar in June 2013. The attendees also toured the Bay City packaging and warehousing facilities (see below).*

Majors who may want to consider a minor in Agricultural Studies include: Biology, Chemistry, Accounting, Communications, General Business, International Business, Finance, Marketing, Management and Business Administration, Computer Science, Mechanical Engineering, and Education. A few examples of the diverse course offerings available to this new minor include Plant Physiology, Environmental Economics, Entomology, Environmental Chemistry, Geographic Information Systems, Quality Control and Assurance, Databases and Applications, and Engineering Cost Analysis.

### Pilot Soils Course Was a Success

In fall 2012, SVSU offered the first of its new Agricultural Studies course, Introduction to Soil Science. Students learned the basics of soil formation, physical, chemical, and biological properties of soils, as well as soil fertility and plant nutrition, soil hydrology, soil classification, and soil management and conservation. In addition to classroom lectures and activities, students conducted laboratory exercises on soil's physical and chemical properties (color, texture, structure, porosity and density, pH, and N/P/K testing). Several field trips were included: local soil conservation practices (with a local soil scientist), soil geomorphology (with MSU soil geomorphology class), and even a visit to the Michigan Sugar Company factory in Bay City. Student feedback from this class was both positive and encouraging. Intro to Soil Science will be offered again this fall, Decision-making in the Agri-food Systems will be offered in Winter 2014, and Agricultural Accounting Information will be offered in May 2014.

### Moving Forward

As we celebrate our 50th year anniversary as an institution of higher learning, SVSU is excited to be expanding our agricultural studies programs for the next generation of agricultural professionals. We look forward to increasing our ties to the local and regional Agribusiness community, and to provide graduates who will be prepared to enter careers in agriculture. We also thank all of you who helped to make our new programs possible, and those who continue to move Agribusiness forward in the Saginaw Valley region and the state of Michigan. ■



**Martin (Marty) Arford** received a bachelor's degree from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in Geology and Biology. He has a Masters and a PhD in Physical Geography. He has been an instructor at SVSU since the fall of 2005 and currently teaches Intro to Physical Geography, Intro to Soil Science, Freshwater Resources, Environmental Issues in Geography, World Regional Geography, and Geology.

# Young Farmers Program Sowing Seeds for Future

Michigan Sugar Company launched a new program this year, which will increase and enhance the knowledge of the next generation of sugarbeet growers regarding the sugar industry and our Cooperative. Growers, family members, or farm employees ages 18 to 35 are eligible to participate.

The program was kicked-off in January with an informal Q&A session with Michigan Sugar Company's President and CEO, Mark Flegenheimer. Over 50 young farmers attended that event and enjoyed a lively discussion on a variety of topics ranging from the Farm Bill to new piling equipment. It was a unique opportunity for these growers to interface directly with Mark.

In February, a smaller group of these growers enjoyed a fun evening at a Saginaw Spirit Hockey game. Members of Michigan Sugar's management team were also in attendance. It was a nice opportunity for our younger growers to meet and get to know some of the management group.

Vice President of Marketing, Jerry Coleman, and Vice President of Administration, Jim Ruhlman, conducted a one-day seminar in June on the sugar market, our marketing plans, and an overview of our packaging and warehousing operations. The group toured the Bay City P&W facilities and got to see first-hand the investments which have been made in that area of our business.

Later this summer, the young farmers will be invited to a session at the Saginaw Valley Research Farm where they will get a chance to learn about the latest research being conducted. It will be an excellent opportunity for the growers to discuss issues and concerns they see in the sugarbeet crop.



In September, participants in this program will be able to apply to be recognized as the Young Farmer of the Year (look for more details on our website in September). The young farmer selected will win an all-expense paid trip for two to the American Sugar Beet Growers annual conference in February 2014 in Tampa, Florida. This three-day conference is an excellent forum to learn about our industry from economists, politicians, market analysts, and other experts. This meeting is a great occasion to not only learn about the sugar industry, but it is also a wonderful venue to network with growers from across the United States.

As with any new, first-year activity, the Young Farmers Program will be tweaked and improved upon in the future. We are excited that so many future leaders in our industry have participated in the activities this year and we look to make the program even better in the future. ■

# Meet Your Next Generation of Agriculturists

by Paul Pfenninger, Vice President of Agriculture

Years of service to the sugarbeet industry would indicate that working in agriculture truly is a career move. Your agricultural staff at Michigan Sugar Company has many seasoned veterans who have enjoyed long careers in the sugarbeet industry. Since Roger Elston retired with his 48 years of service last summer, the next “Top Ten” employees, in terms of service, averages 30.2 years. Age becomes a factor as well with 15 ag staff members now at 50 years old or older.

Succession planning has begun and the “next generation” of agriculturists has arrived.

Smartphones, iPads, and GPS equipment are everyday tools for this group of “next generation” agriculturists. We will be challenged to create an environment that will encourage them to move sugarbeet production forward in the state of Michigan. We are leaders in many areas of sugarbeet production today and we need to remain out front going forward.

What will the yields be 15-20 years from now? How about the sugar content? Looking back 20 years, the average yield in 1993 was 17.53 tons per acre and grower sugar was 17.90%. Our five-year average yield today is 26.6 tons per acre and average sugar is 18.27%. Will we see the same percentage increase in the future?

The “next generation” of agriculturists will be key to directing this Cooperative in that direction. **Who are they? Let’s meet them one by one ...**

## Dexter Auernhamer • February 2010

Dexter grew up on a small family farm located in Richville. Everyone knows the farm — If you have ever purchased straw from the trailer on M-46.

Dexter attended Michigan State University and received his degree in Agricultural Industries. He now covers the area around Caro with 70 growers and approximately 11,000 acres of responsibility.



## Glenn Martus • September 2011

Glenn grew up on a small dairy farm in the town of Brown City, Michigan. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Crop & Soil Sciences from Michigan State University in 2009. He spent a short period of time working in Gratiot County for Michigan Sugar but then was transferred back “closer to home” in Croswell this past year.

Glenn has approximately 90 individual growers with over 14,000 acres of sugarbeets. His largest grower has 1,760 acres while his smallest is just over 20 acres. Glenn believes our agriculture research is “top notch” and “we need to pay close attention to the research findings and take full advantage of our Crop Records.”

## Rudy Schlatter • May 2011

Rudy is the “elder statesman” of this group at the “ripe old age” of 32. He grew up knowing what it takes to be a good agriculturist as he watched his father, Tom, go through the rigors of planting and harvest seasons, year after year. He obtained his Program of Study Certificate in Agriculture from Northwest Iowa Community College.

Rudy is responsible for the area south of Bay City all the way to Durand near I-69. This includes the area of Albee and he even has a few acres near Frankenmuth. With over 80 grower units and nearly 9,700 acres, there are challenges galore. Rudy expresses his biggest challenge as “trying to control both Roundup Ready resistance and fungicide resistance in the future. Growers must believe us and work together to keep agriculture number one in Michigan.”



### Russ Wegener • September 2012

Russ grew up in Freeland, Michigan, only ten miles away from the Bay City factory. His grandpa had a small farm and his father had a small poultry business to go along with the farm. Russ attended Michigan State University and obtained a degree in Agribusiness Management.

Russ is in charge of the area to the south and west of Breckenridge. With the closing of the Ithaca receiving station, many of the beets are now Mased directly to Bay City. His area consists of 33 growers and just under 7,000 areas and is spread out all the way to Sunfield and Greenville — both over 100 miles from Bay City.

Russ sees the changes in technology and the adoption of these changes by farmers and the Cooperative as the biggest challenges facing agriculture in Michigan. He knows the state of Michigan is second only to California, as the most diverse state for agriculture, and he hopes the government will continue supporting agricultural programs so that the “next generation of consumers will know where their food comes from and will have the opportunity to pursue an ag-related career right in their backyard.”



### Canton Brissette • May 2013

Canton grew up in Fairgrove, Michigan, and spent time working on the Ed Mantey & Sons seed corn farm which was located just “around the corner from my house.” He started his college career at Michigan Technological University but then transferred to Michigan State University where he spent time in the Weed Science Department and eventually graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree from the Department of Crop & Soil Sciences with a concentration in Agronomy.

Canton has just over 10,000 acres of sugarbeet production responsibility. His territory is a smaller division of Roger Elston's old territory in the Elkton/Pigeon area. Canton is a recent addition to our “next generation” of agriculturists and just started his job on May 6, 2013. He wants to learn “as much as possible from the experience and knowledge of those who have worked for Michigan Sugar Company for many years.” It is an opportunity to learn, and learn quickly, from his fellow workers.

### Kevin Messing • July 2013

The newest and latest addition to our Agricultural Staff is Kevin Messing. Kevin grew up in Bad Axe on the family dairy farm. He adds to the Crowell staff and will be directly responsible for the Sandusky piling grounds and its associated growers. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Bio Systems and Agricultural Engineering from Michigan State University in 2012. Since graduation, he has been working with Nestle Business Services in Fremont, Michigan, ensuring a safe supply of all fresh products for Gerber — more directly, about 4,200 acres of peas. The agriculturists' territories in the Crowell area will be divided in such a way that each agriculturist will have responsibility for approximately 10,000 - 11,000 acres. ■



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# Gardner Family Farming, LLC

## Yale, Michigan

### Three Generations and Growing Strong

Dennis Gardner and his wife, Reta, are third generation beet growers. They, along with Bruce and Gail Gardner, Dennis' parents, are co-owners of the Gardner Family Farming, LLC. The farm (formerly "Gardner Farms") was established in 1906 by Dennis' grandfather, Frank Gardner, and is located northeast of Yale, Michigan. Frank grew sugarbeets on the farm in the 1960s but eventually discontinued growing beets when the farm expanded to cattle. Dennis and Bruce began growing beets again in 1997 and continue growing them today, with 425 total shares owned, averaging 20-25 tons per acre with 16-18 percent sugar over the last five years.

Today, Dennis and Bruce crop farm 1,700 acres of owned and rented ground. In addition to sugarbeets, the Gardners grow soybeans, wheat, and corn. The general crop rotation is soybeans-sugarbeets-wheat or corn. Occasionally, beets are planted after corn. The farm uses minimum tillage when working their ground. This year, they made the switch from 30 to 22-inch rows for all of their crops. Dennis decided to make the switch due to the benefits of narrow rows that he had observed from research data. When planting their beets, Dennis uses Beta and Crystal seed with the varieties dependent on the needs for each field. Along with correct varieties, Dennis believes timing is a vital key for a successful crop. Equipment must be ready to go when the weather allows for planting. Good timing of field work and planting allows the crop to successfully establish and be healthy enough to fight off any potential disease pressures. Watching the crop diligently aids in the proper timing of chemical applications for weeds, insects, and diseases.

Harvesting for Dennis changed last year when the farm purchased a Ropa Tiger and Big Bear. Along with his beets, Dennis custom harvested 800 acres for other area sugarbeet growers. All of the beets harvested by him are delivered to the Croswell beet receiving station. The beets are delivered throughout the harvest period, beginning with early delivery and finishing during long-term piling by grower-owned trucks. All of the growers for whom he custom harvests use their trucks to help deliver each other's beets to make the harvest run smoother and more efficiently.

Dennis keeps himself busy within the agricultural industry by being part of the Soybean Promotion Committee Board which is responsible for managing soybean check-off money. Just this past winter Dennis was elected to the Michigan Sugar Company East District Board by his fellow growers. Dennis is also involved in the community; he and his family sing in the church choir at Colonial Woods Missionary Church. He is also a member of a quartet with his parents and his sister, Michelle. Dennis is a past member of the Trustee Board for Trinity Missionary Church. When he is not working on the farm, he spends his time with his family. Dennis and Reta have been



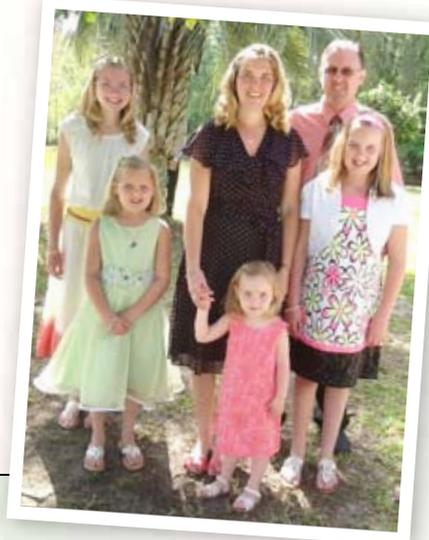
*Gardner Family Farming, LLC, with the farm shop in the background. One of the farm's original barns was remodeled into their modern-day shop.*



*Above: Dennis Gardner planting his sugarbeets near Croswell in early 2013. Right: Dennis with his wife, Reta, and four daughters.*

blessed with four daughters; Kristin, Jenna, Dana, and Lauren. They like to vacation at their summer home in St. Helen, Michigan.

The future goals of the farm are to expand to 2,500 acres and possibly purchase a Ropa Maus to run in the Croswell area. Their main goal is to keep the farm within the family for years to come as the new farm name would suggest. Although his daughters are still young, they have shown keen interest in the farm and enjoy taking turns riding in the Tiger with Dennis during harvest. After all, what better way to learn how to farm and operate farm equipment than by spending time around the farm equipment with their father? ■



**Glenn Martus** is an agriculturalist at Michigan Sugar Company in Croswell. He joined the Company in September 2011.

## Zwerk and Sons Farm Vassar, Michigan

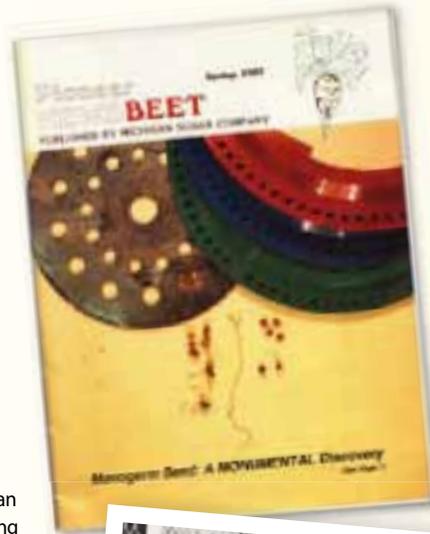
### Past, Present ... and Future!

Zwerk and Sons Farm of Vassar, Michigan, has grown sugarbeets for 68 years, so "beet season" is nothing new and still requires "all hands on deck" when it begins. In 1987, Michigan Sugar Company had written an article on the Zwerks regarding a harvester review. They had purchased a WIC harvester to harvest their beets in a timely fashion. In 1986, they reported harvesting 434 acres of sugarbeets, farming a total of 3,200 acres. Zwerks planted their beets with a 12-row, 28-inch John Deere planter, and they hauled those beets to the factory with two tandems and one tri-axle truck that averaged 17 tons/load. Arnold Zwerk and his sons Mike and Larry had a great yield that year with 25.8 tons per acre and finished harvest in 21 days.

Today, Zwerk and Sons Farm has turned to the next generation. Partners Marty Zwerk, Jeff Schluckbier, and Dave Rupprecht operate the farm. Arnold Zwerk has since passed away, but Mike and Larry are still active on the farm helping when they can. The farm is a bit different than it was just 26 years ago, growing around 1,200 acres of sugarbeets and farming a total of 6,700 acres of land. The Zwerks plant those beets with a 22-inch, 48-row John Deere planter, which saves them time when the soil condition is ideal for planting. Last fall, they harvested their beet crop with a 22-inch, 12-row Amity harvester. They use three beet carts to keep the trucks full and the harvester empty. For the sugarbeet haul, Zwerks use eight semi-trucks averaging 40 tons per load. They like to take their beets to the factory sites as often as they can.

The choice to switch to narrow rows was made a few years ago, and with the 48-row planter, it was given a lot of thought. Taking into consideration an improved yield and higher sugars, the decision turned out to be a good one. For the upcoming harvest, they have decided to go with a self-propelled harvester. The Zwerk farm requires significant manpower during the sugarbeet season and fall, due to the number of acres they manage. With roughly ten employees, they know that their Ropa harvester will help to not only save time and money, but also keep fatigue and stress at bay during the busy harvest season. The Zwerks hope that with the new harvester, they can keep their crew working in the beets and have the option to send a few workers to a different crop to help with the entire fall harvest.

Taking advantage of auto-steer has also saved time and money for the Zwerks in the long run. Whether it is fewer tracks through the field or having the ability to shut off row units in the spring, technology is changing and it can be very easily introduced into everyday farming practices. ■



*This photo, published in the Spring 1987 issue of The Pioneer Newsbeet, demonstrates the longevity of the Zwerk and Sons Farm. Featuring a 23-pound sugarbeet held by Arnold Zwerk who is flanked by, left to right, his son, Larry, his grandson, Marty, and son, Mike.*



*Zwerk and Sons Farm is currently operated by, left to right, Dave Rupprecht, Jeff Schluckbier, and Marty Zwerk.*



**Dexter Auernhamer** is an agriculturist at Michigan Sugar Company in Caro. He joined the Company in February 2010.

# Scholarships Are Stepping Stones to Higher Education...

In 1974, Michigan Sugar established the Albert Flegenheimer memorial scholarship. The scholarship was established in honor of Michigan Sugar Company's chairman from 1963 to 1970. It also demonstrated the Company's firm belief in the importance of higher education. We have awarded this scholarship to over 40 outstanding students who are children of our growers. These fine young people have gone on to be lawyers, doctors, teachers, farmers, and a number of other careers. On the following page, you can learn about what some of these recipients are doing today and have to say about the importance of receiving financial help as they pursued their college degree. This year, we added another scholarship (Michigan Sugar Company Next Generation Scholarship), which demonstrates our commitment toward the future leaders of our industry.

Monitor Sugar also had a similar commitment to education with the establishment of a number of scholarships. Since the time these initial scholarships were established, a number of additional scholarships (see list below) have been set up and funded by a variety of organizations and associations which relate to agriculture and benefit those involved in the sugar industry. We hope all eligible students will apply to receive one of these scholarships when they graduate from high school.

Scholarship Name	Qualifications	Value	For More Information
<b>Michigan Sugar Queen &amp; Court</b>	Young lady between 18-23; resides in a county that grows sugarbeets	\$2,000/\$1,000/\$1,000	<a href="http://www.michigansugar.com/about/scholarship.php">http://www.michigansugar.com/about/scholarship.php</a>
<b>Michigan Sugar Company - Albert Flegenheimer Memorial</b>	High school senior, Youth Project participant	\$2,500	<a href="http://www.michigansugar.com/about/scholarship.php">http://www.michigansugar.com/about/scholarship.php</a>
<b>Syngenta</b>	Ag-focused students in sugarbeet-growing regions of the U.S. (see website for details)	Five \$1,500 awards	<a href="http://www.farmassist.com/promo/sugarbeets/">http://www.farmassist.com/promo/sugarbeets/</a>
<b>Michigan Sugar Company - Next Generation</b>	High school senior, Youth Project participant	\$1,000	<a href="http://www.michigansugar.com/about/scholarship.php">http://www.michigansugar.com/about/scholarship.php</a>
<b>SVSU - Big Chief Scholarship</b>	Business & management or science, engineering technology majors; resides in a county that grows sugarbeets	\$800	<a href="http://www.svsu.edu/financialaid/scholarships/studentleadership/studentleaderships/">http://www.svsu.edu/financialaid/scholarships/studentleadership/studentleaderships/</a>
<b>SVSU - Pioneer Traditions</b>	Freshmen students of Michigan Sugar Company employees or growers	\$500	<a href="http://www.svsu.edu/financialaid/scholarships/studentleadership/studentleaderships/">http://www.svsu.edu/financialaid/scholarships/studentleadership/studentleaderships/</a>
<b>BetaSeed</b>	High school senior residing in Michigan sugarbeet districts	Six \$500 awards*	<a href="http://www.michigansugar.com/about/scholarship.php">http://www.michigansugar.com/about/scholarship.php</a>
<b>Michigan Sugar Company - Guy Beals 4H Memorial</b>	High school senior, Youth Project participant, residing in the East District of Michigan Sugar Company	\$500	<a href="http://www.michigansugar.com/about/scholarship.php">http://www.michigansugar.com/about/scholarship.php</a>
<b>Michigan Agri-Business Association (MABA)</b>	Enrolled in 12 credit min./semester; min 3.0 GPA; interns at agri-business company; degree in agri-business	Varies	<a href="http://www.miagbiz.org/images/E0186601/application_scholarship_interactive.pdf">http://www.miagbiz.org/images/E0186601/application_scholarship_interactive.pdf</a>
<b>Brian Fox Memorial Agriculture Scholarship</b>	Lambton or Kent County (Ontario) student entering an agricultural post-secondary field of study**	\$2,000 (est.)	Email <a href="mailto:admin@ontariosugarbeetgrowers.ca">admin@ontariosugarbeetgrowers.ca</a>
<b>Loren Humm Memorial Sugar Beet Grower's Scholarship</b>	Gratiot County student who is from a family of sugarbeet growers or who has completed a 4-H project related to sugarbeets; 3.0 GPA**	Amount will vary from year to year	<a href="http://www.gratiotfoundation.org/1/280/scholarships.asp">http://www.gratiotfoundation.org/1/280/scholarships.asp</a>

\*Six \$500.00 scholarships (two \$500.00 scholarships in each of the three Michigan Sugar Company Districts)

\*\* Other criteria may be required. Contact the administrator for more information.

## Two New Memorial Scholarships Created

*During this past year, Michigan Sugar Company lost two of its original Board members; Brian Fox and Loren Humm. To memorialize their contributions to the success of our Cooperative and the sugarbeet industry, scholarships have been established in their names. Please consider donating to these scholarships to honor them and ensure continued participation by our youth in the agriculture field.*



**The Brian Fox Memorial Agriculture Scholarship** is administered by the Ontario Sugarbeet Growers' Association (OSGA). The first scholarship award will be presented in the 2014/15 school year to a Lambton or Kent County (Ontario) student entering an agricultural post-secondary field of study (other qualifications may be required). The scholarship award will be in the \$2,000 range.

Fundraising efforts are ongoing. The First Annual BarnBQ held on July 6 was successful in raising \$20,000 toward the endowment fund. If you or your organization would like to donate to this scholarship, please contact the OSGA at PO Box 150 Stn Main, Wallaceburg, Ontario N8A 4L5, or email [admin@ontariosugarbeetgrowers.ca](mailto:admin@ontariosugarbeetgrowers.ca).



**The Loren Humm Memorial Sugar Beet Grower's Scholarship** is administered by the Gratiot County Community Foundation, and will be awarded annually to a Gratiot County student who is from a family of sugarbeet growers, or who has completed a 4-H project related to sugarbeets. Applicants must also have at least a 3.0 GPA. There may be other criteria. The amount of the award will vary from year to year. Interested applicants should check with the scholarship administrator for more details, or visit their website at [www.gratiotfoundation.org/1/280/scholarships.asp](http://www.gratiotfoundation.org/1/280/scholarships.asp).

Donations to the scholarship can be made through the Gratiot County Community Foundation at 168 E. Center St., PO Box 248, Ithaca, Michigan 48847, or by contacting the Foundation at (989) 875-4222.

# Scholarship Recipients: Where Are They Now?

**Chris Grekowicz [1980]** – Harbor Beach, MI • Degree in Crop Production, MSU • Married with four children • Farms corn, wheat, alfalfa, and sugarbeets • Grower-owner of Michigan Sugar Company.

*"If I did not have the scholarship, I would not have continued my education. My mother told me I had to return to school for the second term and without the scholarship, I would not have been able to do so."*

**Sandra (Mossner) Stabinsky [1985]** – Troy, Michigan • Bachelor's in Accounting, Master's of Business Administration, MSU • Worked for Coopers and Lybrand (now PriceWaterhouse Coopers) and earned her CPA • Currently, Senior Manager, Corporate Accounting, Kelly Services, Troy • Married with two children.

*"Growing up on a farm, I was very accustomed to hard work. I took that strong work ethic with me to MSU and applied it to my studies. I was able to earn both my Bachelor's in Accounting and Master's in Business Administration in five years in the Program for Professional Accounting."*

**Kay (Maurer) Balcer [1988]** • Harbor Beach, MI • Degree in Secondary School Education, Life Management Major, and Speech Communication Minor, MSU • Owns a consulting firm, and works with non-profits and businesses helping them to grow and develop • Specializes in grant writing, strategic planning, evaluation services, program development, project management, training, and needs assessments.

*"The 4-H Sugarbeet Project and scholarship opportunity also helped me develop skills for completing applications, writing reports, and interviewing. These skills assisted me as I participated in many college projects including a research study. I also utilized the skills that I had developed during the job application process. The program increased my confidence for public speaking and working with people that I have just met."*

**Kristin (Zagata) Bonham [1992]** – St. Charles, MO • Majored in Agriculture Communications, specialization in Ag Business, MSU • Employed by Monsanto for 18 years, currently the Operations Lead for Strategic Accounts and Licensing • Married with three children.

*"The scholarship helped me support my education and helped me be able to stay within the industry I love. It is wonderful to see a scholarship like this be available for students for nearly 40 years. The demand for talented students in agriculture is great, and this is a great tool to help them support their education and development."*



**Kyle Fiebig [1996]** – Muskegon, MI • B.S. degree and M.S. degree (MSU) to teach Agriscience, which he did for 12 years at Montague High School • Currently, Principal of Muskegon Area Career Tech Center, plus he oversees all Career and Tech Education programs for Muskegon County • Married with two daughters.

*"Without this scholarship, and support from my family, I would not be where I am today. I have had the greatest opportunity in life to grow up on a sugarbeet farm. This atmosphere taught me hard work, management of resources, and soft skills to work with others."*

**Sarah (Zagata) Vasani [1997]** – London, England • Dual majors, International Relations and Agriculture & Natural Resources Communications with specializations in Environmental Economics and Latin American and Caribbean Studies, MSU • Juris Doctorate, Vanderbilt University Law School • Sarah is an international arbitration lawyer focusing on resolving complex disputes for clients across the globe • Married with two daughters.



*"I have been fortunate to travel around the world and to meet with investors and experts in a variety of fields. No matter what happens to an individual in his or her life, or what misfortunes may befall him or her, having a solid foundation*

*built on both education and life experience enables us to overcome obstacles that we face, and to remake ourselves if and when necessary. A solid education is invaluable and something that no one can ever dispossess you of. The Albert Flegenheimer scholarship provided me with essential funds to meet my educational goals and, in turn, my career goals."*



**Stacie Shaw [1999]** – Lahaina, Hawaii (Island of Maui) • BA in Interpersonal Communication, MSU • Works full time at Na Hoku, Hawaii's Finest Jewelers • Licensed massage therapist • Works part time at a small day spa in the Kaanapali resort area • Will be married this September in Las Vegas, Nevada.

*"It allowed me the opportunity to pursue higher education. So many exciting doors have opened up for me, and I have been presented with so many opportunities as a result of my education."*



**Jeremy Licht [2001]** – Pigeon, MI • Majored in Information Technology, MSU • Currently Senior IT Technician, Cooperative Elevator Company.

*"With the funds from the scholarship, plus thousands of hours on the family farm, I was able to complete my degree without any debt. I was able to start a career at the local Cooperative Elevator Co. and directly impact the community that provided me with this generous scholarship."*

**Amy Gerstacker [2006]** – Midland, MI • Majored in Applied Engineering Sciences, MSU • Employed by Dow Chemical Company in Supply Chain • Amy is getting married this summer.



*"The Albert Flegenheimer scholarship helped fund my college education which was instrumental in securing a job in my chosen field. The selection process was also good experience to help prepare me for future interviews."*

**Sara Smith [2007]** – Pigeon, MI • Works at Laker Elementary in a split classroom (4th/5th grade) • Also works at Haist Flowers • Will teach summer school for Lakers • Will serve as Co-Dean of Bay Shore's Junior Camp, which includes about 200 fifth and sixth graders.

*"It allowed me to worry less about being able to meet my tuition requirements and more about my academic requirements ... I was able to join several organizations, start a chapter of an international exchange organization at SVSU, and travel abroad multiple times while attending school."*

**Alyssa Brown [2012]** – St. Louis, MI • Attending SVSU, nursing major, graduating in 2016 • Works part time as a CNA at Schnepf Senior Care and Rehab in St. Louis • When home for the summer, she helps her dad, grandpa, and uncle in the field.

*"Receiving the scholarship was a huge blessing ... Since I received such assistance, financially, I was fortunate enough to be able to live on campus my freshman year. It was a terrific experience and I was able to really get involved on campus and make new friends."* ■

# Spotlight on Youth & Education

## 2013 Scholarships

### Albert Flegenheimer Memorial Scholarship

Jed Bushey of Caseville, Michigan is this year's recipient of the Albert Flegenheimer Memorial Scholarship. He is the son of proud parents, T.L. and Kelly Bushey. Jed has participated in the Sugarbeet Project for three years and earned the Prestige Award in 2012.

Jed graduated from Laker High School with a 4.0 GPA and an ACT score of 29. While in high school, he was very active in school and community activities including football, the Laker Leader Program, Chapter FFA President, Region III FFA Vice President, a 2012 State Top Outstanding Junior, and 2013 Ag Placement (State), and the National Honor Society. He also plays the drums in the church band. Jed led his local chapter in collecting over \$40,000 that was given to those in need and provided relief for families that are in need of emergency care. He also volunteered planting in the local community garden and helped with the food pantry.

Jed's future plans are to attend Michigan State University, to obtain a degree in agribusiness and accounting, and then return to the family farm. He hopes to join the next generation of leaders by becoming a member of many agriculture boards and advisory committees.

Jed states that "Farming is my life. This simple statement sums up how I should spend my days on this planet."

### Guy Beals Scholarship

This year's recipient of the Guy Beals Memorial Scholarship is Julie Maurer, daughter of Duane and Diane Maurer of Bad Axe. Julie has been involved in the Youth Sugarbeet Project for the past ten years and a 4-H member for 12 years. She is the second oldest in a family of four girls.

During her time in the Youth Program, she has received the Premier Grower Award in 2011 and the Prestige Award in 2012. In December of 2012, Julie was able to address a large group of growers and Cooperative employees with a Youth Project report at the East District Annual Meeting. Julie also was the Mistress of Ceremonies at the Youth Project Awards Banquet on January 7, 2013.

Julie graduated from Harbor Beach High School in June of 2013. Julie graduated with high honors and was involved in the National Honor Society while in high school. She enjoyed playing soccer for all four years of high school. Besides being involved in many 4-H activities outside of school, she also was a lector at Trinity Most Holy Church and volunteered at Relay for Life events.

Saginaw Valley State University is where Julie will be attending to further her education in the fall of 2013.

The \$500 Guy Beals Memorial Scholarship is in memory of a local grower from Brown City, Guy Beals, who passed away in 2003.

### Michigan Sugar Company Next Generation Scholarship

Amy Hecht of Saginaw, Michigan, is the first winner of the new "Michigan Sugar Company Next Generation Scholarship" in the amount of \$1,000. She is the daughter of Timothy and Gloria Hecht. Amy has participated in the Sugarbeet Project for nine years and earned the Premier Award four times and the Prestige Award three times.

Amy graduated from Reese High School with a 4.0 GPA and an ACT score of 27. While in high school, she was very active in school and community activities including volleyball, basketball, track, National Honor Society, Out-of-Doors Club, Pep Club. She was also a Sunday school teacher, youth group treasurer, bible school leader, 4-H Club Youth Rabbit Leader and Treasurer.

Amy plans to attend Saginaw Valley State University to obtain a degree in occupational therapy and pursue a career in that field.

Amy was one of the valedictorians of her class and we are sure she will have a very bright future. ■

*2013 Scholarship Recipients,  
left to right: Jed Bushey,  
Julie Maurer, and Amy Hecht.*



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# INTRODUCING THE 2013 MICHIGAN SUGAR QUEEN & COURT

Victoria Hudgins of Lapeer was crowned the 2013 Michigan Sugar Queen at the 49th Annual Michigan Sugar Festival in Sebewaing on June 14. Sarah Kimble of Owosso was crowned first runner-up and Claire Forrest of Bay City as second runner-up.

Victoria is the daughter of Joseph Hudgins and Molly Hudgins of Lapeer. Victoria is a 2013 graduate from Lapeer East High School and will be attending Ferris State University this fall. Her intended major will be in television and digital media production with a minor in marketing. Victoria plans on working in broadcasting with hopes to one day work for the NHL.

First runner-up, Sarah, is the daughter of James and Pamela Kimble of Owosso. Sarah graduated from Owosso High School in 2011 and attends Central Michigan University where she is majoring in psychology.

Claire Forrest, second runner-up, is the daughter of Alan and Lisa Forrest of Bay City. Claire recently graduated from Bay City Central High School. She will be attending Central Michigan University pursuing a degree in hospitality management with the intent to become an event/wedding coordinator.

The Royal Court will be touring the state on the Pioneer Sugar float while making appearances in many local parades. The tour began with the Michigan Sugar Festival Grand Parade on June 15, 2013. They have appeared in two national parades: the National Cherry Festival Parade and the National Baby Food Festival Parade in July. They will also attend the popular Cheeseburger Festival in Caseville, in August, and the Tuscola County Pumpkin Festival in Caro, in October.

The Queen and Court may be coming to your hometown soon, so be sure to check the calendar of events under the community tab on our website ([www.michigansugar.com](http://www.michigansugar.com)) for upcoming parades and appearances for the 2013 Michigan Sugar Queen and Court.

Michigan Sugar Company solely sponsors the Michigan Sugar Queen competition. As the sponsor, the company provides the queen with a \$2,000 scholarship for use at the university of her choice. The first and second runners-up will each be awarded a \$1,000 scholarship. ■



◀ Left: 2013 Michigan Sugar Queen, Victoria Hudgins. Below, left to right: The Queen and Court ... first runner-up Sarah Kimble, Queen Victoria, and second runner-up Claire Forrest just after the crowning ceremonies held at the Michigan Sugar Festival on June 14.



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## Ushering in the Next Generation of Agriculture

by Ray VanDriessche, Director of  
Community and Government Relations

“Like our parents before us, we would like to see our sons or daughters have the opportunity to become the owners and operators of the family farm.”

Over the years, agriculture has seen a significant loss of youth that was raised on the family farm to the lure of other jobs and lifestyles. Although, currently, the trend seems to be moving in the other direction, keeping the next generation on the family farm can be a real challenge. Many of us who have grown up on the farm were fortunate enough to be that “next generation” who eventually became the operators and owners of the farm. Like our parents before us, we would like to see our sons or daughters have the same opportunity that was offered to us and many of them who have a real passion for farming would like nothing better than to see that become a reality. Having grown up on the farm, they know that they will need to be a mechanic, a welder, a fabricator, an equipment operator, a marketer, a certified pesticide applicator, a business manager, and everything else in between. With that in mind, many are going on to college or skill centers and coming back to the farm with agriscience, marketing, business administration, computer science degrees or skilled trade certificates that can bring a whole new perspective to the farming operation.

Farming is one of the few businesses that provides the opportunity and enjoyment of working side by side with our sons or daughters and, at the same time, share our experiences and what we have learned over the years. For the “older generation” that is thinking about slowing down or retiring, shepherding in the next generation can be the perfect scenario. The younger generation can bring fresh ideas and knowledge of new technical advances that are sometimes difficult for the older generation to grasp, and the blend of the old and the new can revitalize a family farming operation.

In most cases, transitioning the farm does not happen without the willingness, foresight, and guidance of parents or other relatives that are involved in the ownership of the farming



operation. One of the key elements of a smooth and gradual transition is good communication between all parties involved and having a well thought-out plan in place. Planning in advance allows the next generation to gradually take over certain responsibilities and learn on the job as they grow in to the operation. Sometimes, due to unforeseen and unfortunate circumstances, the operations of the farm may be turned over to the younger generation much quicker than one could have anticipated — all the more reason to have a plan in place as soon as possible.

Putting a transition plan in place may take the help of outside consultants who can give guidance and can help to avoid emotional conflicts between family members that can sometimes result in hard feelings and poor decisions. The Stevens Family Business Center at SVSU is one of the resources available that can provide a number of opportunities to learn from experts and from well-known family businesses who have gone through the experience to help keep family business going for generations. More and more Michigan Sugar Company shareholders are attending the SCFB events at SVSU and coming away with a real goal to have a succession plan in place in the near future. (The Stevens Center for Family Business was featured in the Winter 2012–2013 issue of *The Newsbeet*.)

As we drive around the countryside, we see centennial farm plaques in the front yards of a number of farmsteads which are a source of pride for multigenerational farms. Centennial farms would not be a reality if parents and/or others involved in the operation had not had the love, patience, and foresight to usher in the “next generation.” ■



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Location	Winfield Seedex Dealers	Address	City	State	Phone	Sales Rep
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Sebewaing	Cooperative Elevator	969 Pine St	Sebewaing	MI	89-883-3030	Joel Fischer
Fairgrove	Cooperative Elevator	4931 Shreeves Rd	Fairgrove	MI	989-693-6104	Jim Reithel & David Ackerman
North Branch	Cooperative Elevator	4290 N Branch Rd	North Branch	MI	810-338-4086	Dar Green
Ruth	Cooperative Elevator	4600 Ruth Rd	Ruth	MI	989-864-3391	Travis Tanton & Jim Terbrack
Bad Axe	Cooperative Elevator	210 Thompson Rd	Bad Axe	MI	989-269-9929	Dutch Seley & Tim Wilke
Ithaca	GAPS	3151 W Fillmore Rd	Ithaca	MI	989-875-7661	Phil Schneider & Ed Nickels
St Louis	A & E Ag	720 East Washington	St Louis	MI	989-681-3080	Chris Engle, Jason & Christie Apple
Fowlerville	Fowlerville Farm Services	320 Garden Lane St	Fowlerville	MI	517-223-9148	Kerrek Griffes
Rapson	Star of the West Milling	2222 N Verona Rd	Bad Axe	MI	989-269-7957	Amy Sweeney & Dennis Bischer
Richville	Star of the West Milling	3269 South Vanburen	Richville	MI	989-868-4186	David Jankowski & Jeff Martus
Kinde	Farmers Co-operative Grain Co	338 Main St	Kinde	MI	989-874-4200	Jeff Kreh
China	Schwehofer Seed Sales	3169 Allington St	China	MI	810-650-5819	Ryan Schwehofer
Freeland	Freeland Bean and Grain	1000 E Washington St	Freeland	MI	989-695-9131	Vic Hupfer
Forest	Lakeside Grain & Feed	7858 Rawlings Rd	Petrolia	Ontario	519-490-5442	John Waters
Petrolia	Lakeside Grain & Feed	7858 Rawlings Rd	Petrolia	Ontario	519-490-5460	Brian Hoven

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