

The Signing...





#### *by Mark Flegenheimer, President and CEO*

As we begin this new chapter in the history Michigan Sugar Company, we are pleased to be able to reintroduce the *Newsbeet* 

Magazine to our growers/owners. This magazine will be issued twice a year (Spring/Fall) and will update you on the latest beet sugar research and agronomic practices, which will help you deliver a higher quality beet crop to **your** factories. It will also keep you apprised of company, community and industry happenings.

As we transform Michigan Sugar from a "stock" company to a cooperative, our mindset must shift from "us" and "them" to "we." We, the company and growers, must work together to maximize the return per acre to our shareholders. Increasing the quality of beets will drive down factory costs, leaving more money available for a beet payment.

You showed your commitment to the sugar beet industry by your investment. We, the employees and management, would like to express our commitment to working together with you, our new owners, to make Michigan Sugar Company a solid, envied competitor in the market.

I hope you enjoy receiving the *Newsbeet* again. I also want to take this opportunity, on behalf of the grower owners and the employees of Michigan Sugar Company, to say thank you to those elected, government appointed and agricultural industry officials who contributed greatly to the Cooperative buyout of Michigan Sugar Company. Governor John Engler, Senators DeGrow and Goschka and all of the other members of the Michigan Senate as well as Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives, Rick Johnson and the other members of the Michigan House for having faith in Michigan's sugar industry by directing the State Treasury to loan at no interest \$5 million for five years to the Cooperative. Dan Wyatt, Director of the Michigan **ABOUT THE COVER** 

The Signing...Attorney Randy Wilson carefully watched over Richard Maurer, Chairman of the Interim Board of Directors as he signs one of the numerous documents in the acquisition of Michigan Sugar Company.

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### PIONEER NEWSBEET

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*by Robert Braem, Vice President of Agriculture* 

While the sugarbeet industry in Michigan reached

a critical stage in 2001, the sugarbeet crop showed again it's importance and stability for the agricultural economy in our area. While other crops suffered under hot and dry summer conditions, beets held on until rains came in August. An excellent sugarbeet crop in 2001 was one of the many important factors aiding the successful purchase of Michigan Sugar Company by its growers.

Potential for a good crop starts with early planting. Spring conditions last year allowed this early start with a small percentage of the crop being sown in March. Planting continued as soil conditions improved throughout April with 54% planted by the 20<sup>th</sup> and

root of the BUSINESS continued

Department of Agriculture and Bob Craig, Director of Agriculture Development were also key supporters of this effort. We would also like to recognize the efforts of the Michigan Farm Bureau, it's President Wayne Wood and Legislative Counsel Ron Nelson for their work on our behalf. Without the State of Michigan loan the Michigan Sugar Company purchase would not have been completed and 350 full time and over 1100 seasonal jobs would be lost today.

We are also grateful for the work done by Carl Osentoski, Dale Benish, and Jim McLoskey of the

95% by month's end. This planting schedule seems normal for the last several years, but was 20-30% ahead of our 10-year average for the dates referenced above.

A second factor insuring good crop potential is good emergence and stand retention during the early growing season. Growers have focused in recent years to

Good stands are important for a successful crop.

increase plant population as the means to increase tonnage and improve quality. Through improved seed technology, closer seed spacing, less spring tillage and a timely rain or two, higher plant populations were achieved in 2001.

Weed control, although hindered by spring rains was very good across the entire growing area. More and more growers are changing their weed control pro-

> gram to micro-rate spraying. Broadcasting very low rates on a timed interval controlled weeds and reduced sugarbeet injury. Micro-rates allowed growers to cover significant acreage more timely and efficiently when weed size and soil conditions were right. As more experience and understanding of the new weed control techniques are gained, more growers will use this system to successfully control weeds.

Each year the growing season is made up of good and not so good growing conditions; 2001 was no

continues on page 4

Huron, Sanilac, and Tuscola Counties' Economic Development Corporations, and JoAnn Crary, President of Saginaw Futures Inc. in securing a \$260,000 grant for the feasibility study. We must also thank Jason Church and Bobby Morrison, Commercial Loan Specialists from USDA Rural Development for their assistance in getting a \$500,000 grant to help with startup operating costs.

Each one of these people, as well as many others, played an important roll in the success of this buyout and to all we say THANK YOU.





different. Spring and early summer weather was right in most areas for the growing crop. Only our western growing region was hurt by heavy rain, crusting and seedling diseases. Their crop recovered better than expected and along with other areas looked good at canopy closure. Then it forgot to rain; between June 17<sup>th</sup> and August 15<sup>th</sup> no significant rainfall was received over any large area. Other crops were seriously impacted while the beets "hung on" waiting for moisture to come. Dry conditions reduced and delayed Cercospora leafspot infections. Most growers sprayed less often, but continued controlling leafspot into the late summer.

Tonnage was made in late August on through harvest when rainfall amounts averaged well above normal. During the 10week period beginning August 15<sup>th</sup>, 13.8" of rain was recorded across the growing area.

A good start, a dry summer and a great finish sums up this growing season. Sugarbeets were the one crop that sustained in an unusual growing season and produced average or better results. Yields for Michigan Sugar Company were 20.1 tons per acre with a 16.9% sugar and 93.2% clear juice purity. An excellent crop to get the new Co-op off to a good start in 2002.

#### GROWING SUGARBEETS FOR THE CO-OP

What will be different now, growing sugarbeets for the Cooperative? As owners of the company, growers will receive not just a beet check, but all of the profits from their crop. Attention to both yield and quality, with equal weight will be important. Profit is largely driven by factory efficiency, which is greatly impacted by beet quality. This re-focus of attention should not be difficult given the participating contract offered by Michigan Sugar Company for many years. The main keys to raising good sugarbeets remain the same. Early planting, achieving good emergence and retaining high plant populations are important to a good start. Good weed control and persistence in controlling Cercospora leafspot allow the crop to grow and mature into a

high quality raw product for processing into sugar.

Harvest and storage of the crop are only an extension of factory processing. Care needs to be taken to deliver a quality product. This includes loads of properly defoliated beets free from trash and dirt. We must continue to be patient during harvest for proper temperatures to pile and then harvest quickly during the right times to finish before fall weather conditions turn wet and cold. All this effort allows for good pile storage which increases factory slice and extraction.

No major changes will be necessary to raise sugarbeets for the cooperative. More emphasis will be devoted to sugarbeet quality through research and grower practices. Most of the attention will be on the little things as growers strive to tweak their growing practices to insure a better crop. A cooperative is working together; with all of us working to improve the crop, storage and harvest, along with factory performance, Michigan Sugar Company will be a successful cooperative for many years to come! 🖡



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# SEED TREATMENT TERMINOLOGY

In the last five years pelleted seed has increased in popularity among our growers. More than 50% of our acreage is planted with pelleted seed. As you make decisions on which varieties to plant, you also have to determine the seed treatment. Numerous options for the type of seed treatment and/or coating are available. Seed Treatment Terminology (Table 1.) lists the seed processor; seed size (dimensions); approximate amount of build-up; if the seed is steeped before the final seed coating is applied; if the Priming Advanced Technology (PAT) is available; and original seed size.

### TABLE 1: SEED TREATMENT TERMINOLOGY - 2002

	seed number	seed size	build-up	Steeped	PAT*	original seed size	Comments
Michigan Sugar Compa Accramerge ProPrime QuickPrime mini pellets	<b>iny (Neon Red</b> 2 3 4 5 4 3 2M	<b>Color)+</b> 6.5-7.5/64 7.5-8.5/64 8.5-9.5/64 9.5-10.5/64	3-4% 3-4% 3-4% 3-4% 33% 30% 250%	No No No Yes Yes Yes	No No No No No No*	2 3 4 5 3 2 2 or 3	small (S) medium (M) large (L) X-large (XL)
+ Michigan Sugar Com	oany packages	ACH Seeds, I	Hilleshog and	l Seedex va	rieties.		
ACH Seeds (Green Cold GemCoat + PAT GemCoat + PAT	or) L XL	8.5-9.5/64 9.5-10.5/64	27-28% 27-28%	Yes Yes	Yes Yes	3 4	seed size # 4 seed size # 5
BetaSeed (Blue Color) Prohanced Pro 200 mini pellets regular pellets jumbo pellets	M,L,XL XL 2M 4M Jumbo		27% 200% 250% 320% 350-400%	Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes	No* No* No* No*	one size smaller 5 2 or 3 3 or 4 5	
Hilleshog (Green Color F-15 Fasconated Visicoat UniPel PAT mini pellets regular pellets	) S,M,L,XL M,L,XL M,L,XL 2M 4M		12-15% 30-35% 30-35% 250% 320%	No Yes Yes Yes Yes	No No Yes Yes Yes	S,M,L,XL 3,4,5 3,4,5 2 or 3 3 or 4	

\* Also available with PAT



### HIGH YIELDS THROUGH GOOD PLANT ESTABLISHMENT



#### *By Steve Poindexter, MSU Extension Sugarbeet Agent*

Company records indicate producers achieve approximately 50% emergence when averaged between all field conditions and varieties.

Sugarbeet Advancement research in 2001 shows extremes of emergence from 17% to a high of 86%. (Table 1). Results indicate even under ideal conditions as much as 13% difference can occur between excellent and poor emerging varieties. Field emergence conditions can further greatly affect plant emergence. spacing. Producers will need to adjust their seed spacing not only based on variety, but also seedbed conditions. An optimum harvest stand is approximately 150 to 175 beets per 100 feet row for both 22- and 30-inch rates. Growers will need to adjust seed spacing as much as 25% above or below our 4-inch seed spacing to achieve the desired stand. Use Table 2 to help determine approximate seed spacing based on field conditions and variety. Remember, on average you lose 10% of the stand from 30 days after emergence to harvest. Under conditions where we get excellent emergence, we have seen no detrimental effects on yield up to 200 beets per 100 feet row.

T A	В	L E		1
Field Emergence Conditions	(Poor Emerger) B-5736	(Average Emerger) C-648	) (Excellent Emerger) E-38	Average Emergence
Ideal – Bean & Beet Farm (Wa	arm) 73%	79%	86%	79%
Fair – Ewald Trial (Cool)	44%	43%	53%	47%
Poor – Sherwood Trial (Crusti	ng) 17%	27%	23%	22%
Average Emergence	45%	50%	54%	<b>49</b> %

Growers will need to adjust their seeding rates based on variety selection. Our research indicates under ideal planting conditions, we can achieve approximately 73% emergence for a poor emerging variety versus 86% emergence for an excellent emerging variety. Under crusting conditions, plant establishment for a poor emerging variety may be as low as 17%. Under poor field conditions, i.e. crusting, poor emerging varieties will less often establish an adequate population when compared to excellent emerging varieties. With ideal conditions, all approved varieties can achieve excellent stands.

For an average emerging variety under fair emerging conditions, it is suggested producers seed at a 4-inch Conditions favoring an ideal seedbed and faster germinations are keys to successful stand establishment. Early planting, April 1<sup>st</sup> on, generally has more optimum moisture conditions and less crusting due to cooler temperatures. A firm seedbed, with very shallow secondary tillage, allows for uniform depth placement and movement of moisture to the seed. Strong emerging varieties and pre-germed PAT seed can speed up emergence from 3 to 5 days. Excellent stands improve weed control, produce higher recoverable white sugar per acre, and are more easily topped.

Always remember, the financial penalty for thin stands far outweigh too thick of a stand.

T A B	S L	E	2
Field Emergence Conditions	Poor Emerging Variety	Average Emerging Variety	Excellent Emerging Variety
Ideal - Average 70 to 80% Emergence	e 4.5-Inches	4.75-Inches	5.0-Inches
Fair - Average 40 to 60% Emergence	3.5-Inches	4.0-Inches	4.2-Inches
Poor – Average 20 to 30% Emergence	e 3.0-Inches	3.0-Inches	3.0- Inches



Sugarbeet Advancement's improved planter efficiencies this Spring by using a Honda 300-watt generator with three Sears two-gallon vacuum cleaners. The vacuum's hoses have been modified to reach next to the planter hopper's seed plates to remove all the seed. This is faster and easier on the producer's equipment, and improves the quality control due to less seed mixing because the hoppers are cleaner. Also, no planter malfunctions have occurred this year because of removing seed hoppers from the planters.







# SUGARBEET WEED MANAGEMENT UPDATE - 2002



by Karen Renner, Crop and Soil Sciences

In January 2002 I presented a weed manage-

ment update to sugarbeet growers at six regional meetings. The three main issues discussed were: 1)

adoption of micro-rate herbicide applications in Michigan, 2) the need for preemergence (PRE) herbicides in sugarbeet, and 3) the timing of microrate herbicide applications in sugarbeets.

#### **ADOPTION OF MICRO-RATE HERBICIDE APPLICATIONS (SUM-MARY OF THE SUGAR-BEET AGRICULTURALIST** SURVEY):

Sugarbeet acres treated with postemergence micro-rate applications increased from 41% in 2000 to 52% in 2001 (Figure 1). The first micro-rate application was made 14 to 35 days after planting, depending on the sugarbeet planting date. Timings between micro-rate applications in grower fields ranged from 7 to 21 days.

Sugarbeet acres treated with preemergence (PRE) herbicides decreased by 23%. Most of the decline in the application of PRE herbicides to Michigan's sugarbeet acres occurred on micro-rated acres. Seventy-two percent of the micro-rated acres were not treated with Assure II, Select, or Poast

(ACCase chemistry.) (Figure 2). This tells us annual grasses in sugarbeet fields were usually controlled by micro-rate applications of Betamix or Progress, in tank mixtures with UpBeet + Stinger + MSO (methylated seed oil).

Seventeen percent of the microrated acres were not cultivated. and the number of cultivations on

Figure 1: Percent of sugarbeet acres treated with micro-rates in 2001



all micro-rated acres decreased. A similar trend was observed in the Red River Valley where the average number of cultivations on sugarbeet acres has declined from 3.2 cultivations in 1992 to 2.0 cultivations in 2001.

#### **NEED FOR PREEMERGENCE HERBICIDES IN SUGARBEETS:**

Research was conducted by Michigan State University,

Michigan Sugar Company, and Monitor Sugar Company to assess the need for PRE herbicides. PRE herbicides cost money, can be injurious to sugarbeets, and do not control weeds when dry weather follows herbicide application. However PRE herbicides can control many weed species when adequate soil moisture is present and PRE herbicides provide 'insurance' in the event wet weather precludes growers from making timely postemergence (POST) herbicide applications.

Research was conducted at three experimental sites and in four grower fields in 2001. Ro-Neet, Pyramin, Nortron, and Dual II Magnum (Dual II Magnum is not registered for use in sugarbeets) were applied PRE at the experimental sites. Nortron and Pyramin were applied PRE at the

#### Figure 2: Use of ACCase inhibitors for grass control in micro-rates in 2001



four grower sites. Postemergence applications of Betamix + UpBeet + Stinger OR Progress + UpBeet + Stinger were applied as either standard split applications or as micro-rate applications (which included MSO (methylated seed oil) at the experimental sites. On the grower farms, micro-rates were applied by the grower in accordance with his spray schedule.

At the three experimental sites, PRE herbicides increased control of common lambsquarters and redroot pigweed by 3 to 8% compared to where no PRE herbicides were applied. Redroot pigweed control was better with the microrate of Betamix compared to the micro-rate of Progress. Ro-Neet reduced sugarbeet populations compared to other PRE herbicides or no PRE herbicide. However, RWSA was not reduced by the application of any PRE herbicide.

At the four farmer locations, weed control was excellent at 3 of 4 sites. PRE herbicides did not improve weed control compared to micro-rate applications alone. The number of micro-rate applications at the grower sites ranged from 3 to 5, and the number of cultivations at the grower sites ranged from 1 to 4 cultivations. RWSA was reduced at one site where Pyramin was applied and at 3 of 4 sites where Pyramin + Nortron were applied. We plan to repeat this research in 2002 to evaluate PRE herbicides in Michigan sugarbeet production.

#### TIMING OF MICRO-RATE HERBICIDE APPLICATIONS:

The timing of micro-rate herbicide applications in sugarbeets continues on page 10

### NOZZLE PLUGGING AND PRECIPITATE FORMATION WITH THE MICRO-RATE IN SUGARBEETS.

by Trevor Dale and Karen Renner, Dept. of Crop and Soil Sciences

What can growers do to alleviate nozzle plugging and precipitate formation on nozzle screens when applying micro-rates in sugarbeets?

Formation of precipitate and the resulting nozzle plugging occurring with some micro-rate applications is caused by the active ingredient in Betamix (or Progress) forming crystals. Formation of these crystals and the resulting precipitate is affected by many factors. These factors include: water temperature, size of spray tank (amount of solution), duration of spraying, spray volume per acre, amount of agitation, herbicides included in the micro-rate, and mixing order.

Research conducted at North Dakota State University determined the most important factor contributing to nozzle plugging from precipitate formation was spray water temperature. In general, precipitate formation increases as water temperature decreases. Often well water may be less than 50°F, which is very conducive to precipitation of the micro-rate. Warming the water to 80°F reduces the precipitate to nearly zero.

Another major factor is water volume. Reducing water volume reduces precipitate formation. If possible growers may want to be at spray volumes of 8 to 10 gallons/acre. The assumed reason why aerial applicators do not have precipitate problems in the Red River Valley is because they spray their load in a short amount of time, and they are applying 3- to- 5 gallons per acre which is a higher concentration of herbicides than normal ground sprayers.

Another factor to consider is reducing the agitation in the spray tank to the minimal amount needed to keep the spray in suspension. Growers often think you should agitate more, this actually makes the problem worse.

Some additives may reduce the precipitation problem. Quad 7, Transactive, and Renegade reduce precipitate formation by increasing the pH of the spray solution. Quest, Request, Bronc Max, and Choice are water conditioning agents that may help reduce precipitation problems, but have not been researched at North Dakota State University. Ammonium sulfate at 2% v/v (or less) may reduce precipitate formation because the sulfate would complex with cations in hard water. AMS would have little influence on the pH of the spray solution. However, AMS would increase the activity of UpBeet and would not be recommended with the micro-rates at this time.

If an additive (i.e. water conditioner) is included in the micro-rate application it should be the first product added to the tank, and then the herbicides Upbeet (pre-slurried), Betamix (or Progress), Stinger, and finely MSO (methylated or ethylated seed oil).

#### SUGARBEET WEED MANAGEMENT UPDATE continued

should be every 7 days according to the herbicide labels. However we know temperature and soil moisture play an important role in weed and sugarbeet growth. Too frequent micro-rate applications injure sugarbeets and cost the grower money! Too few micro-rate applications result in poor weed control and cost the grower money (additional cultivation, hand labor and yield loss)!

In 2001 we planted 'Hilleshog E-17' and 'Beta 5400' sugarbeets on April 2, April 17, and May 1. We then applied micro-rates using five different strategies. These strategies were: 1) every 7 days, 2) every sugarbeet leaf pair, 3) every 175 growing degree days (GDD) 4) every 275 growing degree days (GDD), and 5) scout and apply micro-rates when needed. We calculated growing degree days based on air temperature (see box on page 11).

The number of micro-rate applications ranged from 4 to 7, depending on the planting date and micro-rate strategy. Spraying every 7 days OR every 175 GDD resulted in excellent weed control. There were few differences between these two strategies (i.e. number of applications and weed control did not differ). Spraying every 275 GDD reduced sugarbeet injury but giant foxtail control was only 75% in sugarbeets planted April 17<sup>th</sup>. This would not be a problem in grower's fields because they could add Assure II, Select, or Poast to the third or fourth micro-rate application and control the foxtail.

Redroot pigweed was not controlled in the 275 GDD strategy when sugarbeets were planted on May 1. Therefore, in 2002 we will include a strategy of micro-rate applications every 225 GDD to try to reduce the number of micro-rate applications, reduce sugarbeet injury, but still control redroot pigweed.

Another interesting observation was that 'Beta 5400' was injured more by the micro-rate applications than 'E-17' (reduction in leaf area and stand loss in the mid-April planting date). This past winter we planted four sugarbeet varieties (E-17, Crystal 555, Beta 5400, and Beta 5736) in the greenhouse and applied micro-rates every 175, 225, or 275 GDD. The leaf area and leaf weight of Beta 5400 and Beta 5736 were reduced more by micro-rate applications than Crystal 555 or E-17, regardless of temperature. Therefore, we know some varieties will be injured more than others by micro-rate applications in April, May and June but this does not mean RWSA will be reduced.

### NEW COMPANY SELLING GENERIC 'NORTRON'

A new company, AgValue is selling a generic version of Nortron for weed control in sugarbeets. Etho SC is the trade name for this generic Nortron. Some retailers are selling this product in Michigan in 2002. Michigan State University (MSU) has not applied Etho SC. You need to be aware of three issues with a new generic product or a new formulation of a product. These are: 1) Will this formulation mix well and will it stay in solution? Will it plug nozzle screens? 2) If this product is

applied postemergence will it differ from Nortron in sugarbeet response and weed control? 3) If I have any questions or concerns with this product who do I call? In 2002, MSU, along with Michigan Sugar Company, will compare this herbicide to Nortron in our postemergence studies. AqValue also plans to have a generic version of Betamix available in 2003 and we will compare it to Aventis' Betamix this year in field trials. 🏹

# GROWING DEGREE DAY FORMULA MICRO-RATE TIMING STUDY

(Maximum air temp + minimum air temp)/ 2 – 34 F = growing degree days (GDD) accumulated that day

- Example High of 80 and low of 60 F (80+60)/2 -34 F = 36 GDD for today
- If there are 5 days of 80 high and 60 low the total GDD would be 36 x 5 = 180 GDD

### Current Ratio Return on Equity Debt/Acre Net Worth/Acre

Is your accountant helping you give the **BEST information** to your team?

> Financial Institutions Owners Employees

Suppliers Insurance Agents Estate Planners

Nietzke & Faupel, P.C. specializes in helping agri-business teams compile and understand the real numbers.

Our farm accrual financial statements are highly respected by our clients and their "teams" including their bankers. It's the information you need to manage your agri-business.

Let us help you with **affordable** and **user-friendly** computerized bookkeeping setups, monthly/ annual accrual financial statements, expansion feasibility studies, cash flow analysis, succession planning, estate planning, and tax work.

We're ready to be a part of your team.



# NEW FUNGICIDES ON THE HORIZON



*by Jim Stewart, Manager of Research* 

Cercospora leaf spot, caused by the fungus Cercospora beticola, is the most important disease of sugarbeets in the Michigan Sugar

Company growing region. Data from three years of Sugarbeet Advancement trials suggest yield losses of one to two tons per acre and one half point of sugar can be expected with moderate disease infestations. Michigan Sugar Company data shows yield losses of five to six tons per acre and over one point of sugar can be experienced with heavy disease pressure.

For the past two years we have been evaluating several new fungicides for control of Cercospora leaf spot. The first of these is Eminent (tetraconazole) which has been registered in 2000 and 2001 under a Section 18 label. A Section 18 label will be requested in 2002. The full Section 3 label for Eminent in sugarbeets is pending.

Eminent is a triazole fungicide which stops the production of ergosterol, a cholesterol like substance which is essential for the fungus to grow and develop. Eminent penetrates the plant leaf and is systemic, meaning the chemical moves within the plant. Eminent has curative properties and can stop Cercospora infections after the fungus has penetrated the leaf. Eminent has shown excellent activity against Cercospora leaf spot in our trials.

We have also been testing a new class of f ungicides called strobilurins which have shown activity against Cercospora leaf spot. These fungicides, Quadris (azoxystrobin), Gem (trifloxystrobin) and Headline (pyraclostrobin) act by preventing the production of ATP which is the main energy source the fungus needs to develop. Quadris is the only one of these compounds which is currently labeled for use in Michigan. Registrations for Gem and Headline are expected sometime this year.

Strobilurins penetrate the plant leaf and are locally systemic, meaning they move small distances within the leaf but do not translocate throughout the entire plant. Strobilurins have preventative and curative properties. Our data shows Headline is the most effective of this group for controlling Cercospora leaf spot. Gem has also provided good leafspot control while Quadris has given fair to good control. Table 1 summarizes two years of research with Eminent, Headline, Gem, Quadris and Super Tin.

As with most things, there is a downside to hese new fungicides. They all have a single site mode of action and are at a relatively high risk for the Cercospora fungus to develop resistance. Headline, Gem and Quadris are from the same class of chemistry and have the same mode of action. If the Cercospora fungus becomes resistant to one of them, it will be resistant to all of them. As a result, only one of these products should be applied each year.

Eminent applications should also be limited to only one application per year. It appears we will have several effective fungicide alternatives to chose from including the strobilurins, Eminent, Super Tin, Topsin and the EBDC's. It is critical to rotate chemical classes when spraying for Cercospora leaf spot to

# **CONGRATULATIONS!**

ACH Seeds is proud to salute Michigan Sugar Company iob well done and it's growers on a the their with purchase of sugar company.

We look forward to continue being an important part of the Michigan Sugarbeet industry by top-performing providing varieties that meet your growing needs. As we introduce a new generation of disease-tolerant varieties. we are excited about the prospects of our shared success.

Hats off to Michigan Sugar Company, a grower owned cooperative!

ACH Seeds,Inc. District Market Manager

> Andy Bernia 877-769-0195 Akron, MI

Crystal sugarbeet seed...The Emerging Force in Sugarbeets!



help prevent resistance from developing. You should never use a product back to back and you should avoid using the product more than one time per season.

We have also been evaluating Quadris, Gem and Headline for control of Rhizoctonia root and crown rot (Rhizoctonia solani). After two years of testing, it appears Quadris is more effective than Gem in controlling Rhizoctonia root and crown rot and Headline is the least effective of this group. Data from small and large plot trials indicate Quadris will provide good control of Rhizoctonia root and crown rot when applied at the 6-8 leaf stage. Midseason applications of Quadris appear to stop the spread of the disease, however, plants already showing symptoms will probably not be saved. As a result, the overall control at this later timing will be significantly less compared to the early season application. However, some growers may want to choose this midseason application timing because, depending upon the situation, it may also serve as their first Cercospora leaf spot spray.

Additional Rhizoctonia research will be conducted in 2002 looking at fungicide rates and application timings, tank mix combinations with herbicides and surfactants and the effect of using tolerant and susceptible sugarbeet varieties. Together with Ron Pitblado, Ridgetown, Ontario; Sugarbeet Advancement; and Monitor S ugar Company, we will also be testing a Cercospora leaf spot model (BEETCAST) in 2002. The website for Michigan growers is *www.michiganbeets.com*; the website for Ontario growers is *www.ownweb.ca*.

Longer term research is needed to address a whole host of concerns including resistance management issues, crop rotation and tillage effects, when and how plants are infected, how to predict problem fields and many more unanswered questions.

# TABLE 1: CONTROL OF CERCOSPORA LEAF SPOT IN SUGARBEETSWITH SUPER TIN, GEM, QUADRIS, EMINENT AND HEADLINE -AVG. OF 2000 AND 2001 MICHIGAN SUGAR COMPNAY TRIALS

Treatment	Rate/Acre	CLS rating*	RWSA	Ton/A	RWST	%Suc
Untreated		4.96	3726	17.1	219.5	15.8
Super Tin 80 WP	5 oz	2.14	4781	20.4	237.6	16.9
Quadris 2.08 FL	9 fl oz	1.97	5234	22.1	238.1	16.9
Gem 25 DF	6.25 oz	1.91	5252	22.3	237.3	17.1
Eminent 1.04 SL	13 fl oz	1.76	5220	22.1	239.5	17.0
Headline 2.09 EC X-77	9.2 fl oz 0.25%	1.49	5545	23.1	241.9	17.0
AVERAGE		2.37	4960	21.2	235.6	16.8
LSD (5%)		0.48	400	1.5	9.2	0.5
<b>C.V. (%)</b>		22.2	8.9	7.6	4.3	3.2

# PROPER PESTICIDE APPLICATIONS

Pesticides for sugarbeets must be applied properly and according to their labels to protect not only our shareholders and the Co-op; but also, the customers of our products and the environment. Section 11 of your Grower Agreement states the following:

"Grower also agrees not to apply to the crop or land on which the crop is grown any pesticide, chemical, or other substance, as defined in the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, as amended, unless a regulation shall then be in effect under Section 408 of said Act, exempting such chemical from the necessity of a tolerance or establishing a tolerance for such chemical, in which event such chemical shall be applied to the crop or land only at such time and in such manner and quantities as shall be specified in the labeling of such chemical and so

that any residue of such chemical on beets accepted hereunder shall be within tolerance specified in such regulation. The Cooperative reserves the right to reject the delivery of any beets not complying with this provision."

Use only approved, registered, authorized and labeled pesticides and other chemicals on your sugarbeet crop. No grower is allowed to vary from labeled pesticide application practices; do not jeopardize your livelihood or your fellow shareholders. Deliberate illegal pesticide applications could result in the following:

- Loss of your ability to deliver sugarbeets (condemnation of the field)
- T Confiscation of Co-op shares
- Fines from Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA)

- Fines from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA); in Ontario fines from Pesticide Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA)
- T Custom applicator penalties
- Revoking grower, commercial or Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) certification and licensing.

Illegal pesticides would include herbicides (such as Blazer, Cobra, Dual or Frontier) or insecticides (such as dimethoate). In 2001 about 700 acres of sugarbeets were condemned in Minnesota due to an illegal application of Blazer herbicide; no crop was harvested. Court dates have been set for the Minnesota sugarbeet producers charged with illegally applying Blazer to their 2001 sugarbeet crop.

## **2001 SUGAR QUEEN**

Amanda Trischler is the reigning Michigan Sugar Queen and has participated in twenty-five events as of April 30th. Her experience in the farming industry started when her father ran a sugarbeet harvester for eight years. At every opportunity she would ride with him in the tractor and fall asleep sitting behind his seat. From ages 13 to 16, she worked on her cousin's farm; she rode her bike to work one mile each way!

Amanda is currently employed by Michigan Sugar Company at the Caro Factory as the Administrative Assistant, while she is pursuing a Business Management Degree at Delta College.

Amanda says being the 2001 Michigan Sugar Queen has been a tremendous experience which she will never forget especially, with this huge transition year. It has been a great ten months and she still has two months to go!!

The 2002 Michigan Sugar Festival is June 21-23<sup>rd</sup>. The application deadline for the Sugar Queen is May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2002. Please contact Barb Wallace at 989.799.7300.



2001 Michigan Sugar Queen, Amanda Trischler, sporting her crown & sash during sugarbeet harvest in a Tuscola County field harvested by Fritz & Kovach Farms of Unionville. Photo by: Burrows Studio of Sebewaing.







#### by Herb Wilson, Vice–President of Operations

The quantity of sugar, in pounds, the factory produces per ton of beets delivered is referred to as pack. It is a good measurement of

the total efficiency of sugar production from field to the finished product. The sugar content in a sugar beet has both direct and indirect relationships on the pack.

The direct relationship can be demonstrated by calculating the influence of 1% change in sugar content on the pack, assuming no losses in pile storage and a constant factory extraction. For example, each 1% change in sugar content at 80.0% extraction will change the pack by 16 pounds per ton.

To understand the indirect relationships we need to describe the basic steps of factory operations. The process of making sugar is essentially a series of separations. Some of these are physical separations and others are chemical in nature. The overall objective is to leave the natural sucrose alone and separate away the water and non-sugars. In the business, associated with higher purity and so it is usually a good indicator of beet quality and non-sugar loading on the process.

The type and concentration of impurities encountered can significantly affect the difficulty and cost of operating the factories. All impurities will take sucrose with them to the molasses, therefore become part of the loss. It should be recognized even weeds, beet tops and other field materials not completely separated prior to entering the factory, will impart impurities into the process. As the relative quantities of impurities become higher (lower purity), the losses incurred during manufacturing will increase and the pack will go down.

Costs will increase as a result of lowered operating rates, diminished recovery, additional purification materials usage and increased re-boiling. The traditional sugar making process is efficient at dealing with certain types of impurities and poor with others. The process is somewhat adjustable to changes in quality, but only within a fairly narrow range. Typically, the most difficult impurities to handle arrive as a result of the beet's degradation and rot. Under these conditions there is a high degree of color for-

non-sugars are also referred to as impurities and include everything that is not water or sucrose. When we use the word purity in the factory, we are referring to the percentage of sucrose as compared to all substances, other than water, that are in a particular solution.

Higher sugar content in the beet is typically



mation, increased sensitivity to heat and difficulties in filtration.

High quality sugar beets result in low cost processing and larger returns per acre. The return in investment is immediate.

The data charted adjacent suggests a strong correlation between cossette sugar content and factory performance.



Steering Committee and Interim Board of Directors for Michigan Sugar Company are left to right (front row) Thomas Zimmer, Richard Maurer and Wayne Hecht (middle) Richard Leach, Lee Butts, Chris Grekowicz and Ken Wadsworth (back) Robert Lutz, Charles Bauer, Loren Humm, Jack Tagget, William Herford, Carl Bednarski and Jeff Gulick.

# THE LONG HAUL



By Richard E. Leach, past Executive Vice-President of the Great Lakes Sugar Beet Growers

Association and Executive Secretary of the Michigan Sugar Beet Growers, Inc

The "Long Haul" is a synopsis of the events which transpired in the acquisition of Michigan Sugar Company by their growers.

#### **QUAIL HUNT AND PROPOSAL**

We had just finished supper at Imperial's hunting lodge about ten miles outside the small Southwest Texas town of Hebbronville. Imperial had invited the Executive Board of the **Great Lakes Sugar Beet Growers** Association and myself on a quail hunting trip. The date was Friday, January 22, 2000. Richard Maurer, Tom Zimmer, Wayne Hecht, and Loren Humm were present along with Roger Hill from Imperial, and Mark Flegenheimer, Jim Ruhlman, and Bob Braem from Michigan Sugar Company.

Roger and Mark stood at the end of the long table and stated they had a proposal for the growers to consider. Roger asked if the Great Lakes would consider forming a cooperative to explore the feasibility of buying Michigan Sugar Company. Roger stated Michigan Sugar was not for sale on the market, but Imperial would consider a sale to the growers with the condition Imperial would market the Co-op's sugar.

The rest of that night, Saturday, and Sunday were spent discussing

the offer. Many quail were missed because of a lack of concentration. From that weekend forward, the Great Lakes Sugar Beet Growers Association would never be the same.

The next week I called

Jim Kempner, President and CEO of Imperial Sugar and asked him to put the proposal in writing. He said he would and he did.

### RANDON WILSON RETAINED

After talking with several A few sh people, the Great in Texas.

Lakes' Executive Board set up a meeting with attorney Randon Wilson from Salt Lake City, Utah. The executive board met with Randon on February 28<sup>th</sup> and hired him to manage the Michigan Sugar buyout project. Randon had been involved in other cooperative buyout projects with sugar beet growers.

Randon went to work almost immediately with a trip to Sugar Land, Texas to establish himself as the buyout attorney for the growers and to gather information. Imperial told Randon they would not set a price on Michigan Sugar Company, the growers would need to make an offer.

#### STEERING COMMITTEE APPOINTED

The Great Lakes appointed a 13-member steering committee from its board of directors: three each from Croswell, Sebewaing, and Caro, and two each from Saginaw and Alma. The association received a \$50,000 grant from Huron County's Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and \$210,000



A few shots found their mark during the quail hunt in Texas.

from the Michigan EDC to help pay for the feasibility study.

#### GENERATING A FINANCIAL MODEL

Randon began working with a modeler and they began collecting relevant information to use to build a financial model of Michigan Sugar. Financial information was difficult to acquire and even more difficult to understand. Our modeler had experience in modeling sugar companies and knew when the numbers did not work. Imperial became more difficult to work with. We were lucky to have a dialogue with Ernest Flegenheimer. With his years of experience he understood the cost of the operation. While all this was going on Jim Kempner was telling us the buyout was never going to work because the growers could not get the money.

#### MICHIGAN SUGAR BEET GROWERS, INCORPORATED FORMED

In August 2000 the Michigan Sugar Beet Growers, Incorporated was formed as a 521 cooperative. The 13-member steering committee was appointed as the Interim Board of Directors.

#### **FIRST OFFER MADE**

A month later the Co-op made its first offer to Imperial in a draft of a letter of intent. For more than six weeks, no response to the offer was made. When Imperial's General Counsel Bill Schwer did reply, the response was belittling and hardly mentioned the offer. 11 bankruptcy. Imperial told the growers the bankruptcy court had given permission to pay its critical venders. Growers were considered critical venders. Imperial did not tell the growers the court order stated Imperial could pay at its discretion.

#### BANKRUPTCY ATTORNEYS RETAINED

This was discovered when the Great Lakes retained attorneys to represent the growers. Shortly after the bankruptcy was announced, the board was to meet with Mr. Kempner and Mr. Schwer in Saginaw. The growers' bankruptcy attorneys were also in Saginaw. When Mr. Kempner



The quail hunt in Texas (I to r) Wayne Hecht; guide & dog; Mark Flegenheimer and Dick Leach.

#### **IMPERIAL FILED BANKRUPTCY**

The December grower payment for the 2000 crop was made and in a news release about its financial condition, Imperial mentioned the word *bankruptcy*.

In mid-January 2001, nearly one year after their initial proposal, Imperial did file for protection from its creditors under Chapter found out the attorneys would be at the meeting he was so angry he would not meet.

#### **LETTER OF INTENT**

Now the impact of bankruptcy was understood, the Co-op continued to negotiate a letter of intent including the framework of the Management Agreement, Marketing Agreement, Stock Purchase Agreement. A Lease Agreement was also negotiated so growers could get the 2001 crop processed if the purchase was not completed before the harvest. Imperial had a hard time understanding growers would not contract with a company in bankruptcy. The board decided if the Co-op contracted with the growers then the Co-op would own the beets and the sugar so the growers would be assured of getting paid for the 2001 crop.

#### **AGREEMENT REACHED**

In late March Imperial got serious with negotiations and in mid-April the following agreement was reached: \$55 million cash at closing, \$10 million sub-note to Imperial with a scheduled payoff in 4.5 years, and assumption of \$18.5 million of Michigan Industrial Development Bonds. The total was \$83.5 million with \$500,000 earnest money good until February 28, 2002, subject to bankruptcy court approval.

Imperial informed the Co-op it did not have money to pay for the inter-campaign cost (the cost of running Michigan Sugar from March 1<sup>st</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup>) so the grower's 2000 crop money would be used. This meant no April payment.

#### INTER-CAMPAIGN COSTS NEGOTIATED

The board negotiated an agreement to pay two-thirds of the inter-campaign costs if the purchase was completed by February 28<sup>th</sup> or all of the costs if the purchase was not completed. Imperial, concerned the Co-op would not get enough acres to

#### THE LONG HAUL continued -

run all four plants, stated it would not pay a grower any more 2000 crop money unless the grower contracted approximately the same number of acres in 2001 as he planted in 2000. Growers were rightfully angry over this

but

the Co-op did contract 114,000 acres. Imperial agreed to make a \$2.50/ton payment after the definitive agreements of the letter of intent were signed. The Co-op would try to borrow \$6 \$6 million to make another \$2.50 payment. The first \$2.50 payment was made in mid-May to all 2000-crop growers.

#### **STOCK SALE BEGINS**

In early June the Co-op began the sale of Patron Preferred Stock (acre shares) for \$200 per share. Each buyer of shares needed to purchase one share of Common Stock for \$100; this would be the voting stock. Purchasers of stock were asked to send a deposit fee of \$50 for each share of preferred stock purchased. The board wanted to close the deal by the end of September. The Co-op was working with Michigan National Bank and Netexis Bank to obtain the \$6.5 million loan so the growers could get the next \$2.50/ton payment. The holdup now was Mr. Schwer's unwillingness to finish the stock purchase agreement and get it approved by the bankruptcy court.

#### STATE \$5 MILLION LOAN APPROVED

After much politicking, on the evening of June 13<sup>th</sup> I was informed the state House had approved a \$5 million "no" interest loan to the Co-op for five years, to be used to help growers buy Michigan Sugar Company. The Senate would also pass it and the governor would sign it. This would be only the second loan the state has made and the first one was to Chrysler Corporation.

#### STOCK PURCHASE AGREEMENT APPROVED

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July Randon Wilson reported Mr. Schwer had approved the Stock Purchase Agreement, but on July 20<sup>th</sup> Imperial had not signed the agreement because of two issues Mr. Schwer claims had not been resolved yet. The board and Randon agreed to submit a formal objection to the bankruptcy court to Imperial's financial plan to exit bankruptcy. This action motivated Imperial's management to sign the Stock Purchase Agreement.

#### IMPERIAL EMERGES FROM BANKRUPTCY

In mid-August the bankruptcy court approved the four agreements and Imperial's financial plan was approved and Imperial came out of bankruptcy.

Natexis Bank informed us they had approval for one-half of the \$6.5 million bridge loan needed to get growers the \$2.50 payment, but Michigan National Bank was sold to Standard Federal who knew nothing about agriculture and were not interested in the loan.

The Co-op received notice the USDA had approved a \$500,000 grant which could be used for operating expenses.

#### MIDWEST AGRI LOAN COMMITMENT

The Co-op obtained a \$2.5 million loan commitment from Midwest Agri-Commodities (a Co-op marketing our pulp and molasses) to help growers buy shares in the Co-op. The summer was hot and dry and growers were slow to buy more shares. The goal of having 115,000 shares sold, as a minimum needed to make the financial model work had not happened and it was apparent the closing could not be completed before harvest. Two "loan hunters" were hired to find

continues on page 22



#### THE LONG HAUL continued -

lenders who were interested in lending the Co-op the \$30 million needed to close the deal. They contacted 83 lenders and only one lender, G.E. Capital gave us a letter indicating interest.

#### **FOCUS CHANGES**

In mid-September the focus changed to the lease agreement, getting insurance policies in place and a sugar-marketing plan approved by the board. The \$6.5 million bridge loan was not in place because Imperial would not give up control of the sugar sales money. They would take lease payments out of sales and give the Co-op what was left. This was a breach of the signed agreement.

Once the processing began the Co-op was able to borrow from the CCC and the long promised \$2.50/ton payment was sent to the growers in October.

#### **OPERATING LOAN PURSUED**

The harvest was going well and the factories were processing well. The next challenge was to get a \$20,000,000 operating loan. Natexis Bank and Societe Generale (S.G.) Bank from New York, and Citizens Bank in Saginaw were working together on this loan, but the bank's attorney would not approve the loan until the banks could have the receivables for collateral. Imperial said no. What the December grower payment would be was now in question.

#### MCLAUGHLIN NEW CEO; KEMPNER RETIRES

On October 23<sup>rd</sup> an Imperial news release stated Mr. Kempner had retired and the new CEO was Robert McLaughlin. Randon sent a copy of the G.E. Capital preliminary loan letter to Mr. McLaughlin and within a week he called to set a meeting with the Co-op executive board and Randon. I informed him of the breach of the marketing agreement, he had not been told about this. We set a meeting on Wednesday October 31<sup>st</sup> in Saginaw.

Imperial sent a letter to the growers stating the total value of the 2000 crop was \$30.88/ton. Growers had already received \$28.00, but the Co-op still owed

тне HARVEST WAS GOING WELL AND ТНЕ FACTORIES WERE PROCESSING WELL. THE NEXT CHALLENGE WAS TO GET \$ 2 0 , 0 0 0 , 0 0 0 Α **OPERATING** LOAN.

Imperial \$2.44 for the inter-campaign expenses. Imperial's final grower payment was \$0.44/ton. The board informed growers the Co-op would pay the \$2.44/ton when money becomes available.

#### **NEW DEAL FINALIZED**

McLaughlin's meeting lasted only three hours. McLaughlin brought with him Attorney Bill Schwer and Financial Officer

Karen Mercer. The Co-op had the Executive Committee, Attorney Randon Wilson and Chief Financial Officer Denis Boissonneault. Mark Flegenheimer from Michigan Sugar was also present. The issue of who controls the Co-op's sugar sales money was worked out first and after Randon had explained the Co-op's inability to attract term loan money, Mr. McLaughlin stated what Imperial would do. The purchase price was reduced by \$20 million and Imperial would finance the term loan. The Co-op would be responsible for the bonds. The Co-op agreed and the deal went forward.

#### **DECEMBER PAYMENT**

As the December grower payment came closer, Imperial/ Mr. Schwer and Ms. Mercer had still not released collateral so the operating loan could be acquired. The factories ran well and the Co-op was able to borrow from the Commodities Credit Corporation (CCC). The board approved a \$25.80 per ton payment on December 15<sup>th</sup> for the growers. The Natexis Bank and Citizens Bank operating loans were completed in January but the S.G. Bank loan was not closed until February.

#### ACRES PEAK AT 129,000

Preferred stock sales (acres) were going fast and the board ruled after December 21<sup>st</sup> the share price would increase to \$230.00 per acre. At the end of the day on December 21<sup>st</sup> the Co-op had just over 129,000 acres, of which 7,500 acres were "warehouse" acres, (acres not grown by the share owner). The board informed shareowners the

continues on page 24

Left: Lee Butts, Interim Director, shows support with the growers.

Below: Celebrations at the General Office for Michigan Sugar Company becoming a grower-owned cooperative.

MICHIGAN SUGAR COMPANY

Above: Mountains of paperwork had to be signed by numerous personnel to make the acquisition official.

and when

Right: The \$5 million loan from the State of Michigan presented to Richard Maurer by Michigan Congressman Mike Goshka and Robert Craig, Michigan Department of Agriculture.

#### THE LONG HAUL continued -

other \$150.00 per share needed to be in by January 4, 2002. The closing date was set for Tuesday, February 12, 2002, just after the factories would finish processing the 2001 crop.

#### CO-FIRST ON STATE OF MICHIGAN LOAN

The \$5 million State of Michigan loan had a real problem. The State wanted a co-first position on all of the collateral, but Imperial would only give a second. **Denis Boissonneault** and I made a trip to Lansing to try to resolve the collateral issue with the state treasury people. After some serious discussion Denis called Karen Mercer at Imperial and asked if Imperial would give a cofirst on all the collateral. If not, the State loan would not go through. Karen called back later and said Imperial's banks would allow the State to have a co-first on all collateral.

#### \$25 MILLION RECEIVED FROM GROWER-OWNERS

Grower loans by the finance pool had all been completed by the first of February and just over \$1.8 million of the \$2.5 million available was used. The amazing thing was out of \$25 million worth of shares that were sold, all but \$15.00 was received.

### WORKING CAPITAL SHOW-STOPPER

On Monday, February 11<sup>th</sup> Randon and Rick Knuth, an attorney working with Randon, came to the Michigan Sugar office to begin preparing the paperwork for the closing. Maury Rothschild, an outside attorney working for Imperial also came. Bill Schwer and Karen Mercer arrived about 10:00 p.m. at the office. Randon confronted Schwer on the working capital issue (this issue meant \$1.5 million to the Co-op) and Schwer stated this issue was a deal breaker and he would not budge. At this point Randon gathered his papers, put them in his briefcase and walked to the hotel. As Rick left the office he noticed Mr. Schwer and Ms. Mercer were preparing new documents for the morning meeting.

#### CLOSING ON FEBRUARY 12<sup>™</sup>, 2002

On the morning of Tuesday, February 12<sup>th</sup> Mr. Schwer and Ms. Mercer gave on the working capital issue. The State's attorney was here to close on the loan and the \$5 million was transferred to the Co-op's account and \$29 million was electronically transferred to Imperial's account. After several hours of signing documents, the deal closed.

#### **GREAT BEGINNING**

Going through the ups and downs necessary to complete the deal certainly provided some trying times for the board and the folks at Michigan Sugar. On a rough count there were 64 steering committee and Co-op board meetings combined, and 17 conference calls. This does not count all the executive committee meetings and the hundreds of phone calls we received. All this in a 24-month time period, but what a great ending to an even **GREATER BEGINNING.** 

Left: Carrollton factory personnel showing support at the signing on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

Ine Granulate

Below: One of the desserts depicting the grower-owned co-op.

MICHIGAN

Above: Dick Leach signing the resolution.

adadada

Right: US Congressman James Barcia (D-5<sup>th</sup> District) in the Carrollton warehouse on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2002 congratulating the growers on their purchase of Michigan Sugar Company.

# 2001 4-H AWARDS 219 PARTICIPANTS

The 2001 Michigan Sugar production with a written test, Company 4-H/F.F.A. Sugarbeet and a personal interview. Project involved 190 youths and Each 2001 participant received a 29 project leaders from the five black zippered portfolio folder. Of Michigan Sugar grower those judged, 54 earned districts. Participants **Premier Grower** were judged awards, plus 15 according to earned top involvement in Prestige the local club Grower honor chapter, ors. Fach Premier winner exhibiting sugarbeets at received a 12their local fairs, ounce Stanley keeping accumug and a black vinyl rate records of cultural and travel bag. Each Prestige winner management took home a touch practices used in growing their screen radio and 432-

sugarbeets, knowledge of beet

page millennium World Atlas. All

the awards have the logo for identification.

Many thanks to the leaders, advisors, judges and especially parents for their time and support, for without their participation, this project would not be possible. Great Lakes Sugar Beet Growers Association and Michigan Sugar Company jointly sponsor this program.

REMINDER: May 1<sup>st</sup>, each year is the deadline for submitting applications for Michigan Sugar Company \$2,500 Albert Flegenheimer Memorial Scholarship. If you need an application form, please contact your agriculturalist. **T** 





### SBEWAING





WINNERS (Prestige, left to right) ALMA: Luke Butcher; CARO: C.J. Bednarski, Ashley Bierlein and Nicholas Zwerk; **CARROLLTON: Adam Bauer** and Chelsea Stolz; **CROSWELL:** Andrew Volmering, Jackie Puvalowski, Craig Helewski, Erica Helewski and Andrew Kirsch; SEBEWAING: Ben Haag, Kirk Yackle, Jason Smith and Kurt Yackle.



ALMA



# MEET YOUR **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Thomas V. Zimmer, Chairman of 6822 North Unionville Road, Unionville, Michigan, 48767, phone 989.674.8715, email szimmer@avci.net. Mr. Zimmer represents the Sebewaing District. Mr. Zimmer was vice chairman of the Interim Board and past president of the Sebewaing Beet Growers Association. Mr. Zimmer is a member of the Board of Directors of the American Sugarbeet Growers. He serves in the community on the Board of Elders in his church. Mr. Zimmer has been farming sugarbeets for 42 years.

Richard J. Maurer, Vice-Chairman of 2027 Parisville Road, Ruth, Michigan, 48470, phone 989.479.6490. Mr. Maurer represents the Croswell District and was chairman of the Interim Board. He was past president of the Croswell Sugar Beet Growers Association. He also serves in the community as Sigel Township's Supervisor-Assessor, a position he has held since 1979; as chairman of the Central Ambulance Board and as the secretary of the Parish Council for the Holy Trinity Church. Mr. Maurer has been farming for 44 years, during which 40 have been growing sugarbeets.

Wayne Hecht, Secretary of 8750 West Saginaw Road, Vassar, Michigan, 48768, phone 989.823.7734, email whecht@tds.net. Mr. Hecht represents the Caro District. He served as secretary/treasurer of the Interim Board and was past president of the Caro Sugar Beet Growers Association. Mr. Hecht has been farming sugarbeets for a total of 33 years.

Michigan, 48441, phone 989.479.9658, email cgrekowicz@hbch.com. Mr. Grekowicz represents the grower-at-large position. Mr. Grekowicz served as vice-president of the Croswell Sugar Beet Growers Association. He also serves in the community as Sigel Township's treasurer and is secretary of the Sigel #4 School Board. Mr. Grekowicz has been farming sugarbeets for 20 years.

Chris Grekowicz, Treasurer of 1453 North Minden Road, Harbor Beach,

Carl Bednarski of 2740 West Elmwood Road, Caro, Michigan, 48723, phone 989.674.2357, email cl@centurytel.net. Mr. Bednarski represents the Caro District. Mr. Bednarski was a member of the Caro Sugar Beet Growers Association and serves on the Board of Directors for the Michigan Farm Bureau. Mr. Bednarski has been farming for a total of 22 years, of which 14 has been farming sugarbeets.













**Brian Fox** of 26528 Baldoon Road, Dover Centre, Ontario, NOP 1LO, phone 519.354.8345, email *bgfox@ciaccess.com*. Mr. Fox represents the Croswell District. Mr. Fox served as chairman of the Ontario Sugarbeet Growers Association and was a member of the Croswell Sugar Beet Growers Association Board. He is an Engineer and until 1995 worked in industry for 28 years; for the last 15 years as president for three different corporate divisions. Mr. Fox and his wife, Alana, cash crop 1600 acres including 400 acres of sugarbeets along with their son.



**William Herford** of 4771 Berne Road, Elkton, Michigan, 48731, phone 989.375.2411, email *herford@uci.net*. Mr. Herford represents the Sebewaing District. Mr. Herford was vice-president of the Sebewaing Beet Growers Association and was a board member of the Huron County Farm Bureau and past member of the Parish Council at church. He is currently a member of the Michigan Cattleman's Association; board member of the Michigan Edible Bean Cooperative and a long-time member of the Knights of Columbus. Mr. Herford is a long-time sugarbeet grower.

**Loren L. Humm** of 5990 East Tyler Road, Ithaca, Michigan, 48847, phone 989.875.2189. Mr. Humm represents the Carrollton District (Alma area.) He has served on the Alma Sugar Beet Growers Association as member, president and vice-president. He also serves the community as past board member of the Gratiot County Farm Bureau and on the Emerson Township Board of Review. Mr. Humm has been farming for 33 years, of which 30 have been farming sugarbeets.



*Marty Lewis* of 5082 North Road, North Street, Michigan, 48049, phone 810.385.4888, email *marshalllewis@hotmail.com*. Mr. Lewis represents the Croswell District. Mr. Lewis was a past secretary of the Croswell Sugar Beet Growers Association and served on the St. Clair County Farmer's Home Administration Board; St. Clair's Soil Conservation District Board with three years as chairman and was past chairman of the Sugarbeet Advancement Committee. Mr. Lewis and his wife, Carol Ann, farm 950 acres, including 285 acres of sugarbeets along with their son, Charles.



**Robert Lutz** of 650 West Hickory Court, Sebewaing, Michigan, 48759, phone 989.883.2564. Mr. Lutz represents the Sebewaing District. Mr. Lutz was a past secretary of the Sebewaing Beet Growers Association. He also serves in the community as a trustee for Sebewaing Township. Mr. Lutz has been farming sugarbeets for 36 years.



John A. Tagget of 6335 Cole Road, Saginaw, Michigan, 48601, phone 989.777.2007, email *jtagget@webtv.net*. Mr. Tagget represents the Carrollton District (Saginaw area). He served as a president of the Saginaw Sugar Beet Growers Association; and is National PAC chairman of American Sugar Beet Growers Association. He also serves in the community as a supervisor for Spaulding Township in Saginaw County. Mr. Tagget has been farming sugarbeets for 44 years.





#### By Dick Leach, Director of Community and Government Relations

It has been several years since I have written in the Pioneer Newsbeet, and I am

glad to have the opportunity to do so again. As Director of Community and Government Relations, community relations will continue to be an important part of the Michigan Sugar Company's "Grower Owned" public relations program.

As we tell the Michigan Sugar Company ~ Grower-Owned story, we must not forget the local communities where our factories are located, where our employees live, and where our grower owners do business. School and church events, county fairs and town festivals will continue to be important to this grower-owned company. We all know there are times in the year when our big trucks need to deliver beets to the receiving stations and factories, our machinery needs to move on the highways, and our factories produce an odor. Supporting community events and working with community leaders helps promote a greater understanding of our industry needs.

When we first started to talk about buying Michigan Sugar, I was asked to attend a Carrollton Township Board meeting. At that meeting I explained Imperial's offer and the future of the company, if the growers were not successful. The Township Board was very interested and offered to help any way they could. After the news conference on the day we completed the purchase, the Carrollton Township Supervisor came up to me and was delighted the Carrollton factory would continue to run. Yes, we provide a tax base, but I think being a good neighbor is also important to the Carrollton Township as well as other local communities.

### PIONEER SUGAR LADIES NEEDED

We are looking for a few good ladies who are willing to volunteer their time! The PIO-NEER SUGAR LADIES will be promoting the good neighbor spirit at local events. These ladies will provide help with community events such as parades, local festivals and fairs. They will help in booths, sell logo products, meet people, answer questions and have fun.

We would like to have four grower/owner ladies from each of the four factory districts who are interested in taking part in promoting the Pioneer Sugar products made by their Co-op. Michigan Sugar Company will provide hats and jackets along with training on topics important to the sugar industry.

These PIONEER SUGAR LADIES will be under the direction of Dick Leach. Any interested party should contact Michigan Sugar Company at 989.799.7300.



Mary McPhee of Bay City, Michigan is displaying her first place cake and awards at the 2000 Zehnder's Snowfest Cake Decorating Contest sponsored by Pioneer Sugar and WSGW.



# We've pulled out all stops to bring you the best plantability in the business.

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Both *F-15* and *Unipel* are green, easy to find in the soil, and available on most Hilleshög varieties. For more information contact your Hilleshög Sales Rep or visit *www.hilleshog-us.com*.



### THE PIONEER NEWSBEET IS BACK!

How time flies... The last time you received a Pioneer Newsbeet was the Spring of 1998 (see picture). With Imperial Sugar Company our magazine evolved into a national magazine, the Sugarbeet Update which was brought to you four times each year; the Update is no longer printed. Now the Pioneer Newsbeet is back! We will have our magazine issued two times annually in the Spring and Fall.

We hope to challenge you with the latest agronomic research results from all aspects of the sugarbeet industry. In the Great Lakes growing region much research is conducted on sugarbeets by Jim Stewart, Manager of Research for Michigan Sugar Company; university researchers at Michigan State University and University of Guelph in Ridgetown College in Ontario (and their graduate students); Sugarbeet Advancement coordinated by Steve Poindexter and Monitor Sugar Company's research department. Other research is conducted throughout our nation and internationally on sugarbeets which we also plan on bringing to you.

We are pleased to bring you agronomic challenges to encourage you to deliver a higher quality beet crop to **your** factories. In addition, we will attempt to keep you apprised of local events in your community, sponsored by your company, along with industry happenings at the state and national level.

Enjoy our Pioneer Newsbeet!



The last issue of the Pioneer newsbeet was published in the Spring of 1998.

### **PIONEER NEWSBEET**

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