

MICHIGAN CORN

# BETWEEN THE ROWS

The Joint Magazine of the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan and the Michigan Corn Growers Association



2015 YEAR IN REVIEW:

# CMPM and MCGA

MICHIGAN CORN

# BETWEEN THE ROWS

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# Letter from the Executive Director: The RFS is Important to You!

By: Jim Zook, Executive Director, Corn Marketing Program of Michigan

As the executive director of the Corn Marketing Program, my biggest concern is working to strengthen and grow markets for Michigan corn. One of the ways the CMPM has done that over the years is through support of the ethanol industry.

In 1992 when the CMPM was formed, growers were facing low corn prices and we were struggling to find ways to go through our pile of corn and get off of government support. Ethanol offered us a chance to do just that by consuming a large number of those bushels.

However, because oil companies owned all the infrastructure to dispense fuel in this country, we were going to need a policy to open up market access for ethanol fuels. To accomplish that, the CMPM and other corn marketing programs from across the U.S. worked to develop the Renewable Fuel Standard by funding feasibility studies into how to launch the industry.

The results of launching the ethanol industry have been immensely positive for corn growers. Data shows that once the standard went into effect, farmers went from receiving an annual price of \$1.78 to \$2.37 for their corn to an annual average of \$3.10 to \$6.69.

Now we are in the phase of the program where we have perform maintenance and repairs on the program to keep it relevant, viable and operating. To use an example, when you buy a tractor you have the original purchase cost, but once you have the tractor it takes additional money to cover depreciation, interest, repairs, taxes, insurance, and fuel to keep it operating. We are in that phase of the RFS program trying to keep it maintained.



Why do we spend the time and money to maintain this program? A study conducted by the MSU Product Center showed that the RFS contributes 7.4 percent to the value of your corn. Since the RFS has been in place, that has worked out to an additional \$.33 per bushel each year since 2006.

Looking to the future; we are currently working with the auto companies, EPA, gas pump manufacturers and other entities to ensure access to the market. Like the initial policy, these changes won't happen overnight, but we are well into the next phase of keeping ethanol demand and corn usage strong.



## Mark your calendars for the 2016 Between the Rows Summer Tour!

### TENTATIVE DATES AND LOCATIONS

HOST	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Matt Frostic	August 29	Dinner at 6:30 p.m.	2535 Applegate Rd., Applegate MI 48401
Steve Errer	August 30	Dinner at 6:30 p.m.	3820 North Van Dyke Rd., Fillion, MI 48432
TBD	August 31	Dinner at 6:30 p.m.	Saginaw County
Wilbur-Ellis	September 1	Lunch at 12:00 p.m.	11828 E. Bluewater Hwy., Pewamo, MI 48873
Jay Drozd	September 6	Dinner at 6:30 p.m.	537 M40 S, Allegan, MI 49010
Jon White	September 7	Dinner at 6:30 p.m.	63636 M40, Jones, MI 49061
Sheats Farm	September 8	Dinner at 6:30 p.m.	11592 Plank Rd., Milan, MI 48160

# From the Presidents of the CMPM and the MCGA

By: Richard Dobbins, President of the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan and Alvin Ferguson, President of the Michigan Corn Growers Association

Here in Michigan, we have two distinct but complementary organizations working on behalf of Michigan corn growers. These two organizations have separate and independent boards and unique missions. However, on many issues we need the work of both organizations to achieve success.

The Corn Marketing Program of Michigan is your check-off organization. A penny from each bushel of corn grown in the state goes into the program to support research, education, promotion and market development aimed at improving the profitability of Michigan's corn growers.

The Michigan Corn Growers Association is a grassroots membership organization funded by voluntary, dues-paying members. The MCGA is the political voice of Michigan's corn growers. MCGA advocates at the state and national level for policies that enhance and strengthen our industry.

There are many areas where the work of these two organizations complement and build on each other. One example is trade. On the MCGA side, we fight for policies and trade deals that enable international market access and expand trade. On the CMPM side, we

work with the U.S. Grains Council to sponsor trade missions to other countries and bring trade delegations into the U.S. to help boost the demand for Michigan corn, ethanol and DDGs around the world.

Another area where the work of these two organizations come together is on ethanol. On the MCGA side, we push to preserve the Renewable Fuel Standard, which ensures fair market access for ethanol fuels made from corn. We're also working to fix regulations that currently prevent E15 from being offered year-round.

On the CMPM side, we are investing in building additional ethanol pumps across the state. This new infrastructure will substantially increase consumer access to ethanol fuels and help drive more demand for corn.

Our two organizations are unique, we have separate funding sources, independent boards of directors and different spheres of influence. Both of these approaches are necessary when it comes to strengthening our

industry and improving profitability for Michigan corn farmers.

We've made a lot of progress over the past year, and we plan to continue building on that in the years to come. Thank you to all of Michigan's corn farmers for everything you do for our industry.



*Richard Dobbins, President of the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan*



*Alvin Ferguson, President of the Michigan Corn Growers Association*





# Corn Marketing Program of Michigan – Annual Report

In 2015, we had another strong year, continuing to support Michigan's corn industry through research, promotion, education and market development.

## Research

Since 2000, the CMPM has invested nearly \$6 million in research aimed at improving Michigan's corn industry and making our corn farmers more profitable. This research includes new uses for corn, boosting production, and improving sustainability. Reports on completed and ongoing research are available on our website, [www.micorn.org](http://www.micorn.org).

## Public Education

One of our ongoing challenges is educating the public and consumers about our industry and products.

To that end we continued advertising with the Detroit Tigers, the Detroit Lions and U of M football. These platforms allow us to reach large numbers of consumers in target markets. We also launched a new brochure educating the public about GMO foods and answering common questions.

## Farmer Education

This year we launched a new farmer outreach effort with our Between the Rows Tour. The tour took us across the state where we checked corn yields and reported those findings to growers at informal farm meetings. The program was a big success that we will be continuing this summer.



The Great Lakes Crop Summit is another huge educational event for the CMPM. A full recap of that event can be found in the following pages.

## Market Development

When it comes to market development,



the CMPM focused on two major areas this past year: exports and ethanol. Through our membership in the U.S. Grains Council, we help open up new markets for corn and corn products across the world and strengthen existing markets. This included Michigan farmers participating in trade missions to Egypt, Morocco, Japan, and Korea to build demand for Michigan corn and DDGs.

On the ethanol front, we were able to leverage CMPM dollars to secure an additional \$3 million in funding from the USDA to install ethanol infrastructure in the state. This grant will help install more than 80 additional pumps in Michigan, boosting the use of ethanol fuel and consuming more corn.

\*A full report of the financials for the CMPM is available by contacting our office at (517) 668-2676.





## Great Lakes Crop Summit Continues to Grow *More than 900 Farmers in Attendance*



This year's Great Lakes Crop Summit marked another record year with more than 900 attendees, up from around 750 last year. In addition, there were a higher number of students and young farmers attending than in previous years.

Topics at GLCS 2016 ran the gamut from production practices to succession planning on the farm and consumer marketing. Some highlights included:

- National Corn Yield Contest winner Randy Dowdy, who shared tips and tricks for boosting corn yields.
- Nationally-acclaimed agriculture speaker Jolene Brown with tips on how to manage a family farm and plan for succession.
- Terry Fleck with the Center for Food Integrity, who shared the latest research on consumer trust of farming and food systems.
- A brand new panel with millennials where farmers were able to ask questions and find out what they thought about agriculture, farmers and food.
- Our biggest trade show yet, showcasing the latest technology and the best in agribusiness.

Visit us online at [www.GreatLakesCropSummit.com](http://www.GreatLakesCropSummit.com) for a recap of the summit, photos, and information on next year's event!

The Great Lakes Crop Summit is a joint effort between the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan, the Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee and the Michigan Wheat Program.







*Ovid corn farmer Russell Braun presents at the USGC Grain Quality Report rollout in Japan.*

*Michigan farmer and NCGA board member Jeff Sandborn discusses trade opportunities with USGC staff at the Grain Quality Report rollout in Cairo.*

## CMPM: Michigan Farmers Travel Overseas to Promote Export of U.S. Corn

Michigan farmers traveled with two groups of corn farmers to Morocco, Egypt, Japan and Korea this January to help roll out the U.S. Grains Council's (USGC's) 2015/2016 Corn Harvest Quality Report to eager international audiences. This report rollout gives U.S. corn farmers the chance to demonstrate the quality of corn, and talk about ethanol and DDGs available for export from the U.S. and is a key strategy in creating more demand in international markets.

"Our work with the U.S. Grains Council is so important to the future profitability of corn farmers in Michigan," said Jim Zook, executive director of the CMPM. "Funding the council is one of the ways we invest our farmers' check-off dollars to develop new markets for corn, ethanol, and dried distillers grains and ultimately grow the bottom line for Michigan corn farmers."

The groups included two Michigan farmers; Jeff Sandborn, a farmer from Portland, MI, who traveled to Morocco and Egypt; and Russell Braun, a farmer from Ovid, MI, who traveled to Japan and Korea.

The groups met with traders, feed millers, major livestock producers, corn processors, food and beverage companies and government officials to provide them information on U.S. corn quality, supply, production and demand as well as anticipated changes in future corn supply and demand.

"By providing the U.S. farmer's perspective, along with the information in the corn quality report, the Council and its members are able to build rapport and trust in key markets around the world," said Cary Sifferath, senior director of global programs at USGC. "In addition, they can hear any concerns and issues directly from our international customers and take that

information home to inform work in their associations and check-offs."

For customers in mature markets like Japan and Korea, this information and visits from corn farmers help to bolster confidence in the United States as a reliable supplier and encourages purchase from the U.S. versus other available origins.

The two conferences in the Middle East were regional events, with the 60 participants in Cairo hailing from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan and Lebanon and the 60 participants in Casablanca coming from Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Turkey.

USGC is funded and directed by its members, including the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan (CMPM), and farmer-members often act as the boots on the ground, promoting the mission of the USGC.

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# Deadline Extended to Apply for Grant to Install Biofuels Pumps in Michigan

The Corn Marketing Program of Michigan is extending the deadline for retailers to apply for a share of \$3 million in grant money to install infrastructure needed to supply more renewable fuel to Michigan drivers. The money is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Biofuels Infrastructure Partnership, which is designed to nearly double the number of pumps supplying renewable fuels across the nation.

"This project will allow retailers across Michigan to offer more consumer choices at the pump," said Jim Zook, executive director of CMPM. "Ethanol is a local product, its cleaner burning than oil and it saves consumers money at the pump. Investing in ethanol infrastructure is a big win for Michigan families and businesses."

In order to receive the USDA grant money, CMPM worked with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to secure matching commitments from retailers and organizations across the state.

"The strength of the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan has been a major asset for Michigan in this process," said Zook. "We were able to leverage the check-off dollars that our members invest in the program to help secure additional funding from USDA through the Biofuels Infrastructure Partnership. Offering consumers better access to ethanol will help grow this industry and boost the demand for corn grown by Michigan farmers."

More information about the grant, including application materials, are available online at [www.micorn.org/BIP](http://www.micorn.org/BIP).

## 100 years yielding millions more.



This year marks our centennial anniversary and over a decade of paying patronage back to our members. Because of their hard work and dedication, we are returning \$35 million of net earnings. It's just one more way GreenStone is supporting its cooperative members now and into the future.

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# Michigan Launches CommonGround Program

This year, the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan launched the Michigan chapter of CommonGround. CommonGround is a national program that connects volunteer female farmers with consumers to have conversations about the food we grow and how we produce it. They share personal experiences, as well as science and research, to help consumers sort through the myths and misinformation surrounding food and farming.

To kick off this new program in Michigan, the CMPM brought the CommonGround booth to the Michigan Women's Expo in February to discuss everything from GMOs to hormone and antibiotic use in meat production. We were joined by a group of farmer volunteers, including Melanie Block



from Conklin, Janna Fritz from Bad Axe, Sharon Kokx from Hickory Corners, Brigitte Leach from Climax, Cathy McCune from St.

Louis, Carla Schultz from Kingston, Barbara Siemen from Harbor Beach and Carla Wardin from St. Johns. Elaine Bristol from the Michigan Ag Council and CMPM intern Sydney Miller also assisted at the booth.

The conference gave us a unique chance to engage women and mothers and answer their questions about food. Giving consumers opportunities to speak directly with farmers is an important tool when it comes to boosting consumer trust and confidence in our food system.

CommonGround was developed by farmers through the United Soybean Board (USB) and the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA). You can find out more about the program online at [www.findourcommonground.com](http://www.findourcommonground.com).

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*The National Corn Growers Association elected Michigan farmer, and former MCGA President Jeff Sandborn to serve on the board.*

## MCGA: 2015 Year in Review

**T**he Michigan Corn Growers Association is the voice of Michigan corn farmers in Lansing, and in Washington DC. We're a grassroots membership organization. Our strength comes from the dedication and hard work of our farmer members. The more members we have, the stronger our voice. In 2015 our numbers continued to grow, and we're now over 1,400 members strong!

### Member Highlights from 2015

We launched a new member appreciation event this year with American Ethanol and YellowHose.com during the American Ethanol Late Model Tour at the I-96 Speedway. We also continued our partnership with NASCAR, hosting educational events at two summer races at the Michigan International Speedway. One race gave us the opportunity to host Michigan auto dealers and mechanics and educate them about the benefits of Michigan-made ethanol. For the second race, we hosted MCGA members and their guests.



*The MCGA hosted more than 200 members and their guests during this year's annual outings at Centennial Acres in Sunfield and Ubly Heights in Ubly.*



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#### Meet the New John Deere 9RX Series Tractor

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LAPEER, MI 48446  
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# Legislative Highlights



*In March, we held our board meeting in downtown Lansing and invited legislators to stop by and share a few words with us.*



*During harvest season, we connected elected officials with farmers for a ride in the combine to give them a firsthand look at how we operate and how we use new technology on the farm.*



*This July, we participated in a rally at the capitol to protect the Renewable Fuel Standard and visited with our legislators in their offices to talk about the RFS, GMO labeling, expanding trade opportunities and our concerns about the EPA's overreach on the Water of the US rule.*



*During the summer months, we hosted a barbecue at the Michigan Corn office where MCGA members were able to meet with their legislators to discuss their farms and the issues important to them.*



# THANK YOU FOR BEING A MEMBER!



**In 2015, we stood up for Michigan farmers and fought for policies that will help grow our industry.**

**With your help, we've made the voice of Michigan corn growers stronger than ever!**

## 2015 LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

- We successfully preserved funding for the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance program, which certifies farms for good stewardship practices. This program is critical when it comes to quantifying the great work our farmers already do and gives us protection when we're attacked by those who have little knowledge of our industry.
- We worked with NCGA to pass new trade deals that will open up new foreign markets for corn, ethanol and DDGs. Expanding exports will be one of the keys to continued economic growth for our industry and we will continue to be active on this issue on your behalf.
- We fought hard against cuts to the Renewable Fuel Standard. EPA initially proposed major cuts which they revised after substantial pressure from corn growers across the country, including MCGA members. While we were disappointed that the EPA reduced the RFS at all, we know that your voices were key in getting EPA to back down from its first proposal.

**Find out more: [www.micorn.org](http://www.micorn.org)**



# Don Morse and Mark Bauer Receive MCGA Friend of Corn Award

Nine years ago, the Michigan Corn Growers Association created the "Friend of Corn" award as a way to honor individuals who have shown great support, leadership and dedication to the corn industry. This year MCGA honored two outstanding leaders, Don Morse and Mark Bauer.



**Don Morse**



**Mark Bauer**

This event was a fun way for MCGA members and their families to socialize and was instrumental in bringing together corn farmers from across the state. Because of Ethanol Night at the Races we were able to educate thousands of farmers, consumers and

legislators about the benefits of Michigan-made ethanol. None of this would have been possible without their hard work and dedication.

Mark is a fourth generation, lifelong farmer from Reese where he lives with his wife and

three children. He has been a Pioneer seed dealer for over 20 years and is very involved with his community, church and the corn industry.

Don has been farming for over 40 years with his family in Birch Run. Don has also been a Pioneer seed dealer for over 20 years. He has been very active in the corn industry and served on the MCGA board as the Saginaw County President for many years. Don has been a warrior in the fight for ethanol. He served on the NCGA Ethanol Committee and currently serves on the POET Board of Directors. Don started the first Ethanol Night at the Races event in Saginaw County.

## Jim Zook Recognized with ACE Ethanol Grassroots Award

The American Coalition for Ethanol (ACE) is a national ethanol organization that focuses on developing new markets for ethanol use, public policies to support the industry, and outreach initiatives to promote the benefits of renewable fuel. The Michigan Corn Growers Association is an active member of this organization.

Each year, ACE highlights an individual whose leadership and passion for ethanol stands apart from the rest of its members.

"This year's American Coalition for Ethanol Grassroots Award recipient clearly places advocating for the industry at the forefront of his mission," said Lacey Dixon on behalf of ACE at the MCGA annual meeting. "He is passionate about agriculture and ethanol and is committed to working tirelessly for

the successes of both industries. He's poured himself into efforts to protect the Renewable Fuel Standard and now to grow infrastructure in the state in a strategic way."

Accepting the award on behalf of MCGA members across the state, Zook praised those members for their dedication, hard work, and grassroots efforts that have gained national recognition.



## New MCGA Board Member Profile: John Ferkowicz

**Lapeer County**  
**Silverwood, Michigan**

**District – At Large**

**Farming Experience:** Dairy and cash crop farmer for 40 years.

**Education:** High school diploma

**Interests and Affiliations:** Lapeer County Farm Bureau Board of Directors, Michigan Agri-Business Association

**Reasons for Running:** Since high school, I have worked both on and off the family dairy farm. I have worked in the agricultural retail business for many years, including 18 years with Royster Clark and 7 years with Wilbur Ellis. I have also sold NK Seed for 32 years.

# Support Champions of Agriculture

**W**e want to support legislative champions for the agricultural community and we need your help to do it!

Any agricultural issue that affects one corn grower affects all corn growers. The Friends of Corn PAC makes our interests known to candidates who we trust to listen objectively, understand our concerns and act on issues accordingly. Legislators need the support of the agricultural community to fund

increasingly expensive election campaigns. A contribution from the Friends of Corn PAC demonstrates our respect for a candidate's agricultural views.

What are some examples of important issues?

- Biotechnology
- Ethanol
- Transportation
- Waters of the US
- Value-added agriculture
- Crop Insurance
- Livestock development

Help us help you. Contribute to the Friends of Corn PAC by making out your personal check to Friends of Corn PAC and sending it to 13750 S. Sedona Parkway, Suite 5, Lansing, MI 48906. You may also contribute by rounding your membership check up to any amount you are able to give.

You can learn more about the Friends of Corn PAC by visiting our website at [micorn.org](http://micorn.org).

## Michigan Corn Growers Association Membership Application

The Michigan Corn Growers Association (MCGA) is a grassroots-membership association representing the state's corn producers' policy interests. Since the 1970s, MCGA has looked out for the state's corn producers by working to keep legislation, policy and regulation corn-friendly in Washington, D.C. and Lansing. Membership in the MCGA includes membership in the National Corn Growers Association. Your membership includes both state and national newsletters, legislative calls to action, and updates on policy issues affecting corn production. You are also eligible for discounts and scholarships.

### Who May Join?

\*Grower - Any person who derives a portion of income from corn production.

\*\*Associate - Any person who doesn't qualify as a corn grower.

Student - Any full-time student.

Applicant's Name	Spouse's Name (if applicable)
Farm/Business Name	Date of Birth
Street Address	Home Phone
City, State, Zip Code	Business Phone
Email Address	Mobile Phone

*Help us utilize your membership dollars wisely and effectively by providing your email address. Many legislative issues require urgent action and email access allows MCGA membership the ability to act in a timely manner relating to issues facing Michigan's corn producers. Electronic communication ensures your dues go toward projects instead of postage and printing.*

### Membership Type:

☐ First Time Member

☐ Renewal

Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Grower Memberships:\*

☐ Grower Lifetime (\$500)

☐ Grower 3-Year (\$155)

☐ Grower 1-Year (\$60)

### Associate Memberships:\*\*

☐ Associate Lifetime (\$500)

☐ Associate 3-Year (\$155)

☐ Associate 1-Year (\$60)

☐ Student 1-Year (\$20)

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### Count on Me to Support My Friends of Corn PAC

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$75

☐ \$100 ☐ \$1/day (\$365)

When contributing to the PAC, please make your **personal** check payable to Friends of Corn-PAC.



Return your completed application to:

Michigan Corn Growers Association  
13750 S. Sedona Parkway, Suite 5  
Lansing, MI 48906





Attention!

# MICHIGAN CORN Racefans

## Enter to win two tickets to the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series

at Michigan International Speedway during either  
the **Careers for Veterans 200** on August 27th or the  
**Pure Michigan 400** on August 28th, 2016.

Winners will watch the race from a Sky Lounge Suite.  
Learn firsthand about NASCAR and ethanol from Joe Moore,  
Jeff Striegle and Rusty Wallace.

### How to enter:

- »»» If you are an MCGA member, call the office at (517) 668-2676 or fill out the form below to enter.
- »»» Not a member? Join MCGA by filling out a membership application and indicate that you wish to be entered in the drawing.
- »»» Get additional entries in the drawing by recruiting a new member – you and the member you recruit will be entered into the drawing.

**Drawing will be held on August 5, 2016.**



*\* You must be an MCGA member to be eligible to win. Winners will be drawn for the Saturday, August 27, 2016 and Sunday, August 28, 2016 race at Michigan International Speedway. Each winner will receive a ticket for themselves and a guest to one of the races.*

»»» Please enter me in the drawing for NASCAR Suite tickets on August 27 or 28 <<<

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Farm Name/Company: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Corn Marketing Program of Michigan Board Members

**Blaine Baker** – District 4

**Dr. Doug Buhler** – Mich. State University

**John Burk** – District 8

**John Cnudde** – MABA

**Richard Dobbins** – District 5 (President)

**Tom Durand** – District 7 (Treasurer)

**Matt Holysz** – District 2

**Steve Lonier** – District 6 (Vice President)

**Randall Poll** – District 1

**Paul Wagner** – District 9 (Secretary)

**Ned Wyse** – District 3



## Michigan Corn Growers Association Board Members

**Russell Braun** – At-Large

**Ed Breitmeyer** – District 1

**Dan Cable** – District 8 (Vice President)

**Matt Cary** – District 2

**Earl Collier** – District 6

**Gabe Corey** – Industry Representative

**Kevin Diffin** – Saginaw Co. President

**John DiMartini** – Industry Representative

**Richard L. Dobbins** – Ex-Officio

**Richard P. Dobbins** – District 7

**Alvin Ferguson** – District 5 (President)

**John Ferkowicz** – At-Large

**Janna Fritz** – District 3

**Matthew Frostic** – District 3

**Philip Gordon** – District 8

**Dr. Kelvin Grant** – Industry Representative

**Mike Hard** – District 7

**Tony Igl** – District 4

**Dr. James Kells** – Ex-Officio

**Mark Kies** – Hillsdale Co. President

**Loren Koeman** – District 6

**Brian Kreps** – Monroe Co. President

**Bill Kushmaul** – Clinton Co. President

**Scott Lonier** – Chairman

**Jason McConnachie** – Sanilac Co. President (Secretary/Treasurer)

**Scott Miller** – At-Large

**Jeff Sandborn** – Ex-Officio

**Eric Voisinnet** – District 4

**Tom Ziel** – Huron Co. President

## Michigan Corn Office Staff

**Kay Barclay** – Accountant and Office Administrator

**Tera Havard** – Executive Assistant

**Angel Jenio** – Communications Specialist

**Natalie Rector** – Research Coordinator

**Theresa Sisung** – Advocacy and Outreach Director

**Penni Sweeney** – Membership & Events Coordinator

**Jim Zook** – Executive Director



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