

MICHIGAN COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE
Emerald Room
Amway Grand Plaza Hotel
187 Monroe Avenue, NW
Grand Rapids, Michigan

MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 6, 2006

PRESENT:

Douglas Darling, Chair, Commission of Agriculture
Dale Norton, Vice Chair, Commission of Agriculture
Ann Jousma-Miller, Secretary
James Byrum, Commission of Agriculture
Don Coe, Commission of Agriculture
Mitch Irwin, Director, Michigan Department of Agriculture

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairperson Darling called the meeting of the Commission of Agriculture to order at 9:38 a.m. on Wednesday, December 6, 2006. Commissioner Jousma-Miller called the roll with Commissioners, Darling, Norton, Jousma-Miller, Coe and Director Irwin present. Commissioner Byrum arrived at approximately 10:40 a.m. due to travel issues.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: COMMISSIONER COE MOVED APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 6, 2006 AGENDA. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER JOUSMA-MILLER. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 9, 2006 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Darling noted an addition of a date from his comments.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER COE MOVED APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 9, 2006 MEETING MINUTES. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER JOUSMA-MILLER. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

January 8, 2007, Lansing Center, Lansing, Michigan, during the Michigan Agri-Business Association Annual Meeting.

COMMISSIONERS' TRAVEL

November 30, 2006 – Michigan Farm Bureau Annual Meeting, Grand Rapids, Michigan - Commissioners Darling, Norton, Coe and Byrum

December 6, 2006 – History, Arts and Libraries (HAL) Conference, Lansing, Michigan – Commissioner Jousma-Miller

MOTION: COMMISSIONER JOUSMA-MILLER MOVED APPROVAL OF COMMISSIONERS' TRAVEL. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER NORTON. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Jousma-Miller commented that she is on a planning committee for a Michigan State University (MSU) meeting about alternative fuel to be held in the Upper Peninsula (UP) in March. She hopes to also bring agri-tourism issues to the conference.

She has also been working with Bay College and the Michigan Technical Education Center to bring an incubator kitchen to the area.

She is pleased that two individuals from the UP were appointed to the Alternative Fuels Commission.

There is much interest in the Governor's 21st Century Tax Plan and there will be meetings planned.

Commissioner Coe stated there have been a number of meetings locally concerning ramifications of the Governor's proposals for replacement of the single business tax. He has not seen much input related to agriculture policy.

Mr. Coe attended a video conference managed by the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) regarding winery and vineyard development and financing workshop. It was a statewide conference and there was a good turnout from the Traverse City area. He stated the video conference was a very effective tool to bring in participants from all over the state. He encouraged others to use the technology.

Commissioner Norton discussed his recent trip to Holland, Denmark and Germany to look at how the European Union (EU) countries are dealing with the sow stall ban that is to take effect in 2013. He shared observations from several farms they visited in each country. They attended producer meetings in Germany and Denmark.

He discussed management issues, regulatory enforcement, animal identification and movement requirements.

He noted that Arizona has also banned the use of sow stalls, but the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) still has to write the regulations.

Commissioner Darling commented that it has been a wet fall with good prices. He shared observations from his recent trip to Australia about the climate, crops and production.

He commented about the Michigan Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. Topics included Bovine Tuberculosis, farmland preservation, national farm bill and the single business tax.

He briefly discussed labor issues common to EU countries and the United States.

Commissioner Darling commented about the Employee Awards Ceremony and congratulated the award recipients for the Commission of Excellence Award, Debbie Mulvaney; and the Employee of the Year, Jan Wilford.

He also participated as a speaker in the Leadership Academy comprised of staff from MDA, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). He is excited about this program as it brings together individuals who will be working together in the future.

He also congratulated the Michigan State University (MSU) Dairy Judging Team for earning first place at the North American International Livestock Competition.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Irwin encouraged all Commissioners to take advantage of the video-conferencing capabilities available through MDA. The equipment purchase was made possible with federal funds.

He updated Commissioners on budget status. The Department of Management and Budget (DMB) has asked all departments to submit proposals for a five percent reduction in the current spending for FY'07.

He briefly discussed the first meeting of the Commercialization Roundtable and the target date of March 2007 for a preliminary report.

Director Irwin briefed the Commissioners about the development of a workgroup to discuss issues related to raw milk. Michigan Food & Farming Systems will help facilitate the discussions. The workgroup is expected to share progress in 90 days.

Director Irwin commented about the Employee Awards Ceremony and added his congratulations to Debbie Mulvaney and Jan Wilford for their exemplary work.

He spoke briefly of the importance of the partnership with the Michigan Association of Local Public Health (MALPH) and how it relates to the ability of MDA and partner to respond quickly and effectively to any outbreak of a food borne illness.

He shared information about the importance of building a relationship with MSU to strengthen MDA's international trade program working with MSU's international program.

Director Irwin spoke briefly about the Alternative Fuels Commission. They have brought together food and agriculture leaders, including automotive industry leaders, for their first meeting. They began discussing what could be done to develop more of a variety of alternative fuels from crop based organics.

There was a brief discussion about unfunded mandates from the legislature and what could be done to help find assistance for MDA. Director Irwin discussed the possibility of developing a position dedicated to grant writing for MDA and the difficulty faced in determining reduction in services.

Director Irwin noted that Linda Jones, Program Manager for the Michigan Grape & Wine Industry Council (MGWIC), will be taking an unpaid leave of absence to travel to Australia and New Zealand. While there, she will conduct informal research about their wine industries. Existing staff will continue to work with the program and if we need some outside help we will do that to meet the needs of the MGWIC. He stated that the MGWIC has a good staff and a model council.

He spoke briefly about the Michigan Harvest Agri Energy Conference March 13-14, 2007. He encouraged participation in the conference.

He noted that the Electronic Animal Identification team is conducting outreach and education.

Director Irwin briefly discussed a recently released report entitled Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Enumeration Profiles Study in Michigan, a project of the State of Michigan Interagency Migrant Services Committee.

He also shared information the Commission had requested regarding MDA laboratory fees, and an update on Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) general fund expenditures.

Director Irwin discussed the upcoming 2007 Farm Bill and in response to a question from Commissioner Coe, he noted that involvement of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) in working for changes to the Farm Bill.

Commissioner Jousma-Milled noted that she hosted the United States Department of Commerce Export marketing staff in September for two days in September. They visited companies that were exporting so they could work with them on guidelines. In addition to manufacturing, they asked about agricultural interests. She suggested staff work cooperatively with these individuals.

PROPOSED 2007 COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE: Chairperson Doug Darling

MOTION: COMMISSIONER NORTON MOVED APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED 2007 COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER COE. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

REQUEST FOR RULEMAKING, REGULATION 813. HARNESS HORSE RACE AND PULLING TEAM STIMULANTS AND DEPRESSANTS: Melissa Rogers, Animal Health and Education Coordinator, Fairs, Exhibitions and Racing Division

Ms. Rogers requested permission to begin the rule making process for Regulation 813 Harness Horse Race and Pulling Team Stimulants and Depressants. This regulation currently regulates county fair harness horse racing and horse pulling events. She explained that after issues during the past season, staff became aware that MDA does not have authority to take action if an official at the horse pull makes a ruling against a participant and the participant then fails to abide by the ruling. Staff feels it is important to be able to support the officials if their rulings are ignored.

She relayed an incident where a participant was suspected of using an illegal device, but when ordered by an official to stop the team of horses and show the contents of his pockets, the participant refused and continued moving forward. The official could have been harmed and MDA had no recourse.

Additionally, the "pulling" equine are not required to be identified in any way. In the event that a pulling team or owner is disqualified, there is no way to verify that someone else is using the pulling team to complete for them.

A group of industry representative will be formed to review the regulation language and options for making it more useful.

A brief discussion ensued.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER COE MOVED TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR RULEMAKING TO AMEND REGULATION 813. HARNESS HORSE RACE AND PULLING TEAM STIMULANTS AND DEPRESSANTS. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER JOUSMA-MILLER. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

LABOR ISSUES: Denise Yockey, Michigan Apple Committee; Megan Ritter, Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB); Gordon Wenk, Director, Environmental Stewardship Division

Megan Ritter expressed the need for a guest worker program and the effect on Michigan agriculture. Michigan is extremely dependent on a specialized agriculture workforce. Farm Bureau across the country has been engaged in this debate with the greatest impact felt in Michigan, Washington, California, Texas, New York and Florida.

There are long and short term impacts of not having a workable guest worker program. This year, many farmers reported a 30% worker shortage, with documented productivity declines in the workers who did fill the jobs.

MFB continues to work with the industry and commodity groups to push for a workable guest worker program. Without such a program MFB analysis supports that up to a third of the United States (U.S.) fruit and vegetable sector will disappear and between \$5 and \$9 billion in U.S. fruit and vegetable production would be lost to foreign competitors. Net from income for the rest of agriculture (including livestock) would decline by as much as \$5 billion annually.

Without a workable guest worker program and the ability to use this specialized agricultural work force, it will greatly impact rural economies and the state tax rolls.

She stated that it is extremely critical that this issue be dealt with collectively and MFB is trying to do that in the most effective way possible.

Denise Yockey stated the Michigan apple industry is comprised of 1,000 family farms, the third largest producer of apples in the U.S. and pick between 1.5 and 2 billion apples each year, by hand. This year, there were not enough workers. As a result, some apples were not picked at peak, went to juice instead of fresh market and the farmers realized a significant difference in profit. Michigan is the fourth largest user of migrant workers and it is vital that Michigan specialty crop farmers have access to skilled temporary workers. This is a serious threat to Michigan's economy.

She distributed a copy of an article from the *Chicago Tribune* about how Michigan farmers are being put in a crunch not being able to access to a temporary work force.

She discussed how the workforce moves around and that local residents are not interested in working this type of job. It is a skilled workforce and consumers are surprised that apples are still picked by hand.

She stated that the industry understands the needs to know who is coming into the country, but there is a great need for a temporary work force to allow the agriculture industry to continue to thrive in Michigan.

She thanked the Commission for keeping this issue in the forefront and thanked them for their continued interest.

There was a brief discussion regarding immigration legislation.

In response to a question from Commissioner Norton, Ms. Ritter commented about possible reasons for the worker shortage. Possible reasons include increased scrutiny, more media attention to the issue and workers feeling threatened. Another reason is the re-building of New Orleans after hurricane Katrina.

Ms. Yockey stated that the Commission of Agriculture is in position of great influence and could help education the public and legislators about how badly a temporary worker program is needed.

Commissioner Coe reinforced comments made by Ms. Yockey and Ms. Ritter. He added additional anecdotal examples to support the issue. He asked the Commission and Department of Agriculture be added as a signatory to the draft worker program letter introduced at the last meeting. He also requested the letter be sent to other commodity groups and NASDA. Additionally, Commissioner Darling suggested the letter be sent to Michigan's congressional delegation, state legislators and Executive Office.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER COE MADE A MOTION FOR THE COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE TO SEND A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR A WORKABLE TEMPORARY WORKER PROGRAM. A COPY OF THE LETTER IS INCLUDED AS ATTACHMENT L. COMMISSIONER BYRUM SECONDED.

Commissioner Coe read the draft letter to those in attendance. Staff will personalize opening and closing paragraph of draft letter.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Gordon Wenk stated that the role of the Migrant Labor Housing Program within the Environmental Stewardship Division (ESD) is to assure that whatever number of workers come to Michigan have good, safe housing. ESD inspects and licenses the housing. In 2006, federal funding in the amount of \$150,000 was used to improve housing at eight different sites. Michigan is seventh in the nation in numbers of migrant workers. He referenced the recently completed Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Enumeration Profiles Study that contains much information. ESD staff will be part of the coalition that will again travel to Texas to recruit workers to come to Michigan. The number of H2A workers is 800. MDA licenses housing for 28,000 workers. The recently completed enumeration study indicated 45,000 migrant and seasonal workers annually in Michigan.

MDA helped with a legislative tour in the fall to educate legislators on the issues.

MDA has been contacted by a researcher at MSU who is proposing a more detailed study of the seasonal worker shortage, what it will cost the state of Michigan and alternatives to attract farm labor. Staff will work to facilitate and seek funding for the study. Outside of the federal issues surrounding immigration and guest worker policies the number one issue for perspective migrant workers is housing quality.

There was a brief discussion about the difference between a seasonal farm worker and a migrant farm worker and additional housing. ESD will continue to seek federal dollars to provide new housing units. Each new unit can house up to six workers. There are no state dollars available.

AGRICULTURAL TOURISM COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS: Ann Jousma-Miller, Chairperson, Agriculture Tourism Commission

Commissioner Jousma-Miller gave a brief history of the Agricultural Tourism Commission. 2005 PA 46 established the Agricultural Tourism Commission with a directive to detail the effects of local zoning on agricultural tourism; draft a model local zoning ordinance provisions to promote agricultural tourism; write recommendations concerning the use of logo signage to promote agricultural tourism; write recommendations for other measures to promote and enhance agricultural tourism; and research other issues concerning agricultural tourism.

The Commission was administered by MDA with no additional financial resources. She stated she believes that agricultural tourism is one of the fastest growing areas of agriculture in the state.

The Commissioner members appointed are: Ann Jousma-Miller, Gladstone; Walter Brys, Traverse City; Jim Graham, St. Johns; Abbey Jacobson, Romeo; Greg McKenzie, Dexter; Vickie Micheau, Escanaba; Carl Osentoski, Bad Axe; Melinda Remer, Lansing; and Herb Teichman, Eau Claire. She thanked them for their effort.

There were three sub-committees established to address promotion and awareness, signage and zoning. Director Irwin allowed three staff members to assist the Commission; Linda Jones assisted with signage, Liana Bennett with zoning, and Jeanne Lipe with promotion and awareness.

Much research and work has gone into the recommendations. Most meetings were held via teleconference. She discussed changes that occurred during the development of the Recommendations.

She encouraged everyone to work with their local officials to address *Heritage Train Program* and *Pure Michigan* signage issues.

She discussed the need to work closely with local officials on zoning. A sample zoning ordinance and a guidebook are included in the report.

As more visibility comes about, the promotion and marketing of agricultural tourism will hopefully become more viable.

She thanked Linda Jones, Liana Bennett and Jeanne Lipe for their work. She stated that a thank you letter and copy of the final report will be sent to members of the Agricultural Tourism Commission.

Commissioner Coe commended the Agricultural Tourism Commission for their product, especially the draft zoning ordinance.

There was a brief discussion about tracking sales tax revenue as it relates to agricultural tourism.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER BYRUM MOVED TO RECEIVE THE AGRICULTURAL TOURISM COMMISSION REPORT OF RECOMMENDATIONS. HE ALSO REQUESTED A LETTER OF THANKS BE SENT TO EACH MEMBER FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION. COMMISSIONER NORTON SECONDED.

Commissioner Coe asked that the letter include encouragement that financial support is found for ongoing activities of the Commission. Commissioner Jousma-Miller concurred.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Commissioner Darling thanked Commissioner Jousma-Miller, the Commission members and staff for their hard work and commitment.

MICHIGAN BLUEBERRY GROWERS 70TH ANNIVERSARY, GOVERNOR'S TRIBUTE AND COMMISSION TRIBUTE: Mitch Irwin and Commissioner Doug Darling

Commissioner Darling presented John Calsbeek, President of the Michigan Blueberry Growers Association (MBGA) with a tribute from the Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Michigan Department of Agriculture on the occasion of the association's 70th anniversary. In addition, Director Irwin presented Mr. Calsbeek with a tribute from Governor Granholm.

Director Irwin thanked Mr. Calsbeek for continued leadership of the MBGA over the years.

Mr. Carlsbeek expressed his thanks to the Governor and the Agriculture Commission for the recognition.

He commended the Commission for their action related to the farm labor issue. Farm labor is becoming even more important to the blueberry industry as they are producing more fresh product.

VIRAL HAEMORRHAGIC SEPTICAEMIA (VHS): Dr. Steven Halstead, State Veterinarian and Director, Animal Industry Division

Dr. Halstead reviewed the Amended Federal Order for Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia dated November 14, 2006. He also reviewed the resolution passed by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) on Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia. Staff met with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and industry representatives and have begun development of a plan, similar to one that New York has developed, for management of aquaculture intrastate. As currently outlined, it will address some of the concerns NRC had expressed in relation to the intrastate movement of aquaculture.

A meeting is also being planned to develop uniformity across the country.

Dr. Halstead recommended support of the NRC's resolution of November 9, 2006 on Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia. He suggested a cover letter with MDA's support with the original NRC resolution attached.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER COE MOVED TO SUPPORT THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION RESOLUTION ON VIRAL HAEMORRHAGIC SEPTICEMIA DATED NOVEMBER 9, 2006. COPIES ARE TO BE SENT TO MICHIGAN'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION. COMMISSIONER NORTON SECONDED.

There was a brief discussion on how quickly the federal order was put in place and the subsequent amendment.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

RECESS:

The meeting was recessed at 11:45 a.m.

RECONVENE:

The meeting was reconvened at 1:45 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT: Liesl Clark, Legislative Liaison

Ms. Clark distributed the Legislative Status document for December 2006 and reviewed pending bills, new public acts and commented about expected movement of bills prior to the end of the year. Topics included the drain code, fertilizer bill, electronic animal identification, farmland preservation, and privately owned cervids.

There was a brief discussion regarding restoring the \$5 million funding for additional grant funding under the Julian-Stille program.

AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE: Robert Craig, Director, Agriculture Development Division; Jamie Zmitko-Somers, International Trade Program; Christine Lietzau, Select Michigan Program

Robert Craig briefly reviewed division programs. He stated that nearly one third of Michigan agricultural products are exported and almost one quarter of export receipts are export oriented. Michigan realizes \$960 million in export sales.

Jamie Zmitko-Somers shared a PowerPoint presentation about activities in 2005 and 2006.

In 2005, Cherry Central Cooperative received the Ag Exporter of the Year. A Special Export Award went to the Michigan Apple Industry and a number of their key shippers for their work in getting Michigan apples into Mexico.

In February 2006, Flatout from Saline, Michigan participated in the Canadian Specialty Food Trade Mission in Toronto. They met with five companies who were all interested in their product.

In March 2006, staff conducted an export seminar with 35 people participating representing 12 Michigan companies. Topics included the basics of exporting from pricing and transportation to marketing and finding the market that best fit their product. The next seminar will be in Detroit in February 2007.

Also in March 2006, Graceland Fruit, Sunrich/Sunopta and North Dakota Mill & Elevator (all Michigan companies) traveled to Tokyo, Japan for the Foodex Japan Food Show Plus! Overall, nineteen companies participated and they received assistance with interpreters, retail tours and having their company's information translated into Japanese.

The FMI Show was held in May 2006 with 16 companies participating. One site domestic sales reached \$200,000 and expected domestic sales

are \$1,130,000 and export \$75,000. Michigan Farm Bureau again sponsored two buses to the show. 2007 will be the last year for the FMI Show in Chicago. There has been a drop off in exhibitor interest.

She is looking into other show opportunities.

The Food Service Buyers Mission at the National Restaurant Association show was also in May. This was the first time attending this show. Eden Foods, Cherry Blossom, Kitchen Etc., and Coloma Frozen Foods traveled to Chicago to meet one-on-one with potential buyers.

There was a Korean Wine Buyers Mission in August. They toured three wineries, met with two Michigan wineries in East Lansing, and attended the Michigan Wine and Spirits Competition Reception.

Burnette Foods and Cherry Marketing Institute attended the ExpoPan Food Show Plus! in Mexico City. This show is held for the bakery industry.

Cherry Central, Inc., Graceland Fruit, Inc., and Honee Bear Canning traveled to Korea for the Korean Fruit Seminar & Trade Mission to promote blueberries, cherries and cranberries. Health benefits were highlighted. This was a first time mission and extremely successful.

The Canadian Specialty Food Buyers Mission in September involved two Canadian buyers and met with Burnette Foods, Lesley Elizabeth, Safie Specialty Foods, Chef Foods and Cherry Central. One-on-one meetings were held in Lansing. There was keen interest for several of the companies.

Ms. Zmitko-Somers shared that the Mid-America International Agri-Trade Council (MIATCO) has changed their name to Food Export Association of the Midwest USA. Also the United States Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agriculture Service has changed their program year from a fiscal year to the calendar year beginning January 1, 2007.

There was a brief discussion regarding the necessity of traveling to trade shows with other states when using federal funding.

Director Irwin discussed the importance of adding information about return on investment when talking with the legislature and working to enhance the line items for international trade and the *Select Michigan* program.

Christine Lietzau shared information with the Commission regarding the activities for the Select Michigan program for 2005 and 2006.

The *Select Michigan* Program contracts with a private evaluator to determine effectiveness of the program.

In 2005, funding was obtained through a USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant (R-BEG), Michigan commodity groups, associations and companies. The program was focused in Grand Rapids, funded by the USDA R-Beg grant and in Detroit, funded by the private sector, commodity groups and associations.

2005 partners included Spartan (Family Fare & Independents), Meijer, Kroger, Farmer Jack, and Wal*Mart. Together these chains represent almost 80% market share in Michigan.

Commodity campaigns included soy, asparagus, peaches, blueberry, carrots, apples, potatoes, sugar and wine.

Elements included radio, print, in-store radio, signage, tastings, and chef events. By working together with the commodity groups and associations, they have been able to enjoy enormous discounts to the program. For example, they can receive a 50%-75% discount on in-store radio promotions working through Select Michigan rather than going through a private company. The messages always contain a health benefit, an economic benefit and family farm component.

In-store events are key. An analysis of a typical single in-store demo showed a 58% increase in fresh sales. That represents over a \$10,000 increase at the retail level and approximately \$5,000 more in farm gate value.

50% of the sponsors reported that the program provides them with more secure markets. Even for those sponsors who said their growers had higher prices or volumes due to the campaign, most still stated that secure markets were the most important to them.

An example of success is the asparagus program in 2005. In just three years, with Select Michigan promotion a key element, Michigan asparagus growers went from selling about 5% of their crop to fresh markets in 2002 to fully 25% of their crop in 2005. Fresh markets net as much as a 20% premium. At least three new packing facilities devoted to fresh asparagus markets have been opened.

She shared results of the peach crop and how the *Select Michigan* program directly impacted the increase in price received by Michigan farmers. The Michigan Peach Sponsors feel that the future of the Michigan peach industry lies with the continuation of the *Select Michigan* program.

When the evaluators asked what they might want to change, partners responded with a request for more demos; a request for fewer demos; an assurance of product supply; and more signage. All partners interviewed stated they wanted increased funding and program expansion.

New in 2006 was expanded in-store radio and print, additional partners added to the program, partnering with The Henry Ford & Social Marketing Campaign, additional billboards and TV, a Farmers' Market at the State Capitol, and securing a trademark for the *Select Michigan* logo.

There was a brief discussion regarding cost sharing.

Mr. Craig introduced Jeanne Lipe as the newest member of the Agriculture Development staff. Ms. Lipe was instrumental in the development of the *Select Michigan* program in 1999.

Director Irwin spoke about work being done with the State of Michigan purchasing department to promote the purchases of Michigan products.

COMMISSIONERS' ISSUES

Retirement Resolution for Ken Furgason.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER BYRUM MOVED THAT THE RESOLUTION FOR KEN FURGASON BE ADOPTED WITH BEST WISHES FOR A LONG AND HEALTHY RETIREMENT. COMMISSIONER NORTON SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

After reviewing the document about MDA laboratory testing provided earlier in the day, Commissioner Byrum requested staff to prepare a comparison of common tests performed by the MDA laboratory versus the price of those tests at private labs. He stated that the information is needed in the event legislation is required to change the fees. He stated the state should not be subsidizing the testing program.

He also commented that the luncheon speaker at the Michigan Agri-Business Association meeting on January 8, 2007 will be the president of Pioneer Genetics.

He then discussed the issue of western growers crossing the Canadian border to buy pesticides. It began because of the price differential, but that that no longer exists. Commissioner Byrum requested the Commission and MDA develop a position on the issue. There are serious liability and environmental issues. He feels the benefits are miniscule but the negatives are profound.

Commissioner Darling stated that his appointment on the Commission expires December 31, 2006 and that it has been a privilege to serve with the current and past commissioners. He wished everyone well.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ADJOURN

MOTION: COMMISSIONER BYRUM MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER NORTON SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Attachments:

A – Agenda

B – Agriculture Commission Meeting Minutes November 9, 2006

C – December 2006 Director's Report

Michigan Department of Agriculture Fees Comparison

E-mail dated November 29, 2006 from Kenneth Rauscher to Mitch Irwin

Subject: EAB Statement

D – Draft Michigan Commission of Agriculture 2007 Meeting Schedule

E - Agricultural Guest Worker Program, comments presented by Megan Ritter of Michigan Farm Bureau

Copy of a newspaper article from the Chicago Tribune entitled "Fewer Migrant Workers Put Growers in a Crunch" presented by Denise Yockey

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Enumeration Profiles Study - Michigan

F – Michigan Agricultural Tourism Advisory Commission Report of Recommendations

G – Michigan Blueberry Growers Association 70th Anniversary Commission/MDA Tribute

H – Amended Federal Order Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) November 14, 2006

Resolution of the Natural Resources Commission on Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia dated November 9, 2006

I – Legislative Status Report December 2006

J – Agriculture Development Division Update -

Select Michigan Report Card 2005 PowerPoint Presentation

International Marketing 2006 PowerPoint Presentation

K – Commissioners Issues

Retirement Resolution for Ken Furgason

L - Draft Agricultural Worker Program Support Letter