

**MICHIGAN COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE  
Saginaw City Council Chambers  
1315 S. Washington Avenue  
Saginaw, Michigan**

**MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 13, 2006**

**PRESENT:**

Douglas Darling, Chair, Commission of Agriculture  
Dale Norton, Vice-Chair, Commission of Agriculture  
Jim Byrum, Commission of Agriculture  
Don Coe, Commission of Agriculture  
Mitch Irwin, Director, Michigan Department of Agriculture

**OTHERS PRESENT:** (all or part of the meeting)

E.J. Brown, Michigan Association of Fairs & Exhibitions  
Donnie Hobson, Michigan Farmers Market Coalition  
Dan Keane, Downtown Saginaw/Hemlock Farmers' Market  
LauraJeanne S. Kehn, Frankenmuth Farmers Market  
Mike Kenny, Kenny Inc.  
Dave Smith, Michigan Vegetable Council

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Darling called the meeting of the Commission of Agriculture to order at 10:10 a.m. on Wednesday, September 13, 2006. Commissioner Darling called the roll with Commissioners Darling, Norton, and Coe present. Director Irwin was delayed by traffic and arrived at 10:13 a.m. Commissioner Byrum was delayed by traffic and arrived at 10:50 a.m. Commissioner Jousma-Miller was absent.

**Welcome by Carol Cottrell, Mayor of City of Saginaw**

Mayor Cottrell welcomed the Commission of Agriculture to the City of Saginaw. She stated that the Saginaw Valley is a strong agricultural area and has a great agricultural heritage.

Commissioner Darling also welcomed Mike Juhasz and Larry Perreault from the Michigan Department of Agriculture Regional Office.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER COE MOVED APPROVAL OF  
THE SEPTEMBER 13, 2006 AGENDA. SECONDED BY**

**COMMISSIONER NORTON. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**APPROVAL OF JULY 18, 2006 MEETING MINUTES**

**MOTION: WITH A NOTED SPELLING CORRECTION, COMMISSIONER NORTON MOVED APPROVAL OF THE JULY 18, 2006 MEETING MINUTES. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER COE. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**COMMISSIONERS' TRAVEL**

- July 18, 2006, Downy Mildew tours, Monroe and Lenawee Counties – Commissioner Darling
- July 27, 2006, Great Lakes Manure Expo, St. Johns – Commissioner Norton
- August 4, 2006, Electronic Animal ID Meeting, Hillsdale – Commissioner Norton
- August 17-18, 2006, Upper Peninsula State Fair and bio diesel plant opening, Escanaba, Michigan – Commissioner Darling
- August 23, 2006, NRCS MAEAP Session on Cropping – Commissioner Norton
- August 29, 2006, Farm Bureau's 2006 Planning for Agriculture Conference, Clare, Michigan – Commissioner Coe
- August 30, 2006, Michigan State Fair, Detroit, Michigan – Commissioners Darling, Byrum and Norton,

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER COE MOVED TO APPROVE THE ABOVE TRAVEL FOR THE COMMISSIONERS. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER NORTON. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**COMMISSION COMMENTS:**

**Commissioner Norton** commented they are in the middle of a good tomato harvest. Rain is causing some complications.

He discussed the TB testing rules from Ohio and Indiana and issues relative to easy movement across state lines. He noted a day that had a record number of hogs slaughtered (416,000 head) and because of increase in slaughter capacity and export market being strong, there was not much depression in price. It has been a much stronger market this summer than expected.

He noted that he would miss the next Commission of Agriculture meeting as he will be in Holland and Denmark with the National Pork Board Swine Welfare Committee. They will be looking at sow housing systems and

gestation stalls. They hope to meet with producers and discuss how to handle similar issues here.

**Commissioner Coe** commented that they have the worst case of Powdery Mildew in northwest Michigan in several years. They are also dealing with a Japanese beetle issue. He complimented the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) for spotting the pest. The infestation seems to be related to the movement of sod. He noted the recent discovery of Emerald Ash Borer in Leelanau County.

Disaster zones have been declared for apples and sweet cherries. There has been a 38% set aside announced for tart cherries.

The research station in Traverse City has been found free of Plum Pox virus.

There is a Farmland Preservation millage vote in Leelanau County in November.

**Commissioner Darling** commented briefly of his concerns about Downey Mildew.

He spoke about the reception he attended at the UP State Fair for Michigan State University's Lou Anna Simon and the Governor's Luncheon. He was able to talk to a number of farmers about agriculture issues and the UP State Fair. He noted a large attendance and great weather. He commented about a new exhibit called Growing UP Forester, teaching children and adults about making paper and the forestry industry. He said attendance was great at both the fair and the luncheon. He also attended the opening of the Ag Solutions bio diesel plant in Gladstone.

He commented that the number of buyers attending the Livestock Auction at the Michigan State Fair in Detroit was down. The Miracle of Life tent is still the popular favorite.

**Commissioner Byrum** briefly discussed the upcoming Bio Economy Summit in Lansing. He noted the grand opening of another ethanol plant in Woodbury.

## **EAT FRESH AND GROW JOBS, MICHIGAN: Patty Cantrell, Michigan Land Use Institute**

Ms. Cantrell commended MDA and the Commission for their work in promoting agriculture, farmland preservation and the consumption of more fruits and vegetables.

She discussed recently published results of a new study on the economic effects of selling more Michigan fruits and vegetables into fresh produce markets.

Using an economic modeling tool customized to Michigan, the Eat Fresh and Grow Jobs study looked at doubling and tripling the amount of Michigan fruits and vegetables going to fresh produce markets. It is a collaborative effort of Michigan State University's C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems, the Michigan Land Use Institute's Entrepreneurial Agriculture Project, and the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

She stated the results warrant a state economic development investment of at least \$9.5 million toward marketing Michigan foods and helping farms and related businesses supply more fresh product markets. That investment amounts to just \$5,000 per job compared to the more typical national level of \$15,000 per job.

Many of the study's recommendations are no or low-cost changes in state government, from new coordination among agencies on food systems goals to putting more emphasis on fresh market opportunities. Recommendations in the report range from growing the state's *Select Michigan* program to supporting the development of fresh market-focused production, packing, and distribution.

She shared information about an upcoming event in February 2007 that will bring together a statewide conference with participants from across the country to look at policy.

Ms. Cantrell responded to a number of questions posed by Commissioners regarding the report.

Commissioner Coe suggested that when the state farmers market association is established, it be linked to the Agricultural Tourism Commission. He also suggested that there be some type of registration, through the state, for community farmers' markets.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Irwin thanked the City of Saginaw and the counties of Saginaw and Bay for hosting the Commission for the meeting and tour.

He noted that there is a great opportunity for enhanced nutrition and community and economic values through promoting local produce through community farmers' markets. There are similar activities underway through the Cities of Promise (Saginaw is one) and MDA has been proud to help promote that work.

Director Irwin spoke briefly about the grant announcements of the Julian-Stille Value-Added Program. He updated the Commission on budget activity and discussed the continued interest in ethanol and bio diesel highlighting several plant and pump openings. Other topics discussed included fairs and festivals visited, invasive and exotic pests, electronic animal identification, congressional delegation visit, division director's offsite meeting and a meeting between the senior leadership at Michigan State University (MSU) and MDA.

He commented about the Commissioners' visit to Saginaw Valley State University to learn more about their corn research activities.

He noted that recruitment is underway for the 2007 FMI Show in Chicago. This is an important show that Michigan business has benefited from in the past.

He congratulated those wineries that won awards at the 2006 Michigan Wine and Spirits Competition. There was a reception held August 1, 2006, in East Lansing to celebrate the award winning wines.

Additionally, he complimented Brad Deacon and staff on the number of emergency activities and equipment improvements made possible with federal grant dollars.

Because of the success of Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP), MDA received an award at Ag Expo in July. MAEAP is a national model.

He briefly discussed the importance of improving housing and living conditions of the migrant labor community.

Director Irwin noted a special day at the State Capitol designated as Buy Fresh, Buy Michigan Day. There will be a farmers' market on the Capitol lawn to sell locally grown products.

### **DIRECTOR'S TRAVEL**

- September 15-19, 2006, Norfolk, VA NASDA Annual Meeting.
- October 31, 2006, Indianapolis, IN speaking at the Land Use, Economic Development and the Environment conference

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER NORTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE ABOVE TRAVEL FOR THE DIRECTOR. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER COE. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **INVASIVE SPECIES AND EXOTIC PEST UPDATE: Ken Rauscher, Director, Pesticide & Plant Pest Management Division**

Mr. Rauscher updated the Commission on recent developments with Plum Pox, Hemlock Wolly Adelgid and Downy Mildew. He distributed several handouts.

He reviewed current information about Plum Pox Virus. A positive plum sample from Southwest Michigan Research Center (SWMRC) was confirmed August 11, 2006. The source appears to be from a nursery in Washington. Since the confirmation, approximately 24,000 samples have been pulled from southwest Michigan. He reviewed sampling procedure and the quarantine that has been put in place. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) quarantine restricts the movement of propagated material from that area and disallows replanting of peach material for three years. Under the federal guidelines, everything is removed within 500 meters of the positive tree. That is a big impact to the research station. There is a request in place for eradication and a declaration of extraordinary emergency is being prepared for the Governor's signature. Hopefully, that will help with indemnification for the affected growers.

The initial find was through a random sample being pulled through the cooperative agriculture survey program. The tree has been at SWMRC for three years and not sampled in the past. No additional positives samples have been found. The sample tree came from Washington, via Oregon, through California, brought to Michigan by MSU. Trace back is continuing.

In response to a question from Commissioner Coe, Mr. Rauscher explained the federal quarantine process.

In response to a question from Commissioner Darling, Mr. Rauscher stated that the disease does over winter in the stock. This particular strain of the virus does not affect cherries.

In response to a question from Commissioner Coe, Mr. Rauscher stated there does not appear to be a spread of the virus and there has been total cooperation from MSU. The spread of the virus is from aphids that can be controlled by spraying.

Mr. Rauscher briefly discussed Hemlock Wolly Adelgid. He shared maps and photographs identifying infestations. Hemlock is a very slow growing tree and valuable species that is important to wildlife. In July, materials were brought in from a nursery in West Virginia and are believed to have been infested. This stock was not brought in with the proper inspections. The grower has voluntarily destroyed the infected trees and is working with MDA to clean the nursery. With the amendments earlier in the year, there are substantial penalties available.

Outreach and education is continuing with growers and with other states.

In response to a question from Commission Byrum, Mr. Rauscher stated that pesticides are effective and they are looking at funding opportunities.

A brief discussion ensued related to rules, enforcement activities, budget resources and industry responsibility.

Commissioner Byrum suggested convening a workgroup to analyze next steps in preventing the introduction and spread of diseases and invasive pests in Michigan. Mr. Rauscher stated there has been a lot of work done at tracing plant material.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER BYRUM MOVED THAT PRIOR TO THE NEXT MEETING, DEPARTMENT STAFF CONSIDER OPTIONS, WHETHER IT IS A LITERATURE SEARCH OF OTHER STATE ACTION OR WHATEVER PROPOSALS MAY COME FORTH, TO ADDRESS THE ONGOING INVASIVE SPECIES PROBLEMS FROM A STATE PERSPECTIVE. STAFF TO PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSION FOR ACTION.**

Director Irwin stated that staff has reviewed these challenges and feel it is appropriate to work to merge activities with those at the federal level to increase responsiveness and protect our borders.

In response to a question from Commissioner Coe, Director Irwin stated that Michigan has application in place for a Gateway Border Surveillance Partnership for plant and animal diseases.

Commissioner Darling stated that comparing activities in other states will help with uniformity. He thought it was a good idea to have dialogue with all neighbors and recommendations for changes in legislation

**COMMISSIONER COE SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Rauscher updated the Commission on the Downy Mildew infection earlier in the year in Monroe County. As anticipated, there were additional infections statewide. Some fungicides have been effective, but expensive. This disease jeopardizes the cucumber industry.

A meeting of stakeholders is being planned to look at options for combating the disease. Options include fungicides, making sure the stock coming into Michigan is clean, early disease detection and incentives for self-reporting.

A brief discussion ensued about how rapidly the disease spreads.

**JULIAN-STILLE VALUE-ADDED PROGRAM UPDATE: Mike DiBernardo, Economic Development Specialist, Agriculture Development Division and Robert Craig, Division Director, Agriculture Development Division**

Director Irwin spoke briefly about the promotion of Michigan products, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Job Fund Program and the Julian-Stille Value-Added Program. He commented that there is a great entrepreneurial spirit in the agriculture sector and complimented staff on their hard work throughout this process. (Director Irwin then left the Commission meeting to participate in media interview at the Saginaw Farmers' Market.)

Mr. Craig distributed handouts and reviewed the background of the program and commented that this program is unique in that the eligible recipients are the private sector; farmers, farm co-ops, businesses, corporations and commodity organizations. Universities and non-profits organizations were not eligible. He reviewed expected return on investments and projected jobs as a result of these grants.

Mr. DiBernardo reviewed the process used in the selection of the grant recipients. There were nine grant-writing workshops held throughout the state with 374 participants. 225 proposals were received for a total request of \$36 million. Eighteen people were appointed to a Joint

Evaluation Committee (JEC) and divided into three teams. The teams were assembled based on technical expertise and based on the five application categories.

The recommendations have been submitted to the Administrative Board (Ad Board) for their approval. They are expected to review and approve by October 3. There are 40 proposals that have been recommended. Some adjustments were made to the spending plan based on the needs identified in the proposals. Once approval from the Administrative Board is received, grant agreements will be put in place. These grants will be cost reimbursement grants.

Notification will be sent to all who submitted proposals. For those who were not selected for funding, assistance will be offered for potential new rounds of grant opportunities.

In response to a question from Commissioner Norton, Mr. DiBernardo stated they hope this will be a yearly process. There has been strong interest and support from the industry. Currently, there is no funding beyond this year.

In a response to a question from Commissioner Coe about the additional \$5 million, Mr. Craig discussed pending negotiations regarding a loan guarantee program.

A discussion ensued regarding grant and loan guarantee programs.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER COE MADE A MOTION OF ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT FOR THE JULIAN STILLE VALUE-ADDED GRANT PROGRAM AND ENCOURAGED THE LEGISLATURE TO CONTINUE TO FUND THE JULIAN STILLE VALUE-ADDED PROGRAM AS A GRANT PROGRAM. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BYRUM. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Commissioner Darling thanked Messrs. Craig and DiBernardo for the work done through this process with the industry and MDA.

**FARMER'S MARKET ASSOCIATION PRESENTATION: Elaine Brown, Executive Director, Michigan Integrated Food & Farming Systems (MIFFS) and Dru Montri, Manager, Michigan Farmers' Market Association; Dan Keane, Saginaw Farmer's Market**

**Ms. Brown** thanked the Commission for the opportunity to share the background and partnerships that are developing in relation to a farmers'

market association. In early 2000, there were approximately 90 farmers' markets and now there are at least 150. These are community driven.

MIFFS received a grant through the Partnership for Public Spaces to develop a farmers' market association in Michigan. They are one of five groups in the United States that were selected. One of the reasons they were selected was the participatory approach. Partners include MSU, who has been conducting research and surveys. She briefly discussed different types of surveys and studies being conducted.

They have also been involved with projects through MDA and the Select Michigan Program. She thanked MDA staff for their assistance with a variety of projects and participating in a visioning session.

**Dru Montri** discussed the visioning process being used to work with and for the farmers and those that will benefit from this developing organization. The first visioning session was recently held and participants included farmers, farmers' markets representatives, neighborhood centers, downtown development organization, municipalities, foundations, non-profits organization, state government representatives and MSU Extension. Interested parties from the Upper Peninsula are also involved.

One of the primary issues that came out of the first meeting was the need for an association that can act as a resource and clearinghouse of information for those that are working in and with farmers markets.

She stated they came away from the first session with clear elements of their mission and vision. They also outlined taskforces. In the next three months they will have committees working on membership structure and organization, information and education, services and benefits.

The larger group will meet again during The Expo in Grand Rapids on December 7, 2006. There will be session that day focused on farmers' markets.

In response to a question from Commissioner Norton, Mr. Montri stated that while they do not have a strict definition of a "farmers' market", they see a farmers' market as a group of farmers coming together at one location and direct marketing their produce to the consumer.

Ms. Brown stated that they have seen in other states, that when a farmers' market is developed, it creates a sense of community. Typically, when a consumer goes to a farmers' market, they may also stop at a restaurant or

a hardware store to purchase other items. It is a place for other economic opportunities.

**Dan Keane** stated that the Downtown Saginaw Farmers' Market is participating in the Buy Fresh, Buy Local Select Michigan Program.

Mr. Keane discussed the daily activities at the market, attendance and history of the market. They currently have approximately 40 vendors and have extended the days and hours of operation. Approximately 85% of products sold at the market are locally grown. He stated the customers are loyal and that farmers markets put a "face" on agriculture.

He briefly described a "dot survey" that is used with customers at the market to help management make future decisions based on customer satisfaction.

In response to a question from Commissioner Byrum, Mr. Keane stated they operate under MDA guidelines to operate an open-air farmers' market and also work with the local county health department. He stated there are great opportunities to work together and focus on those things help farmers' markets be more successful and maintain food safety.

Commissioner Coe stated that because of all the areas of involvement with MDA (e.g. food inspections, weights and measures etc.) he encouraged MDA to work cooperatively with or through the association for licensing or registering farmers markets for promotion and public safety purposes.

Ms. Brown stated that she feels there is a solid working relationship with both the Food & Dairy Division and the Agriculture Development Division that will continue.

**RIGHT TO PROCESS ISSUES UPDATE: Gordon Wenk, Division Director, Environmental Stewardship Division**

Mr. Wenk provided a brief update on a request from Michigan Ethanol for a Right to Process pro-active inspection.

Per Commission request, staff consulted with the Attorney General's office to determine whether the Commission was required to approve the plan. The recommendation was that the Agriculture Commission does not need to. With the changes in the Michigan Agricultural Processing Act, it allows the department, following procedures, to make a determination whether the facility is following generally accepted right to process practices.

This was a pro-active inspection requested by Michigan Ethanol. Mr. Wenk stated that MDA only reviewed the processing component of the operation. The inspection team included staff from Food & Dairy Division, Environmental Stewardship Division and Pesticide & Plant Pest Management Division. The inspection took place on August 31, 2006 and found the processes and practices were in conformance to best practices and all known permits were in place as confirmed by MDEQ. Based on the findings of this inspection, there will be a report sent to them stating that they are following the latest practices as determined by the Michigan Agricultural Processing Act.

In response to a question by Mr. Wenk, Chairman Darling stated the Commission would like to be kept informed of future requests and results of inspections.

**FOOD POLICY COUNCIL – REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS: Kristin Brooks, Executive Coordinator, Michigan Food Policy Council**

Ms. Brooks recognized Commissioner Byrum and Elaine Brown as members of the Michigan Food Policy Council (MFPC) and introduced Beth Ellis, Policy Analyst for the MFPC. She thanked MDA for their work and support of the Council through staff and in-kind contributions.

Ms. Brooks reviewed the background of the MFPC. The MFPC was created by Executive Order 2005-13 and funded in part by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. It is an advisory body to identify policy recommendations that look across the entire agri-food system, particularly looking at food related economic activity, increasing businesses and jobs, increasing access to fresh and healthy foods, promoting and expanding markets for Michigan foods, and increasing collaboration between agencies that have impact on the food system.

MDA is the lead state agency, joined by the Departments of Community Health, Human Services, Education, Labor and Economic Growth and Environmental Quality.

The MFPC has over 60 regular participants; 21 council members and task force participants. There are four task forces that focus on increasing agri food businesses and jobs; increasing access to fresh and health foods; promoting Michigan foods; and enhancing agriculture viability. In addition to state employees, task force members include public and private practitioners, representatives from commodity organizations, Michigan Farm Bureau and MSU Product Center.

Twenty recommendations have been drafted for the presentation to the Governor. As soon as the report is complete, copies will be sent to the Commission. Each recommendation includes a policy statement, explanation and list of implementation strategies. These recommendations were developed with input from regional public listening sessions, presentations at task force and council meetings, council and task force members, and open meetings.

She briefly reviewed the recommendations that include Agri-food Entrepreneurship; Support for Food Processing; Agricultural Processing Renaissance Zones; Information and Collaboration Opportunities; Supermarkets in Underserved Locations; Healthy Food Access through Direct Markets; School, Community and Urban Gardens; Food Assistance Program; Summer Food Service Program; Nutrition Education; Emergency Food Needs; Select Michigan Program; Farm-to-School; Department of Corrections Michigan Food Purchases; Support for Farmers' Markets; Farmland Preservation; New Market Development; Michigan Agricultural Viability; Farmers and Farm Workforce and the Role of MSU Extension.

Commissioner Darling thanked Ms. Brooks, the members of the MFPC and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for their hard work and support.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Mike Kinny**, represents a farm in western Saginaw county growing cucumbers, sugar beets, corn, soybeans and wheat. They also have a company that buys cucumbers from other growers and sells them to pickling companies throughout the country. Mr. Kinny distributed information related to downy mildew in Michigan.

He discussed Downy Mildew and shared information about research for effective fungicides and how it has affected cucumber production in Michigan.

He encouraged developing a strong policy on transplants so that this disease does not devastate future cucumber production in Michigan. He discussed cost involved in fighting the disease and the opportunities for increased production of cucumbers in Michigan. He also discussed the difficulty in finding growers to continue to grow cucumbers until a way is found to mitigate the risk. He asked MDA to help.

He stated there are no crop subsidies or crop insurance to fall back on. He stated Michigan leads the country in cucumber production and they

should lead the country in development of a strong policy to deal with downey mildew.

In response to a question from Commissioner Byrum, Mr. Kinny stated that the spores are air borne. It has become a worldwide problem. It has followed the weather patterns and hurricanes into Florida from the Caribbean.

Commissioner Darling noted that the spores do not over-winter. He briefly discussed things to consider in developing policy.

In response to a question from Commissioner Norton, Mr. Kinny stated that for the most part, the cucumber industry is a profitable enterprise. Michigan has been successful. It is a fairly stable industry primarily based on contract. He briefly discussed crop rotation.

In response to a question from Commissioner Byrum, Mr. Kinny felt that the disease transmission was from a single source, working its way throughout the state.

**Dave Smith**, Michigan Vegetable Council, spoke briefly of the costs to growers that this disease has caused.

Mr. Kinny stated he thinks the disease can be managed, but they need help with other growers to assume the transplants were clean.

Commissioner Byrum asked what other states were doing to deal with downy mildew.

Mr. Smith stated this is an international issue and USDA should be involved. Canada is also involved, however, they do not have the same protection tools available as in here in the United States. They do not have registration for the same farm chemicals for use in their greenhouses.

Commissioner Darling stated that MDA, USDA, other states and the industry should meet to discuss the issues.

There was a brief discussion about other crops being affected.

**E.J. Brown**, Michigan Association of Fairs & Exhibitions, gave a brief update on the fair industry in Michigan. He stated the fair season is winding down. McDonaghs from Chesaning began using B-50 bio diesel in all their operations. They are very pleased with the product. Most other carnivals are using B-20.

At their January conference, they will be including a workshop on Electronic Animal ID.

Additionally, later in the fall, there will be workshops for fair emergency planning, using grant monies from Homeland Security.

There was a quarantine put in place on the last day of the Chippewa County Fair due to a virus in pigs. The horses were not held as they had already been tested and were in a separate barn area. All animals have been released except for the pigs, as they are awaiting laboratory results.

**LauraJeanne Kehn**, Frankenmuth Farmers Market, spoke in support of the Michigan Farmers' Market Association and the promotion of fresh fruits and vegetables to children. She stated that attending a farmers' market is a social activity and that these markets are very important to the economy of the state and also to preserve the family farm. She encouraged the Commission to continue its support.

She also commented briefly about her support of ethanol and encouraged the Commission to continue to support ethanol production and the installation of more pumps in Michigan.

**Donnie Hobson**, Michigan Farmers Market Coalition and Birmingham Farmers Market, spoke in strong support of the Michigan Farmers' Market Association. He commented about the popularity of the markets, but that there are not enough farmers to support the markets in different cities on the same day. He shared information about activities being developed at the markets to bring families in. Craft activities, music and food events bring more people to the market.

### **COMMISSIONERS' ISSUES**

Commissioner Darling presented a resolution commended Ruth Domeyer for her years of service to the people of the State of Michigan.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER COE MOVED THAT THE RESOLUTION FOR RUTH DONMEYER BE ADOPTED WITH BEST WISHES AND A LONG AND HEALTHY RETIREMENT. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BYRUM. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Commissioner Darling commented about a tour put together by MDA staff for members of the farm community visiting from South Carolina. He

participated in some of the stops and stated it went very well. He thanked Jeanne Lipe and staff for organizing the tour.

**ADJOURN**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 1:18 p.m.

Attachments:

- A – Agenda
- B – Agriculture Commission Meeting Minutes July 18, 2006
- C – Michigan Land Use Institute Letter dated September 8, 2006
  - Eat Fresh and Grow Jobs, Michigan September 2006 report*
  - Taste the Local Difference Select Northwest Michigan brochure*
- C – Director's Report August 2006 and Director's Report September 2006
- D – Invasive Species and Exotic Pest Update PowerPoint
  - Michigan Eastern Hemlock Resource*
- E – Julian Stille Ag Innovation Grant Awards submitted to the State Administrative Board
  - Julian-Stille Ag Innovation Grants 2006 Project Locations*
  - The Michigan Renaissance The New Bio Economy*
- F – Farmers' Market Work at Michigan State University
  - MIFFS Memo August 2006*
- G – Michigan Food Policy Council Update
- H – Public Comment
  - Mike Kinny – Confirmed downy mildew reports in Michigan as of September 6, 2006*
- I – Commissioners' Issues
  - Retirement Resolution for Ruth Domeyer*