



Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development

Environmental Stewardship Division

Annual Report 2010

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2010 Annual Report

Contents:

Biosolids Land Application Program	1
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program	1
Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program	2
Intercounty Drains Program.....	2
Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program.....	3
Michigan Conservation District Program	4
Michigan Conservation and Climate Initiative.....	4
Bovine Tuberculosis.....	5
Invasive Pest Surveys	5
Emerald Ash Borer.....	6
Michigan Water Stewardship Program	6
Agricultural Program	6
Clean Sweep Program.....	7
Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative Program	8
Groundwater Monitoring Program	8
Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program.....	9
Pesticide Container Recycling Program	9
Residential Program	10
Spill Response Program	11
Migrant Labor Housing Program	11
Right to Farm Program.....	11
Environmental Complaint Response Program.....	12
Site Selection Program.....	12

The Environmental Stewardship Division (ESD) administers the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development's (MDARD) many programs that encourage environmentally sound agricultural practices and prevent agriculture-related pollution.

ESD seeks to enhance commercial agriculture activities in Michigan, while protecting the environment and public health.



James Johnson
Director

Biosolids Land Application Program

The Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (MDARD) provides education and technical assistance to individuals involved with, or are affected by, the land application of biosolids. State law allows all wastewater treatment facilities in Michigan the option to safely recycle biosolids to cropland as a soil amendment to provide plant nutrients.

The MDARD delivers education and technical assistance in a number of ways, including the “Amendments” quarterly newsletter; a “Commonly Asked Questions” brochure; and an information page to local conservation districts. The MDARD also partners with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan State University Extension, and the Michigan Water Environment Association to provide education to farmers, wastewater technicians, and township officials.

2010 Accomplishments:

- 170 wastewater treatment facilities participated in the land application program.
- 72,000 dry tons of biosolids were recycled to cropland on Michigan farms.
- Over 20,000 acres of Michigan cropland received “soil amendment.”
- The nutrient value equates to \$10 million saved by farmers using biosolids instead of commercial fertilizers.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) has helped protect Michigan’s environment and enhance wildlife since 2000. The State of Michigan has entered into a partnership agreement with the federal government to establish this very successful conservation program. The partnership includes private and public conservation organizations, universities, and farm landowners to implement conservation practices relative to soil erosion, water quality, and wildlife habitat. CREP includes eligible farmland in Saginaw Bay, River Raisin, Lake Macatawa, and the Western Lake Erie Basin Watersheds, covering all or parts of 30 counties in Michigan. CREP targets nonpoint source pollution resulting from crop production, reducing the transport of phosphorus, nitrates, and pesticides by 70 percent. The overall goal of the program is to enroll 85,000 acres of conservation practices, promoting the use of native grasses and wildflowers, improving habitat and wildlife diversity by leveraging federal funds. The technical assistance for CREP is delivered through conservation districts.



2010 Accomplishments:

- Farmers and landowners have enrolled 73,180 total acres in the program, including 42,180 acres of riparian corridor practices or approximately 3,479 miles of 100-foot wide vegetative filters, more than 18,000 acres of wetland restoration practices, and 13,000 acres of field windbreaks and diverse grassland cover on highly erodible cropland.
- 6,500 contracts with private landowners protecting the sites for 15 years.

- Michigan was awarded an additional \$500,000 grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to fund a voluntary “Hunter’s Access Program” to better use the wildlife improvement aspects of the program.
- CREP will be a critical component for the recently announced “Pheasant Restoration Initiative.”

Farmland and Open Space Preservation

The Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program preserves agricultural and open space, supporting economic diversity and quality of life for current and future needs of Michigan residents. In an agreement with the state, landowners choose to keep their land in agricultural production. In exchange, the state offers the landowner the opportunity to claim a tax credit. Farmers are offered exemption from special assessments for sewer, water, lights, and non-farm drainage.

2010 Accomplishments:

- 41,500 agreements covering 3.1 million acres are enrolled in P.A. 116 (P.A. 451 of 1994, as amended).
- 95 conservation easements covering 20,670 acres in the State Permanent Program.
- 45 agreements covering 6,000 acres in the Local Open Space Program.
- 15 open space easements covering 3,500 acres in the Designated Open Space Program.
- 11 local conservation easements (936 acres) were completed under grants issued by the Michigan Agricultural Preservation Fund in two grant cycles (2005 and 2007).

Intercounty Drains Program

County and intercounty drains are the pre-requisite infrastructure for much of Michigan’s economic development. Drains have played a key role in the development of agriculture, roads and highways, and residential and commercial properties by removing excess soil moisture, reducing flood impacts, and improving public health. Michigan has more than 35,000 miles of legally established “public” drains and approximately 17 million acres of agricultural and urban lands and roadways. Since 1923, the MDARD has been responsible under the Drain Code to administer the proceedings to establish, improve, and maintain storm drains and sanitary sewers involving lands in two or more counties. Staff are deputies for the MDARD Director and serve as chair of the intercounty drainage board that is required for each drain and whose members are the county drain/water resource/public works commissioners of the affected counties. There are approximately 1,100 intercounty drains in Michigan with an estimated length of over 6,000 miles serving approximately 6 million acres.



Red Run Intercounty Drain between Oakland and Macomb counties.

2010 Accomplishments:

- The program administered petitioned projects with an estimated combined project cost of more than \$65 million with a total of 525,000 acres served affecting 135 miles of drains.
- Staff responded to 140 drain maintenance requests involving 28 counties improving approximately 179 miles of drains serving an estimated 430,000 acres with an approximate cost of \$825,000. All project costs are paid through special assessments on private property and public corporations with the assistance of Clean Michigan Initiative and the Great Lakes Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control grants.
- The Oakland Macomb Interceptor rehabilitation project was the most expensive and challenging intercounty drainage project in the state's history. The system comprises about 21 miles of 12 foot diameter underground tunnel sanitary sewer at a depth of over 100 feet deep serving over 800,000 people. A five year plan to repair and reinforce the tunnel, including installation of structures for maintenance, will serve to prevent collapse. The total estimated cost is approximately \$160 million. The initial construction contracts, engineering, land rights, and legal costs were financed by \$42 million in a State Revolving Fund (\$15 million of which was forgiven under the Stimulus program), grants, and a district bond for an additional \$6.9 million.

Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program

The Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) is a nationally recognized pro-active environmental assurance program targeted at Michigan's agriculture industry. MAEAP ensures producers are using cost-effective pollution prevention practices that assist them to be in compliance with applicable environmental regulations specific to the program and in conformance with Michigan Right to Farm (RTF) guidelines and USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) standards. MAEAP is an industry and government initiative signed by the directors of the MDARD and the MDEQ in 1998 and provides on-site farm specific risk assessments, education and third party MDARD verification (farm inspections) for all size farms and all Michigan commodities. The program has three systems (Livestock, Farmstead, and Cropping) and incorporates farmer education, on-site risk assessments, and third party verification. MAEAP assures farmers have used effective tools for assessing and correcting environmental risks and can help minimize enforcement penalties. MAEAP supporters include over 50 industry, university, state and federal agency, local government, and conservation groups.



The Blight Family following their MAEAP verification.

2010 Accomplishments:

- An average of 5,000 Michigan farmers attend one of about 50 local educational sessions geared toward environmental stewardship and MAEAP verification, annually.
- To date, nearly 10,000 Michigan farms have begun the MAEAP verification process.
- Nearly 1,000 Michigan farms have become MAEAP verified or have requested verification.
- \$1.2 million is spent annually for practice implementation (Farm Bill and private) for farmers working toward MAEAP verification.
- The MDARD has verified that responsible manure application and other conservation practices are the rule on over 317,200 acres of Michigan farmland.

- \$500,000 of USDA Farm Bill cost share is used for nutrient management plan development each year.
- The erosion-reducing aspects of MAEAP verification have kept about 142,000 tons of farming soil where it belongs - in farm fields. That is 12,668 ten-yard dump trucks of soil not reaching streams and lakes – every year.
- Phosphorus loading through sedimentation was reduced by 1.4 million pounds.
- Annual phosphorus reduction through MAEAP is almost 260,000 pounds; enough to grow 7,500 tons of algae in lakes and streams.
- Over 200,000 acres receiving pesticides have approved pest management plans.
- Approximately 4,300 acres of filter strips have been installed and almost 1,000 gullies have been stabilized, improving water quality.

Michigan Conservation District Program

Michigan's conservation districts now take an ecosystem approach toward the stewardship of the state's natural resources. In partnership with the MDARD Environmental Stewardship Division and federal agencies, local conservation districts throughout the state provide the link between land managers and the agencies and organizations funding conservation programming. Conservation districts continually assess local needs and work cooperatively with their community to prioritize and solve natural resource problems. Conservation districts provide the local point of access to practical, everyday aspects of resource management and help Michigan citizens conserve and protect our natural resources. In addition to statewide programs listed elsewhere in this report, conservation districts have helped to deliver programs that address climate change, bovine tuberculosis eradication, invasive pest surveys, and Emerald Ash Borer control.

2010 Accomplishments:

- Nearly 175,000 Michigan citizens visited a conservation district for natural resource assistance and education.
- The program contributed to the delivery of \$37.7 million to Michigan's land managers through the federal Farm Bill.
- 24,000 volunteer hours contributed to assist conservation districts in many resource areas, including native plant rescue, stream bank cleanup and stabilization, recycling, and tree and shrub sales.
- Over six million trees and shrubs were planted through the efforts of the conservation districts.

Michigan Conservation and Climate Initiative

The Michigan Conservation and Climate Initiative (MCCI), a joint project between the Delta Institute, the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts, and ESD offers farmers and landowners an opportunity to earn greenhouse gas emissions credits when they implement conservation tillage, plant grasses or trees, or capture methane with anaerobic digesters. Conservation practices store carbon in the soil and plants that would otherwise form carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Anaerobic digesters produce energy and prevent methane from being released into the atmosphere. Both carbon dioxide and methane are greenhouse gases that contribute to global climate change.

MCCI provides a financial incentive for farmers and landowners who have installed and maintain conservation practices. While the primary purpose of these conservation practices is to sequester carbon dioxide, the practices have secondary benefits such as establishing or enhancing wildlife habitat, future timber production, and the reduction of soil and nutrient runoff into streams and lakes.

2010 Accomplishments:

- 50,137 acres are enrolled by farmers.
- 124,634 acres of private forestlands enrolled.
- 378 contracts on private-lands.
- 174,771 metric tons of carbon credits sold.
- \$200,000 of revenue generated for landowners.

Bovine Tuberculosis

Working with northern Michigan livestock producers, the MDARD created a risk assessment tool - Wildlife Risk*A*Syst - for use by livestock producers. On farm assessments have been conducted on farms selling breeding stock and feeder cattle. Local conservation districts have been working with livestock producers to implement practices that reduce the potential for the transmission of bovine TB from wildlife to their livestock.

The Alpena Conservation District has provided assistance to livestock producers whose risk assessments identified the need to secure their feed from deer or elk. The practices include the construction of secure fenced areas for the storage of hay and silage or the construction of structures (hoop barns) for the storage of hay.

Approximately \$956,800 has been allocated to help livestock producers with the construction of:

- 47 hoop structures.
- Seven fenced secure feed storage projects.

To date, 10 feed security projects are waiting to be awarded and risk assessments have identified 36 additional producers who need feed security measures.

The Alpena Conservation District staff has assisted livestock producers with access to federal Farm Bill funding through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to implement exclusion measures.



Deer exclusion fencing in the TB Area

Invasive Pest Surveys

Surveys were conducted by Michigan's conservation districts across the state during the summer of 2010.

Surveys included looking for everything from blueberries, grapes, stone fruit, and forest products pests. Surveys included both the presence or absence of, and the degree to which the pests exist.

- 17 conservation districts collected samples or monitored traps.
- 1,046 samples were collected for blueberry scorch.

- 975 samples were collected for plum pox.
- 50 grape vineyards were sampled.
- 131 forest sites were sampled for the Sirex Woodwasp.
- 110 sites (3,000 samples) were surveyed for pests impacting the production of forest commodities.

The survey work was completed in conjunction with the MDARD's Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division with funding from USDA.

Emerald Ash Borer

Conservation districts in the Upper Peninsula provided assistance to the MDARD's Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division with the implementation of the "Slowing Ash Mortality" (SLAM) Pilot Project. Conservation district foresters and field crews completed a significant number of site specific projects designed to test control strategies for the Emerald Ash Borer. Twenty-five conservation district staff members were employed during the summer of 2010 to conduct these studies in the central to eastern Upper Peninsula. In addition, conservation districts in the western Upper Peninsula set, monitored, and recovered 2,006 artificial traps.

Michigan Water Stewardship Program

Established in 1995, the Michigan Water Stewardship Program (MWSP) is a legislatively enabled partnership designed to help individuals reduce the risks of groundwater and freshwater contamination associated with pesticide and nitrogen fertilizer use. The program is funded through fees assessed on the sale of pesticides and nitrogen fertilizers.

MWSP addresses groundwater risks through a variety of distinct programs:

- Agricultural
- Clean Sweep
- Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative (CTAI)
- Groundwater Monitoring
- Golf Courses (Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship)
- Pesticide Container Recycling
- Residential
- Spill Response

MWSP – Agricultural Program

The MWSP Agricultural Program is available locally through conservation district water stewardship technicians. In 2010, 42 technician positions were funded providing both water stewardship (24 technicians) and conservation technical assistance initiative (18 technicians). Water stewardship practices are in conformance with the RTF Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices (GAAMPs) and USDA NRCS Standards, and address state and federal environmental regulations. The primary means for identifying on-farm environmental risks are with the assessment tools: Livestock*A*Syst, Farm*A*Syst, and various crop specific Crop*A*Syst tools.

The A*Syst evaluation is conducted by conservation district water stewardship technicians who work one-on-one with farmers to identify environmental risks, create a plan to eliminate the risks, and provide the technical assistance needed to implement the plan.

Over the past 15 years, 15,500 Farm*A*Syst and 1,200 Crop*A*Syst evaluations have been

completed, which reassure the public that producers are using environmentally sound practices and are helping to foster positive community and neighbor relations.

When identified environmental risks have been eliminated, farmers are eligible for MAEAP verification in the Livestock, Farmstead and Cropping Systems. Over 250 farms have been verified in the Livestock System (11% increase from 2009), 328 farms have been verified in the Farmstead System (12% increase over 2009), and 277 farms have been verified in the Cropping System (25% increase over 2009).

In addition, water stewardship technicians offer technical assistance to develop Farm Emergency Plans which provide farmers a plan to mitigate on-farm emergencies and provide emergency first-responders information on the location of on-farm hazardous materials. Water stewardship technicians also work with farmers to create emergency spill kits that provide a quick way to contain and clean up spills of pesticides and fertilizers.

2010 Accomplishments:

- 3,030 on-farm risk reductions (pesticide storage security, anti-backflow device installation, drift management plans, triennial water testing, pesticide container triple-rinsing, etc.).
- 338 Farm*A*Systs and 209 Crop*A*Systs completed.
- 203 Farm Emergency Plans implemented.
- 88 emergency spill kits created.
- 25 abandoned wells decommissioned.

MWSP - Clean Sweep Program

The goal of the Clean Sweep Program in Michigan is proper disposal of unused and unwanted pesticides. The MWSP in cooperation with federal, county, and local government had 15 permanent Clean Sweep sites located throughout the state in 2010 and has collected nearly 1.8 million pounds of pesticides since 1996. Michigan residents may dispose of pesticides at any Clean Sweep site, which will collect packages for shipping and properly dispose of free of charge.

2010 Accomplishments:

- 107,265 pounds of unwanted or unusable pesticides were collected, including the following active ingredient weights:
 - * 1,384 pounds of triazine herbicides.
 - * 739 pounds of persistent, bioaccumulative toxic pesticides (DDT, Chlordane).
 - * 529 pounds of pesticides containing arsenic.
- 2,500 pounds of pesticides were recently withdrawn from the market by the Environmental Protection Agency (chlorpyrifos, diazinon).



The Clean Sweep Program accepts unwanted or unused pesticides from Michigan residents to ensure their proper disposal.

The MDARD secured \$475,530 from the Environmental Protection Agency through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) to expand Clean Sweep collection efforts for 2011 and 2012. The project will offer funding for pharmaceutical disposal as well as expanding outreach to agri-businesses to remove and properly dispose of unusable pesticides from storage.

MWSP - Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative (CTAI) Program

In 2005, the MDARD entered into the Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative (CTAI) Program with the USDA NRCS. The original agreement funded four engineering positions through local conservation districts. This program has been expanded to cover seven engineering positions and eleven soil conservationist positions.

The goal of the program is to assist conservation districts in their efforts to help Michigan citizens better understand, plan, manage, protect, and utilize their natural resources. The program provides funds to conservation districts to hire engineers and technician specialists to provide information and technical assistance to private landowners to implement conservation practices. These conservation practices are funded through the federal Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2008, also known as the 2008 Farm Bill.

The engineers and soil conservationists work directly with USDA NRCS staff to complete the work. Currently there are engineers located in Genesee, Ionia, Kent, Otsego, and Sault Ste. Marie counties. The eleven soil conservationists are located in Branch, Clinton, Delta, Huron, Isabella, Jackson, Missaukee, Montmorency, Oceana, and Van Buren counties. In addition to serving the landowners in these counties, they also serve landowners in adjacent counties.

Funding for the program comes from the MWSP and the USDA NRCS via a contribution agreement between the MDARD and the USDA.

The CTAI employees have worked on a variety of projects during 2010. Their involvement in the practices included design, inventory and evaluation, surveying, pre-construction meetings, construction inspections, plan review, and conservation planning.

2010 Accomplishments:

- 850 practices have been designed and installed, including agrichemical containment facilities, waste storage facilities, heavy use area protection, pest management plans, and nutrient management plans.
- The assistance provided through the CTAI program this fiscal year allowed for \$11 million being made available to Michigan landowners in federal cost share. In addition, landowners have contributed approximately \$7 million locally to complete these projects. This provides a total investment of \$18 million spent on conservation practices throughout Michigan.

MWSP - Groundwater Monitoring Program

The Groundwater Monitoring Program samples private wells across the state for general chemistry, pesticides, and volatile organic compounds. Monitoring is also conducted to help the MDARD and its stakeholders develop and share information on risks posed by various pesticide and nitrogen fertilizer use practices.

The program supports the State Groundwater Management Plan by providing data on private drinking water well quality to retain pesticide product registrations where those products can be used without negative impacts on groundwater quality.

The program provides data on nitrate and pesticide concentrations to well users, investigates the

nature and extent of pesticide contamination at contaminated sites, coordinates information on potential health impacts from the use of contaminated water supplies, and provides alternate water supplies, including well replacement for private well owners with pesticide levels above public drinking water standards. The monitoring program has screened 26,000 wells for atrazine and nitrate contamination since 1997. The data has allowed the program to identify several factors in Michigan associated with nitrate contamination and alert residents using contaminated water of possible risks.

2010 Accomplishments:

- 101 wells were sampled. This includes baseline sampling for common agriculture pesticides, confirmation samples, periodic monitoring on wells known to be contaminated, and envelope monitoring. Pesticides were detected at levels of ten percent of a health standard or lower in three previously unsampled wells. The wells will be resampled to confirm the initial detection. No pesticides were detected at levels above a human health standard in any of the wells sampled.
- 1,451 domestic drinking water well water samples were screened for 2,4-D and nitrates. The results were mailed to all participants with recommendations on dealing with contaminated wells and additional sources of information. Two wells providing water that was consumed by a pregnant woman or an infant showed nitrate-N screening levels at or over ten parts-per million (ppm). Nitrate-N levels of ten ppm or higher in drinking water are a health risk to these two groups.

MWSP - Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program

Established in 1998, the Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program (MTESP) is dedicated to protecting ground and surface water resources by advancing turfgrass management practices, preventing pollution, and increasing regulatory compliance within the golf industry. The program represents a partnership between the MDARD, Michigan State University, and the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation.

The MTESP staff work with golf course superintendents to conduct golf course site visits that identify environmental risks on the property and develop Environmental Action Plans to address those risks. Golf courses that have identified and abated all environmental risks on the property become “certified” courses in the MTESP. At the conclusion of FY 2010, 231 golf properties participated in the program and 53 properties were certified.

MWSP - Pesticide Container Recycling Program

The Pesticide Container Recycling Program provides a way for agricultural producers and agribusinesses to collect and recycle plastic HDPE pesticide containers. Proper rinsing and cleaning of the containers insures that excess pesticides are not introduced into the groundwater and is essential to the program. Collecting and recycling properly cleaned pesticide containers conserves valuable landfill space and reduces the need for new raw material. The plastics collected are recycled and utilized for drain tiles, shipping pallets, fence posts, and other non-consumable, low human contact products. Since the inception of the program in 1993, Michigan has recycled 1,206,644 pounds of pesticide containers.

2010 Accomplishments:

- 30 commercial agri-businesses and turf chemical distributors served as collection sites and/or coordinated consolidation of pickups for their regional satellite offices.
- 92,000 pounds of plastic pesticide containers were collected and sent to a regional center to be ground and recycled.

MWSP - Residential Programming

The MWSP Residential Programming has provided educational and technical assistance to residents to identify and reduce contamination risks to water and other natural resources since 1994. The program encourages individuals to take voluntary proactive steps to protect Michigan's water quality - our drinking water - as well as protect our other valuable natural resources while caring for our family's health and well-being.

More than 150,000 Michigan residents have received and used information on a variety of environmental stewardship topics. The educational interactions are designed to encourage the voluntary adoption of watershed best management practices and behaviors that will protect our water quality and natural resources. The MWSP website and free online training program is the latest addition targeting residential adult populations from homeowners in single-family residences to those living in apartments or condominiums.

In addition to the free online training courses, the website offers a section for students to become youth stewards using games, videos, and activities. A section for educators is also included that provides ready-made lesson plans, activities, demonstrations, videos, publications, presentations, and a list of other teaching resources for enhancing environmental learning.

The website went live in 2010 and more online training courses, virtual models, and games will be added in 2011.

2010 Accomplishments:

- The new interactive website is now live at www.MiWaterStewardship.org.
- Content for all areas was completely rewritten and integrated for online learning versus classic textbook materials as used in the past.
- A virtual water cycle flow model "game" was created allowing users to experience real life scenarios in which they decide to protect or pollute our water resources as a result of their everyday actions.
- The Michigan Green News section allows registered users on the site to submit their local environmental news articles, events, and volunteer opportunities to share this information statewide.
- The local resources section acts as a gateway to provide local information to users searching for contacts in their community for environmental health or natural resources information. Users may search for local contacts by county, city, or any key word they choose.

MWSP - Spill Response Program

The Michigan Water Stewardship Spill Response Program provides for the rapid, cost-effective cleanup and proper use or disposal of manure, pesticides, and fertilizer.

The MDARD staff responds to incidents reported to the MDARD Spill Hotline by emergency first responders, responsible parties, or other persons that observe an uncontrolled release. Staff work with the responsible party to contain the spill. Once any immediate environmental concerns are abated, the responsible party is provided with advice on how to best clean-up the spilled material. In nearly all situations, the spilled material is land applied at agronomic rates, avoiding costly landfill expenses.

2010 Accomplishments:

- Sixteen spills were successfully resolved including seven commercial turf companies, four private applicators, and five commercial agri-businesses.

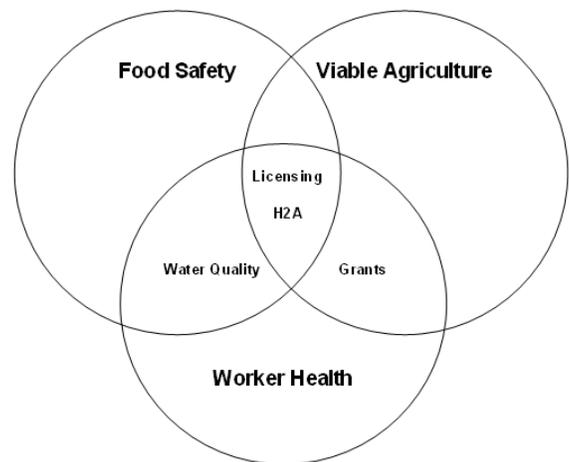
Migrant Labor Housing Program

Michigan's unique environment makes it possible to grow a variety of specialty crops. Thirty-seven commodities ranging from fruits and vegetables to bedding plants and Christmas trees are labor intensive, hand-harvest dependent, and could not be produced without migrant farm laborers. These agricultural products contribute an estimated \$2.3 billion to Michigan's economy each year.

Properly constructed and maintained migrant labor housing is essential to attracting workers needed to keep Michigan agriculture viable. The Migrant Labor Housing Program is intended to assure housing provided to migrant workers and their families is safe and healthy.

2010 Accomplishments:

- Program staff conducted 1,011 inspections.
- Licensed 808 housing sites in Michigan.
- 3,798 living units licensed for occupancy, providing a capacity to house 22,857 people.
- U.S. Department of Labor housing construction grants were awarded to 14 farmers who invested over \$753,958 in construction of 26 new housing units.
- A total of 57 living units were certified for seasonal H2A – Foreign Agricultural Worker use.



Right to Farm Program

The Right to Farm (RTF) Program is comprised of two parts - environmental complaint response and site selection and odor control for new and expanding livestock production facilities. Both components of this program contribute to Michigan's pollution prevention strategy. Michigan's Right to Farm Act provides farmers with nuisance protection when they conform to Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices (GAAMPs) that apply to their farm operations.

RTF - Environmental Complaint Response Program

The RTF Environmental Complaint Response Program began in 1986. Investigations include an

initial on-site inspection within seven business days of receipt of a complaint. Individuals can have their environmental concerns about farms addressed by filing a formal complaint for investigation with MDARD. The management of activities, conditions, and/or materials of concern associated with on-farm production practices are compared to applicable GAAMPs by the MDARD field inspectors.

2010 Accomplishments:

- Responded to 151 new environmental complaints.
- Conducted 99 follow up inspections.
- Runoff control, nutrient management, odor management, and groundwater protection practices were implemented on 55 farms to resolve verified complaints.
- Eight farms developed and implemented Manure Management System Plans (MMSP) or Nutrient Management Plans (NMP) covering 670 animal units on 1,392 acres of crop land.

RTF - Site Selection

The RTF site selection process for new and expanding livestock production facilities provides farmers and their neighbors in the surrounding communities with environmental assurance, social compatibility, and sustainable farm operations. Approximately \$15 million was spent on the construction of new and expanding livestock and poultry facilities under the site selection verification process in 2010.



Swine finishing barns going through site selection.

2010 Accomplishments:

- 14 new and expanding farm facilities completed the site verification process.
- Six new livestock facilities were built.
- Eight existing farm facilities expanded – 3 dairy, 3 swine, and 2 poultry.
- Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans or Manure Management System Plans were developed and implemented on all 14 new or expanded farm facilities.

