



Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development

Environmental Stewardship Division

Annual Report 2012

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“The Environmental Stewardship Division (ESD) works hard through a variety of programs to encourage environmentally sound agricultural practices and prevent agriculture-related pollution. ESD seeks to enhance commercial agriculture activities in Michigan, while protecting the environment, public health, and promoting economic development.”



James Johnson
Director

Biosolids Land Application Program

The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) provides education and technical assistance to individuals involved with or 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.

2012 Accomplishments:

- 176 wastewater treatment facilities participated in the land application program.
- 91,653 dry tons of biosolids were recycled to cropland on Michigan farms.
- Over 24,000 acres of Michigan cropland received this “soil amendment”.
- The nutrient value equates to over \$8 million saved by farmers using biosolids instead of commercial fertilizers.

Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program

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 citizens of the state of Michigan. 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.

2012 Accomplishments:

- 42,867 agreements covering 3,244,637 acres in the P.A. 116 Program (P.A. 451 of 1994, as amended).
- 103 conservation easements covering 21,398 acres in the State Permanent Program.
- 45 agreements covering 6,000 acres in the Local Open Space Program.
- 13 open space easements covering 2,335 acres in the Designated Open Space Program.
- 11 local conservation easements (936 acres) 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 prerequisite infrastructure for Michigan's economic development. They 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 serving over 17,000,000 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 serve as deputies for the Director and chair of the drainage board that is required for each drain 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 six million acres.

2012 Accomplishments

- The program administered 49 petitioned and major maintenance projects in various stages of planning, design, and construction with an estimated combined cost of more than \$67 million affecting approximately 565,000 acres and over 145 miles of drains. These projects and maintenance work required program staff to chair 226 drain board meetings and public hearings involving 33 counties. All project costs are paid from special assessments on private property and public corporations with the assistance of the Clean Michigan Initiative, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and the Great Lakes Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control grants and State Revolving Loan funds.
- The Oakland Macomb Interceptor (OMI) rehabilitation project is in its fourth year of a six year project. Segment 2 construction contracts were begun at an estimated cost of \$32 million. This is the largest, most expensive, and complex intercounty drainage project in the state's history. The OMI is a sanitary sewer interceptor drain serving over 800,000 people in 23 public corporations delivering waste flows to the City of Detroit's sewage disposal plant. The system is a concrete tunnel over 21 miles in length, up to 12 feet in diameter, and at depths of over 100 feet. A six year plan to repair and reinforce the tunnel is designed to prevent collapse and extend the service life. The total estimated cost is approximately \$170 million.



Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program

The Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) is a holistic approach to environmental protection. It helps farmers evaluate their entire operation and make sustainable management decisions, balancing society's needs, the environment, and economics. MAEAP is a partnership effort that aims to protect natural

resources and build positive communities by counseling Michigan farmers that operate farms of all sizes and all commodities on environmentally responsible agricultural production practices. Public Acts 1 and 2 of 2011 codified MAEAP into law, providing incentives and structure. To become MAEAP verified, farmers must complete three comprehensive steps: educational seminars, a thorough on-farm risk assessment, and development and implementation of an action plan addressing potential environmental risks. The MDARD conducts an on-farm inspection to verify program requirements related to applicable state and federal environmental regulations, including the Right to Farm Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices (GAAMPs). To retain MAEAP verification, a farm must repeat all three steps, including an MDARD inspection, every three years. MAEAP supporters include over 50 industry, university, state, and federal agency, local government, and conservation groups. MAEAP was highlighted in the 2012 Office of the Great Lakes Report: State of the Great Lakes 2012, and has been used as a model program by various other states.

2012 Accomplishments:

- Approximately 5,000 Michigan farmers attended educational sessions geared toward environmental stewardship and MAEAP verification.
- Currently, over 10,000 Michigan farms have begun the MAEAP verification process with almost 1,400 Michigan MAEAP farm verifications completed.
- Growers spent more than \$1,200,000 for practice implementation working toward MAEAP verification.
- Verified nutrient management plans are in place on almost half a million acres of Michigan farmland.
- The erosion-reducing aspects of MAEAP verification have kept over 322,000 tons of farming soil where it belongs - in farm fields. That's 28,642 ten-yard dump trucks of soil not reaching streams and lakes – every year. (FY12 showed a 63 percent increase in sediment reduction.)
- Annual phosphorus reduction to surface waters through MAEAP is over 552,000 pounds per year. (62 percent increase from FY11.)
- Nitrogen reduction to surface waters through MAEAP is almost 1.3 million pounds per year. (58 percent increase from FY11.)
- Phosphorus and Nitrogen reduced over the last three years on MAEAP farms could have grown enough algae to cover over half of Houghton Lake at a quarter inch depth. (Houghton Lake is the largest inland lake in Michigan.)
- Over 393,000 acres receiving pesticides have approved pest management plans.
- Over 9,000 acres of filter strips have been installed and nearly 1,859 gullies have been stabilized, improving water quality.



Technical Assistance

Funded through legislation established in 1995, MAEAP Technical Assistance delivers MAEAP through on-farm technical assistance, using farm specific risk assessments, education, and conservation plan development to implement practices and coordinate local, state, and federal agency resources to help reduce identified environmental risks, and make progress toward MAEAP verification. The assistance is funded through fees assessed on the sale of pesticides and nitrogen fertilizers and through several secured grants.

Technical assistance is addressed through a variety of distinct programs:

- Agricultural
- Engineering Assistance
- Clean Sweep
- Pesticide Container Recycling
- Spill Response
- Water Monitoring
- Golf Courses (Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship)
- Residential

Agricultural Program

The MAEAP Agricultural Program is available locally through conservation district water stewardship technicians. In FY12, 51 positions were funded providing both water stewardship (33) and conservation technical assistance initiative (18) technicians. Water stewardship practices are in conformance with the Right to Farm GAAMPs and the United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (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*A*Syst.

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, identify potential funding sources to address the identified risks, and provide the technical assistance needed to implement the plan.

Over the past 15 years, more than 16,400 Farm*A*Syst and over 1,800 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. 507 farms have been verified in the Livestock System (9 percent increase from 2011), 506 farms have been verified in the Farmstead System (133 percent increase over 2011), and 347 farms have been verified in the Cropping System (690 percent increase over 2011).

In addition, water stewardship technicians offer technical assistance to develop Farm Emergency Plans, which provide farmers a plan to mitigate on-farm emergencies and provides 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.

2012 Accomplishments:

- 6,281 on-farm risk reductions (pesticide storage security, anti-backflow device installation, drift management plans, triennial water testing, pesticide container triple-rinsing, etc.).
- 553 Farm*A*Systs, 366 Crop*A*Systs, and 229 Livestock*A*Systs completed.
- 432 new Farm Emergency Plans implemented, including pesticide, manure, and silage considerations. Additionally, 260 Plans were revised.
- 119 emergency spill kits created.
- 27 abandoned wells were decommissioned.

Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative Program

The goal of the Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative (CTAI) 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 for conservation districts to hire engineers and soil conservationists to provide information and technical assistance to private landowners implementing engineered 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 the USDA-NRCS staff to complete the work. Currently, there are engineers located in Chippewa, Genesee, Kent, and Otsego Counties. Soil conservationists are located in Allegan, Branch, Clinton, Delta, Huron, Jackson, Isabella, Missaukee, Montmorency, Oceana, and Van Buren Counties. They serve land owners in approximately 50 Michigan counties.

Funding for the program comes from the MAEAP and the USDA-NRCS via a Contribution Agreement between the MDARD and the USDA.

CTAI employees have worked on a variety of projects during 2012 including design, inventory and evaluation, surveying, pre-construction meetings, construction inspections, plan review, and conservation planning.

2012 Accomplishments:

- 960 practices were 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 over \$11 million being made available to Michigan farmers 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 through the CTAI Program alone in 2012.
- The program also completed 66 risk assessments and implemented 87 risk reduction practices.

Clean Sweep Program

The goal of the Clean Sweep Program is proper disposal of unused and unwanted pesticides. The Clean Sweep Program, a partnership of federal, county, and local government, had 18 permanent Clean Sweep sites located throughout the state in 2012 and has collected over two million pounds of pesticides since 1996. Michigan residents may dispose of pesticides at any Clean Sweep site, which will collect unwanted product for shipping and proper disposal, free of charge. In addition, using the effective Clean Sweep structure already in place, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality has maintained a Memorandum of Understanding with the MDARD to provide funding for the collection of mercury from Michigan residents.

The MDARD secured \$475,530 from the United States Environmental Protection Agency through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to expand Clean Sweep collection efforts for 2011 and 2012. The project offered the opportunity to expand the number and reach of Clean Sweep sites as well as fund pharmaceutical disposal for the duration of the grant cycle.

2012 Accomplishments:

- 136,277 pounds of unwanted or unusable pesticides were collected, including the following active ingredient weights:
 - 1,300 pounds of persistent, bioaccumulative toxic pesticides (DDT, Chlordane) and 120 pounds of 2,4,5-T/Silvex
 - 222 pounds of pesticides containing arsenic
 - 15,957 pounds of unwanted pharmaceuticals
 - More than 1,952 pounds of mercury



Properly disposing of these highly toxic chemicals reduces the risk that they would pose on our environment in a way that jeopardizes Michigan's environment.

Pesticide Container Recycling Program

The MAEAP Pesticide Container Recycling Program provides a way for agricultural producers and agri-businesses to collect and recycle plastic HDPE pesticide containers, 2.5 to 55 gallons in size. 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 1.36 million pounds of pesticide containers.

2012 Accomplishments:

- More than 33 commercial agri-businesses and turf chemical distributors served as collection sites and/or coordinated consolidation of pickups for their regional satellite offices.
- 84,809 pounds of plastic pesticide containers were collected and sent to a regional center to be ground and recycled.



Spill Response Program

The MAEAP 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 works 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.

2012 Accomplishments:

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

The most notable incident involved a tanker loaded with approximately 9,000 gallons of liquid hog manure that tipped over, leaking into a dry ditch. Local spill responders and the farmer moved quickly to abate the release and sought assistance through the MDARD regarding how to clean up and remediate the site. Soil impacted by the manure was excavated under the supervision of county road and drain commission crews and was land applied at agronomic rates. All parties were satisfied with the process.

Water Monitoring Program

The MAEAP Water 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 almost 32,000 wells for atrazine and/or 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.

2012 Accomplishments:

- 146 baseline sample sets were collected. This includes confirmation samples and periodic monitoring on wells known to be contaminated and envelope monitoring.
- There were 761 water samples screened for nitrite and nitrate. The results were mailed to all participants and included recommendations on dealing with contaminated wells and additional sources of information.

Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship

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.



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 FY12, 71 golf properties participated in the program and 25 properties have been certified.

Residential Program

The MAEAP Residential Program, known as the Michigan Water Stewardship Program, provides technical assistance through web-based interactive education and outreach materials. The web site, www.MiWaterStewardship.org, targets both urban and rural residents to assist their adoption of stewardship practices that reduce environmental risks to water and other related natural resources. The site is used by urban and rural schools, municipalities, nature centers, watershed groups, and adults to learn more about Great Lakes water quality. Additional components of the online training are directed to create youth stewards and provide educators with many valuable teaching resources. Students and community groups have submitted videos and news items to the site for outreach.



2012 Accomplishments:

- The site was officially launched on March 22, 2011, World Water Day, and was recognized by the Great Lakes Information Network as the April 2011 Site of the Month.
- Compiled information indicates 584,250 “views” in the year, including 17,498 visitors with over 2,200 unique visitors in peak months.
- Approximately 37 percent of page views have been due to referral traffic. Of this, over 1,400 have come courtesy of the Environmental Protection Agency’s website.

Michigan Conservation Districts

Created during the “Dust Bowl” days to address catastrophic soil erosion, 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 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. Conservation districts have delivered a wide variety of programs to Michigan’s citizens. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources also rely on conservation districts to assist with watershed planning projects and private lands programs.

Conservation districts are the delivery system for all MDARD conservation programs:

- Bovine Tuberculosis Risk Mitigation Program
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
- Emerald Ash Borer Program
- Forestry Assistance Program
- Hunting Access Program
- Pheasant Restoration Initiative

Bovine Tuberculosis Risk Mitigation Program

The Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) Risk Mitigation Program involves working with northern Michigan livestock producers using a risk assessment tool (Wildlife Risk*A*Syst) created by the MDARD for the producers' use. On-farm assessments have been conducted for farms selling breeding stock and feeder cattle. Local conservation districts work 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. \$1,206,055 in general funds has been allocated to help livestock producers with the construction of 78 hoop structures and five fenced secure feed storage projects.



Risk assessments have identified 54 additional producers who need funding (\$810,000). The Alpena Conservation District staff has assisted livestock producers with access to federal Farm Bill funding through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The USDA-NRCS has provided \$1.5 million in EQIP funding for Northeast Michigan.

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 through leveraging federal funds. The technical assistance for CREP is delivered through conservation districts.

2012 Accomplishments:

- Farmers and landowners have enrolled 72,520 acres in the program, including 36,509 acres of corridor practices, 19,703 acres of wetland restoration practices, 1,860 acres of field windbreaks, 14,403 acres of diverse grassland cover on highly erodible cropland, and 45 acres of sediment retention control structure practices.
- 6,693 contracts with private landowners protect the sites for 15 years.
- Three Farm Bill biologists, employed through conservation districts, provide technical assistance for the implementation of CREP conservation practices.
- The MDNR, working with the MDARD, secured a \$1 million federal grant to implement grassland restoration work on public and private lands. Work will begin in FY13.
- Michigan was awarded a \$500,000 grant from the USDA to fund a voluntary Hunting Access Program.
- CREP has become a critical component of the “Pheasant Restoration Initiative”.



Emerald Ash Borer Program

Conservation districts in the Upper Peninsula provided assistance to the MDARD’s Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division with the continued monitoring of the Emerald Ash Borer. Conservation districts coordinated trapping in the western Upper Peninsula. The conservation districts in the western Upper Peninsula set, monitored, and recovered 2,006 artificial traps.

Forestry Assistance Program

The Forestry Assistance Program was resurrected in 2012. A cooperative agreement between the MDNR Forest Resources Division and the MDARD ESD leveraged funding for two full time foresters and eight outreach grants. The program was designed to increase the knowledge and understanding of sustainable forest management practices and thereby increase the harvest of timber from private forestland. Conservation districts established local advisory committees comprised of public and private representatives of the local forestry industry. The committees have



provided guidance to the conservation districts for the local program's Annual Plan of Work. These plans include workshops, field days, and programs for private forest landowners. Increasing the number of acres of private forestland managed under a sustainable forest management plan is an objective of the program. The conservation districts will promote the Qualified Forest Program and enrollment in Michigan Tree Farm. Conservation districts have been working closely with the private sector, connecting private landowners with the assistance they need to manage their land. In the second half of FY12, conservation districts hosted 57 field days and workshops. The two foresters made over 300 site visits and made numerous referrals to the private sector.

The 2013 budget allocated funding for 11 additional foresters starting October 1, 2012.

Hunting Access Program

Michigan's Hunting Access Program (HAP) was created in 1977 to increase public hunting opportunities in southern Michigan where 97 percent of the land base is privately owned. Providing access to quality hunting lands close to urban centers is a key component to attracting new and retaining current hunters. Utilizing funds from a USDA grant, the ESD and conservation districts working with the MDNR Wildlife Division is working to expand HAP enrollment from 47 farms and 7,500 acres in 2010 to 100 farms and 15,000 acres by 2013. In fact, the program exceeded its goal and enrolled 153 farms and 17,032 acres in its first year. Partnering with local conservation districts to handle local HAP promotion, enrollment of new farms, and providing landowner support, the project has been a tremendous success. The MDNR, Wildlife Divisions MI Hunt web based tool has dramatically improved access to the farms. The MDNR has also increased the presence of law enforcement at these sites which keeps the hunting experience of the highest quality. Many of the new farms have improved the habitat on their land by enrolling in Farm Bill programs like CREP and the Wetland Restoration Program.

Pheasant Restoration Initiative

The ringed-necked pheasant is one of the most popular game birds in North America. Although its native range is Asia, it has adapted well to Michigan's farmland. The Pheasant Restoration Initiative proposes to greatly expand enrollment in Farm Bill programs that establish grassland habitat. Grasslands are critical nesting and brood rearing habitats for pheasant. This habitat also provides for the protection of water quality by trapping sediment and nutrients from farm land.



The initiative is a collaborative effort between state and federal agencies including: MDNR, USDA, and the United States Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Services.

Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, and the Wild Turkey Federation have also been active.

Restoration of pheasant populations will expand recreational and economic opportunities for rural communities. The economic impact of hunting activities in Michigan is \$1.3 billion. The recruitment of young hunters and the return of older hunters will be achieved by increasing access to quality habitat and a successful hunting experience.

The initiative has focused its effort on a model described as the hub and spoke. It creates a relationship between the state game areas which are the hubs - large blocks of grass, and the spokes - filter strips and restored grassland habitat on private land. The initiative is working with the biomass industry to identify strategies to harvest low value fiber on state game areas as an energy source and in that process preparing the sites for the re-establishment of grassland habitat.

The ESD manages several grants with conservation districts to fund the Farm Bill biologists who provide technical assistance to private landowners interested in improving the habitat on their land. Farm Bill biologists also work with private landowners to establish cooperatives. The cooperatives create an opportunity for sharing successful methods for establishing grassland habitat and restoring low quality habitat. There are active cooperatives in each of the three priority areas. The Lake Hudson Cooperative has been very active hosting hunts and field days.

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.



2012 Accomplishments:

- Program staff conducted 918 inspections.
- Licensed 704 housing sites in Michigan.

- 3,404 living units licensed for occupancy, providing a capacity to house 21,005 people.
- 32 camps containing 50 living units were licensed for 544 H2A foreign agricultural workers.
- With the support of fruit and vegetable producers, commodity groups, migrant advocacy groups, the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, the Michigan Legislature, and the Governor's Office, the budget was passed allowing the Migrant Labor Housing Program to return to full staffing levels in 2013. This will allow us to provide better customer service and return to conducting in-season occupancy inspections.



Right to Farm

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 GAAMPs that apply to their farm operations.

Environmental Complaint Response

The RTF Environmental Complaint Response Program began in 1986 and has investigated and resolved over 3,500 complaints. Individuals can have their environmental concerns about farms addressed by filing a formal complaint for investigation with the MDARD. Investigations include an on-site inspection within seven business days of complaint receipt. The management of activities, conditions, and/or materials of concern associated with on-farm production practices are compared to applicable GAAMPs by MDARD field inspectors.

2012 Accomplishments:

- Responded to 154 new environmental complaints.
- Conducted an additional 198 follow up inspections.
- 2,520 feet of stream bank fencing installed to exclude 390 animal units from surface waters.
- 98 farms implemented runoff control, nutrient management, odor management, and groundwater protection practices to resolve verified complaints.
- Four Manure Management System Plans (MMSP) were implemented covering 1,686 animal units (AU) and 2,803 acres.

Site Selection

The RTF Site Selection process for new and expanding livestock production facilities provide farmers and their neighbors in the surrounding communities with environmental assurance, social compatibility, and sustainable farm operations. Since June 2000, more than 350 producers in 45 Michigan counties have utilized the site selection process and invested over \$350 million on the construction of new and expanding livestock and poultry facilities.

2012 Accomplishments

- 24 new and expanding farm facilities completed the site verification process.
- 19 existing farm facilities expanded, 11 dairy, four swine, three poultry, and one beef.
- Five new farm livestock facilities were built, one dairy, three swine, one poultry, and two new manure storage structures.
- Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP), or MMSPs were developed and implemented on each of these 24 new/expanded livestock and poultry facilities.



In addition, the RTF Program received 13 pro-active requests from individuals to review their management plans, conduct on-site inspections, and make GAAMPs determinations.

