



**Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program  
Advisory Council Annual Report Highlights**  
March 2011 - September 2012

The Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) Advisory Council (AC) is co-chaired by Tom Coon, Director, Michigan State University Extension and Scott Piggott, Chief Operations Officer, Michigan Farm Bureau and consists of agency, university, agricultural industry and commodity groups, agri-business, conservation and environmental group members. The MAEAP AC Directory is found at [www.michigan.gov/maeap](http://www.michigan.gov/maeap).

**Key AC Accomplishments**

- Organized and conducted bi-monthly meetings hosted by MAEAP AC members, including tours and discussion of MAEAP verified components on AC member farms (Benne Farms, Inc.; Blight Farms; and True Blue Farms). Approved meeting notes are found at [www.michigan.gov/maeap](http://www.michigan.gov/maeap).
- Extensively reviewed, discussed, modified and recommended MAEAP standards to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) Director for adoption by the Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development in September of both 2011 and 2012. Standards were adopted as presented and incorporated recommendations found in the Right to Farm Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices, together with direction from the Natural Resources Conservation Service and other agencies and scientific studies.
- Established a special MAEAP Water Quality Monitoring Task Force. Preliminary report presented to MDARD Director in September 2012. Task Force work continues to finalize Water Quality Monitoring Recommendations.
- Established the Verification Task Force to develop protocols for verification and revocation of verification. Protocols approved by the Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development in September 2011 as recommended by the AC. No changes made in 2012.
- Encouraged more MAEAP-verified farms through various high profile activities such as the October 2012 celebration of the 1000th verification at Lee Farms in Laingsburg.
- Promoted MAEAP as a model verification “Ag Certainty” equivalent program to various state and national agency leaders and legislators, including Senator Stabenow and staff and IPM Alliance Decision Maker Tours in both 2011 and 2012.
- Created subcommittees to address emerging and ongoing issues, including the Livestock, Farmstead, and Cropping Sub-Committees and the Communications, Water Quality Monitoring and Verification Task Forces.

**MAEAP AC 2013 Focus**

The focus for the coming year consists of:

- Targeting work towards reaching 5000 verifications by the end of 2015.
- Directing the work of the subcommittees and workgroups.
- Considering the final recommendations of the water quality monitoring task force.
- Continuing to visit MAEAP verified farms as a group.
- Encouraging the development of the regional environmental assurance teams.