



THE Loop



February
2012

N E W S L E T T E R

MFB INTRODUCES REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES FOR NORTH, SAGINAW VALLEY

Contact: Mike Wenkel (800) 292-2680, ext. 3232

LANSING, Jan. 27, 2012 - The Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB) welcomes Cole Iaquinto and Kate Krepps to its staff as regional representatives servicing county Farm Bureau members in the North and Saginaw Valley regions, respectively.

As the North regional representative, Iaquinto will work with Farm Bureau members in Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, Cheboygan, Otsego, Crawford, Oscoda, Montmorency, and Presque Isle counties. As regional representative for the Saginaw Valley, Krepps will work with county Farm Bureaus in Gratiot, Saginaw, Bay, Midland and Isabella counties.

In their new roles, both Iaquinto and Krepps will help county Farm Bureaus plan and implement membership programs, assist and advise volunteer committees and leaders, and oversee county Farm Bureau offices in their regions.

Cole Iaquinto

Iaquinto succeeds Jessica Jakubik, who resigned in early January to accept a position with Farm Bureau Insurance as an agent based in West Branch. Iaquinto hails from Clio. He currently resides in Cedar Springs and will soon relocate to Petoskey.

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MEMBERSHIP STANDINGS

	ANNUAL NEEDED	CURRENT 1/31/11	% NEW OBJECTIVE
NEW TOTAL MBRS	24,725	8,016	32.42%
NEW REG MBRS	2,699	670	24.82%

A look ahead....

FEB 2012

- 7 Statewide Mbrshp Day**
- 15 Lansing Legislative Seminar**
- 17-20 AFBF YF&R Ldrshp Conf - GR**

MAR 2012

- 1 - 2 Voice of Ag Conf**
- 7 MFB Winter Advisory Conf**
- 14 Ag Day at the Capitol**
- 21-23 Washington Legislative Seminar**

Reminders

- "FB Update" DVDs are mailed out quarterly, Your next version will be in May 2012.
- Annual CAG Supply Packets are mailed out in the fall, via regular mail only to CAG secretaries that are currently updated in our database and do not have email.
- All 2012/13 CAG Set-up Sheets were due to County Administrative Managers by Dec 1.
- All CAG materials are available online to view and print by visiting www.michfb.com/cag.
- Email suggestions or ideas for future articles and discussion topics to: mwenkel@michfb.com or contact us at:
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Attn: Membership & Field Services
P (517) 323-7000 • F (517) 323-6604
Mike Wenkel Ext. 3232, Amy Pline Ext. 3211

FB Update for Winter 2012 features highlights from Michigan Farm Bureau's 92nd Annual Meeting.

Along with all the award winners, you'll hear from Governor Rick Snyder and President Wayne Wood. And you'll learn about some of the policies discussed during the delegate session.



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A 2010 graduate of Michigan State University (MSU), laquinto has a bachelor's degree in fisheries and wildlife. Prior to joining Farm Bureau, he worked for The Nature Conservancy, assisting land owners with conservation management practices.



laquinto also brings to his new position leadership experiences gained while serving in the Michigan National Guard for the past six years.

Kate Krepps

Krepps has relocated to Sanford. She is a native of Ravenna, where she grew up on her family's beef cattle farm and was actively involved in FFA, including serving as the FFA state treasurer from 2007-08.



Krepps recently graduated from MSU with a bachelor's degree in agriscience education. She spent the past year working as an intern with MFB's Agricultural Ecology Department and becoming more familiar with the organization.

MFB is the state's largest general farm organization, representing more than 48,000 farm families statewide.

Editor's note: Photos of Cole laquinto and Kate Krepps are available for download.

BUSINESS LEADERS FOR MICHIGAN EMBRACES AG, 'NATURAL RESOURCES ECONOMY'

LANSING, Jan. 27, 2012 - Agriculture has a rightful place in the 2012 Michigan Turnaround Plan unveiled earlier this week by the Business Leaders for Michigan (BLM), and the industry will serve a meaningful role, according to the Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB).

"As the state's largest general farm organization, Michigan Farm Bureau is pleased that the Business Leaders for Michigan (BLM) recognizes the current and future economic impact of our state's \$71.3 billion agriculture industry," said MFB President Wayne H. Wood.

"The Michigan Farm Bureau has made it our goal to improve upon our state's agricultural successes and remove barriers that have hindered progress. Together with the Business Leaders for Michigan I'm optimistic we can implement policy that allows for the expansion of Michigan's current \$25 billion food processing industry, creating jobs and growth in personal income" Wood said.

Building on the BLM's prior work, the 2012 Michigan Turnaround Plan outlines a number of new recommendations for revitalizing Michigan's economy and introduces a new step focused on "Leveraging Assets to Grow the New Michigan." This new step identifies distinct Michigan strengths and their inherent opportunities for long-term economic growth in Michigan.

Among the six strengths identified is investing in and leveraging "Michigan's natural resources in sustainable ways to grow a Natural Resources Economy." This is where the BLM gives props to the state's agriculture industry.

"Our agricultural know-how can help us fulfill another of the world's growing needs: food production. Our farming traditions married to our engineering expertise can help us seize advantages in the rapidly growing industry of precision and

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high-yield agriculture," reads one section of the plan.

The plan goes on to state, "Michigan's varied agricultural industry has flourished in part because of the local engineering capabilities that have been brought to bear on improving it. That dynamic between farmer and innovator offers Michigan a marked advantage in the field of precision agriculture ... The industry is booming at a projected rate of more than 19 percent per year, and for good reason: farm productivity matters more than ever as populations swell, land suitable for cultivation becomes more scarce and a complex world commodity marketplace increases price volatility.

Michigan has all the pieces in place to lead this trend. With global demand for food expected to rise by 70 percent between 2000 and 2050 and Michigan farms producing 50 percent more feed-grains than state residents consume, Michigan can become a key provider of the world's food supply by increasing exports and growing its food processing capacity."

In its "case for change," the BLM also points out that agriculture is one of only three job sectors in Michigan that out-performed the U.S. average for job sector growth.

"Significant capital investments in the production agriculture arena over the last decade set the stage for tremendous opportunities in food processing. Economic analysis from Michigan State University shows tremendous economic growth opportunities for our \$25 billion food processing sector," said Wood. "We look forward to working with BLM in the months and years ahead as they develop and implement policies to promote Michigan's Natural Resources Economy."

Learn more about BLM and read the entire 2012 Michigan Turnaround Plan by visiting <http://www.businessleadersformichigan.com>.

FARM BUREAU URGES CONGRESS TO REJECT ANTIBIOTIC RESTRICTIONS

Contact: Ryan Findlay, (800) 292-2680, ext. 2025 or Ernie Birchmeier, ext. 2024

LANSING, Jan. 27, 2012 - The Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB), along with the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), are urging members of Congress to oppose legislation (H.R. 965 and S. 1211) that would restrict the use of important antibiotics in livestock and poultry.

In letters to Senate and House members, Farm Bureau leaders said the legislation would handicap veterinarians and farmers in their efforts to maintain animal health and protect the nation's food supply.

"We want Michigan's Congressional delegation to know that farmers care about the animals they raise and the people farmers feed. At times, antibiotics are necessary to help a sick animal. In situations like this, farmers use antibiotics carefully, judiciously and according to label instructions," said MFB national legislative counsel Ryan Findlay. Farm Bureau contends that antibiotic use in animals does not pose a serious public health threat.

"Proponents of the legislation suggest that antibiotic use could constitute a public health threat through antibiotic-resistant bacteria in animals being passed along, creating a similar resistance in humans," said AFBF President Bob Stallman. "However, in more than 40 years of antibiotics being used to treat animals, such a public health threat has not arisen, and recent government data shows the potential that one might occur is declining."

MFB doesn't deny that animals can develop a resistance to antibiotics, but it remains unfounded whether this resistance is transferred to humans, said Findlay.

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“Michigan farmers support continued research on antimicrobial-resistant bacteria that would include multiple government agencies and livestock farmers,” said Findlay. “There is a great deal of emotion surrounding this issue but accurate, unbiased science needs to be the guide. The Michigan Farm Bureau looks forward to additional research that helps to further enhance animal health and human medicine.”

AFBF adds that increased use of improved food safety technologies over the past several years has contributed to decreased bacteria survival in food processing/handling and in food-borne illnesses.

“Data indicates development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria in animals is stable, and food-borne bacteria resistance in humans is declining,” Stallman said. “In fact, recent research indicates using antibiotics to keep animals healthy reduces the incidence of foodborne pathogens in meat.”

CAG CORNER

This section is a resource to help Community Action Groups get an idea what other groups around the state think. Each month, a *summary* of most common responses to a previous month’s Discussion Topic will be featured.

FEATURED MONTH: NOV 2011 DISCUSSION TOPIC - “HOW WILL ROADS BE FUNDED IN THE FUTURE?”

QUESTION #: 1

List three new ideas for funding roads other than property taxes:

There were many great answers. The four most popular answers however, were:

- Add road tax to registration and/or License fees; pay road tax up front, raise registration fees (higher for electric vehicles).
- Toll Interstates
- Fuel/Gas Tax increased and use ONLY for roads, plus base it on current cost.
- Electric cars should pay same tax as gas vehicles,

tax on charger use - like gas tax, and pay based on mileage via odometer.

QUESTION #: 2

Document instances in your county where a farmer needs to drive around a crumbling bridge to get to a field.

Many of the counties that submitted responses had bridges that are an issue, including: Clinton, Shiawassee, Huron, Lenawee, Livingston, Washtenaw, Macomb, St. Joseph, Ingham, Monroe, and Osecola. In addition to the crumbling bridges, Allegan, Gladwin & Livingston indicated that a more common problem for them is narrow bridges and those with low weight restrictions.

What can your county Farm Bureau do about it?

The most frequent responses were to communicate with the county road commission, township, and/or legislators.

QUESTION #: 3

What is the top priority in your county for roads? (ie New construction, bridge repair, road maintenance, other).

The most popular answer was:


- Bridge repair and/or road maintenance


Thank you for your responses!

DIGITAL DIALOGUE REMINDER!

You can follow Michigan Farm Bureau news and interact with the organization using the following social media tools.

 The Michigan Farm Bureau operates a page on Facebook called Michigan Farm Bureau. Search for it at www.facebook.com and become a fan.

 The Michigan Farm Bureau operates a Twitter account named MichFarmBureau (no spaces). You can find us at <http://twitter.com/MichFarmBureau> and become a follower.

 The Michigan Farm Bureau has its YouTube channel, appropriately titled, MichiganFarmBureau (no spaces). Find it at <http://www.youtube.com/MichiganFarmBureau> and become a subscriber.