

Alternative Member Engagement Opportunities

We are always looking for creative ways to showcase the value of membership. This document is meant to offer ideas for activities that you can mold into your own events. If you have questions or are looking for ideas from other counties who have held similar events, reach out to your regional manager.

Virtual Gatherings

- Virtual coffee hours with legislators, county boards, leadership, membership welcome call
- Virtual trivia with prizes
- Virtual trainings: consumer conversation training, interacting with teachers and students, farm safety trainings
- Online Contests: photos, decorating, planting contests by commodity
- Virtual 5k
- Live stream reading a book (cannot record due to copyright infringement)
- Create a video of a farm tour to share with classrooms

Socially Distant Group Gatherings

- Drive through: dinner, ice cream social, treat of agriculture (commodity stations with goodies to share) or add a policy development drop-off to begin conversations
- Drive-in movie
- Tailgate/picnic/cookout: host a movie, dinner, yard games
- Un-parade: decorate floats or tractors for individuals to drive by and judge
- Winter activities: sledding/snowshoeing/ice fishing/skiing
- In-person 5k, 10k, mud-run, etc. (staggered starts for social distancing)
- Golf scramble (carts to be used separately or only same household sharing)
- Kayak/canoe/tube down a river
- Scavenger hunt – county wide, give members a week to complete, driving with vehicles
- Drawings for local dining or ways to support local businesses, have members fill out surveys to collect member info
- Shooting event: rifle range/sporting clays or youth mentoring
- Deliver meals during planting season or harvest

Promotion Ideas

- Social media: Facebook (create an event), Instagram, Twitter, Parler
- Postcards
- County website
- Call members to invite them
- Farm Gate



5 Steps to Getting More Members to Your Event

1. Take a moment and **recall** the first Farm Bureau event you attended (ahh... the memories...)
2. How did you get **invited** to the activity? (A vast majority of the time, another Farm Bureau or family member invited you.) Would you have gone without the invite?
3. **Think** about the event you are planning, who do you want to attend the most:
 - New Members
 - Active farmers in the county
 - Members who have never been active before
 - All farmer members
 - Young Farmers
4. Make a list of **5** people that fit the criteria in #3.
5. Pick up the phone or stop by those 5 members' home and re-enact step 2, simply put -- **You gotta ask!**

If you don't know where to begin...

Hi, I'm <name> from the <county> Farm Bureau. I see that you are a <new member/young farmer, etc> with the organization. I wanted to invite you to our upcoming membership event to learn what's happening with other farmers, meet other local members and help keep the county Farm Bureau strong.

Plan Your Event: Sample Timeline & Promotion Tool Kit

Let's plan an event

- Event type, theme, ideas
- Feasibility and timing
- Available resources and insurance
- Key messages to promote

2 months

Plan your promotion

- Who do you want to attend?
 - Identify target audience
 - Commodity groups
 - Demographic specific
 - District-wide
 - New members
 - Uninvolved members
 - Young Farmers
- How do you want to reach them?
 - Select appropriate channels for groups, possibilities include:
 - Phone call/text
 - Personal contact/face-to-face
 - Social Media
 - Print
 - Email
- Print promotion (ads or postcards) should be created now.

Form a planning team

- If necessary, have a meeting
- Discuss format
 - Know your audience and tailor your conversation to them
 - Family oriented
 - Interests
 - Issue related
 - Farm specific
- Arrange speakers and/or tour stops
- Assign tasks – ex. program, meal, invitations, advertising, sponsors, etc.
- Incorporate Learn, Help, Meet hot buttons

Invite guests

- Send personal invitations to guests
- Advertising needs

1 month

Execute print promotion

- Postcards and printed invitations should go out 4+ weeks prior to your event to allow time for printing and mailing.
- Ads should be sent to papers to get into the next issue.
- Notify local media of the event

Send out an email

- If you want an email, webpage or social media post to promote your event, now is a good time to finalize those plans and put them into action.
- County events can go on the MFB website – ask your county staff.

Planning team meeting

- Discuss event plan progress
- Develop an agenda and timing
- Think about promotional items or give-aways
- Invite the media to cover your event

1 week

Finalize plans

- Finalize agenda
- Contact speakers and those involved in the event to confirm details
- Make arrangements for final meal numbers

Final push for promotion

- Contact local media
- Utilize social media
- Follow up with personal contact (phone call/text) to invitees

Event week

Volunteer check-up

- Be sure to rally your volunteers
- Use your enthusiasm
- Thank them in advance
- Provide detailed instructions or training

Presentation and safety

- Verify location is presentable for your guests
- Finalize your key messages and information to provide guests
- Ensure safety regulations are in place

Event day

- Make plans on how to gauge the effectiveness of each promotion tactic by collecting information on how participants heard about/were asked to attend (include on sign in sheet or survey)
- Emphasize the importance of Michigan Agriculture
- Stay on time and stay positive
- Allow time for question/answer period
- Ask participants to complete evaluation

Whew, now what?

- You did a great job at your event, but there's still a few things to wrap up.
- Thank your volunteers and sponsors
- Send photos, captions and a short description along with some key points to the media
- Post your photos
- Recap your event
- Make notes to review for the next event
- Follow up with invitee—ask about their experience, was it enjoyable? Would they like to be involved in anything that was discussed?