



# MFGC UPDATE

For members of the Michigan Floriculture Growers Council

March 2015

**MFGC Office**  
235 N Pine St  
Lansing, MI 48933  
517-367-2033  
mail@mifgc.org

## Calendar of Events

**MSU Grower Day**  
July 11-14, 2015  
MSU

**Annual Meeting**  
Tuesday, Dec 8,  
2015  
Devos Place  
Grand Rapids

## 2015 Board of Directors

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Bud Ripberger  
Mike Faber

**MDFGA Appointee**  
Tammy Ruhlig

**WMGA Appointee**  
Scott Stiles

Dear Member,

Come on Spring! What a good month March was. We spent March 25th, *Ag Day at the Capitol*, shaking hands with legislators and staff on your behalf. The floriculture industry provided lovely chrysanthemums to legislators and, with the help of Mike Faber, we shared information on industry happenings with staff and visitors.



On March 27th MFGC hosted a membership meeting at Wojo's Greenhouse in Ortonville. We toured Wojo's and discussed industry issues with legislators and regulators.



For your calendars: Depending on the availability of local legislators, the next MFGC member meeting will be either June 19 or 22, 2015 in Kalamazoo. Members are encouraged to attend, this is a great opportunity to talk about how important your industry is to Michigan's economy.

I've included information on the Governor's recycling and energy initiatives in this newsletter since both affect MFGC members. As always, contact me with any questions.

The annual membership drive is underway. I hope you are enjoying the benefits of belonging to MFGC, especially your statewide voice as Michigan floriculture growers, and our collective ability to identify and rectify grower issues and problems through public policies and legislative action.

MFGC is a public policy organization that will provide you with e-mail updates (or US mailed upon request) on industry and government issues, and make sure your views are expressed to public officials.

MFGC is an independent organization endorsed by Metro Detroit Flower Growers Association (MDFGA) and the Western Michigan Greenhouse Association (WMGA).

The Council actively supports beneficial legislation and opposes public policies that do not support Michigan's floriculture economy. Support your industry and renew your [Membership](#) today!

I look forward to hearing from you.

Val Vail-Shirey  
Executive Director

**Policy Chair**  
Ken Tuinier

**Membership Chair**  
Susie Raker-Zimmerman

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## Michigan's recycling initiative

In his 2015 *State of the State* address Governor Snyder reiterated the importance of residential recycling. We are including information on the Recycling Summit and have posted his news release from last April explaining the background and history of his efforts.

Fueled by his initiative to double Michigan's recycling rate by May 2016, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and Michigan Recycling Coalition are working to create the programming infrastructure needed to achieve this goal in every community and every business in the state. Join professional colleagues at this Summit & Conference to build your knowledge and understanding of the challenges and opportunities we face and to be a part of identifying the solutions and answers that will ultimately grow recycling in Michigan.

On May 5 -7, 2015 at the Kalamazoo Radisson will be the first ever Governor's recycling summit with the annual conference following.

Governor Snyder's commitment to double Michigan's recycling rate has ignited the movement to grow recycling in Michigan. Learn about the State's progress toward that goal and its plans for developing, supporting, and institutionalizing innovative projects and programs that promise sustained progress

into the future. Click on the link below to register:

[http://www.michiganrecycles.org/images/2015Conf/2015ConfProgram\\_3\\_25.pdf](http://www.michiganrecycles.org/images/2015Conf/2015ConfProgram_3_25.pdf)

## **Snyder announces statewide recycling initiative**

*Effort will help Michigan become leader in residential recycling*

*Original post date April, 2014:*

LANSING, Mich. - Gov. Rick Snyder today announced a statewide plan designed to increase residential recycling access statewide. He also announced appointments to a nine-member Michigan Recycling Council to guide the plan's implementation.

In his November 2012 Special Message on Energy and the Environment, Snyder called on the Department of Environmental Quality to assemble a stakeholder group tasked with developing a plan. The governor presented his plan today during a tour of Clean Tech Inc., Michigan's largest plastic bottle recycling plant, near Monroe.

"Michigan has a strong tradition of protecting and enhancing its environment," Snyder said. "But when it comes to recycling, we must do better. Michigan trails other Great Lakes states and much of the nation in residential recycling. It's a complex challenge but one that we can address. This plan puts us on the right path."

Michigan's recycling rate for residential household waste is about 15 percent. The national average is 35 percent. A recent study concluded more than \$435 million in recyclable metal, glass, paper and plastics goes from Michigan households to Michigan landfills each year.

"States with healthy recycling programs have found that, in addition to reducing pressure on landfills and helping the environment, recycling creates jobs and opens markets for recovered materials," Snyder said.

"We've been throwing away money for decades. Addressing this issue is simply the right thing to do, and I am pleased to announce we are committed to making Michigan a recycling leader."

The 15-point plan focuses on four key areas:

- Benchmark and measure progress - including developing ways to better track Michigan's recycling rate and document the progress of the state's effort.
- Public education and technical assistance for communities - other states report that an informed and supportive public is a key to increasing recycling, along with providing tools for local governments to develop local programs.
- Provide convenient access - successful recycling programs feature convenient access at the local level.
- Develop markets - stimulation of market opportunities for recycled products will be addressed with grants and other economic incentives.

The DEQ drafted the plan in cooperation with 45 key stakeholders including recyclers, landfill operators, manufacturers, waste haulers, bottlers, grocery store operators and others.

"This plan represents a real breakthrough for the myriad interested stakeholders around recycling," said Michigan DEQ Director Dan Wyant. "What we celebrate today is their leadership, our partnership and the sustained commitment from everyone to keep 'Pure Michigan' pure in the years ahead."

The effort is supported by a \$1 million appropriation in the governor's recommended fiscal year 2015 budget, along with \$500,000 in DEQ pollution prevention grants that will be committed to support local recycling programs over the next two years.

"The Michigan Recycling Coalition is pleased with the governor's leadership on this issue," said Kerrin O'Brien, executive director of the Michigan Recycling Coalition. "This initiative recognizes that we can and should do more to fully achieve the economic and environmental rewards that a comprehensive residential recycling program will bring to Michigan."

To learn more about residential recycling opportunities in Michigan or see Michigan's plan, go to [www.Michigan.gov/MIrecycles](http://www.Michigan.gov/MIrecycles).

## Proven Winners® \$25,000 Scholarship Program

Proven Winners is looking to the future, and the future of our industry depends on our next generation of leaders. We realize there is amazing academic talent that exists across North America, and we want to, for the second year, support the individual pursuits of college students by introducing a \$25,000 scholarship program that will reach out to students in three distinct areas. Proven Winners is proud to announce that 2015 will be the first year in which we award a total of at least \$25,000 in college scholarship programs. The scholarship money will be divided into eight scholarships and awarded in four areas:

- The Proven Winners Innovations in Plant Breeding Scholarship - \$5,000
- The Proven Winners Innovations in Horticultural Marketing Scholarship - \$5,000
- The Proven Winners Grower Excellence Scholarship - \$5,000
- Proven Winners Scholarships for Technical or 2 year Post-Secondary Students-Five Scholarships, \$2,000 each

Scholarship applicants must either be enrolled in a four-year university and be at least a sophomore, Masters and PhD students are eligible, or students must be enrolled full time in an accredited Technical or 2-year Post Secondary Institution in the 2015 school year. Applicants must be enrolled in Horticultural Science or related fields, and they must hold a minimum GPA of 3.0.



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Send a cover letter that includes:

- The scholarship you are applying for,
- The name of the University where you are enrolled
- The degree you are working towards, including minor where appropriate
- Current grade level (sophomore, junior, etc.)
- Current cumulative GPA
- Target graduation date
- Your contact information and:
- A letter of recommendation from the current academic advisor or a professor
- An essay of 750 words or more on the topic: "What I Want to Accomplish in Horticulture"
- Application Materials to be submitted via email to Kerry Meyer at [Scholarship@provenwinners.com](mailto:Scholarship@provenwinners.com)

Deadline: April 1. Recipients will be chosen and notified in June.

For full details about the scholarships, visit Proven Winners® Website at:

<https://www.provenwinners.com/25000scholarship>

## New Michigan Agency for Energy

Gov. Rick Snyder: Michigan Agency for Energy will guide state work toward affordable, reliable solutions

Snyder intends Valerie Brader to head agency created in executive order



Wednesday, March 18, 2015

LANSING, Mich. - Michiganders need to know they'll have access to affordable, reliable energy long into the future, and a new agency will focus on coordinating efforts and decisions as the state looks to replace retiring plants with newer, cleaner sources, Gov. Rick Snyder said.

Snyder today signed Executive Order 2015-10 restructuring some state bodies and creating the Michigan Agency for Energy. Upon its creation, he intends to name Valerie Brader, now a deputy legal counsel and senior policy advisor specializing in energy issues, to head the new agency.

"Michigan families and businesses need a future without fear of unaffordable energy price spikes or widespread outages that disrupt lives and work," Snyder said. "The new agency will oversee how our state responds to the energy challenges that we know are before us, and will work across state government to help Michigan reduce energy waste and adapt to changing needs and technology."

Snyder, in a Special Message on Energy delivered on March 13, said the state should approach the retirement of 10 coal-fired plants in the coming years as an opportunity. Solutions will be guided by the pillars of affordability, adaptability, reliability and protecting the environment. The state also needs to ensure that decisions affecting Michigan's energy future are made in Michigan, and not in Washington, D.C. The governor announced his intent to create the new agency during his State of the State address in January.

The Michigan Agency for Energy will serve as a single agency dedicated to getting all of our departments and commissions the information and context they need to support our energy priorities. The agency will be within the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA), and the energy agency's executive director will serve as the chief adviser to the governor and the directors of state departments regarding the development of energy policies and programs.

The executive order also calls for several transfers of responsibilities to and from LARA, the Michigan Public Service Commission, the Department of Environmental Quality, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the Michigan Strategic Fund and the Michigan State Police.

For instance, the order transfers to the new agency the Retired Engineers Technical Assistance Program and Air Policy Director from the Department of Environmental Quality; and the Michigan Energy Office from the MEDC and the Michigan Strategic Fund. It also transfers LARA's Energy Advisory Committee authorities to the executive director of the new agency.

The MPSC will continue to operate autonomously from the agency.

Brader, 38, has worked with the administration since 2011. She previously served as chief energy policy officer at the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and as an adviser to former Idaho Gov. Phil Batt on environmental and natural resource issues. She also worked in a private law practice, specializing in environmental and corporate law.

Brader is a Rhodes Scholar with degrees from Harvard and Radcliffe Colleges, two master's degrees from University of Oxford and a law degree from Georgetown Law Center.

"Valerie has tremendous expertise in energy issues, but I've also appreciated her legal skills," Snyder said. "She knows how to handle complex issues, playing a key role in resolving Detroit's bankruptcy issues, helping restore the city's financial foundation so it can continue to grow. I'm confident she'll do an outstanding job in this new position, guiding decisions that will help Michiganders long into the future."

The executive order is effective 60 days from today. The full text of the executive order is available at [www.michigan.gov/Snyder](http://www.michigan.gov/Snyder).