



MFGC UPDATE

For members of the Michigan Floriculture Growers Council

October 2016

Dear Member,

The MFGC Board of Directors has been busy reviewing the by-laws and our greenhouse industry. Looking at new crops introduced into the Michigan greenhouses, recycling requirements and participation and the proposed Worker Protection Standards.

You will receive your annual ballot in November and a proposed change to the by-laws will be included for a yes or no vote. The MFGC Board of Directors is asking that you consider a name change from the Michigan Floriculture Growers Council to the Michigan Greenhouse Growers Council - to be a more inclusive organization encompassing all greenhouse growers. As the greenhouse industry continues to change and grow with many new (and different) plants and products, the MFGC Board of Directors has discussed an expansion of the council to include all greenhouse operations. As we all know there is power in numbers, if all greenhouses are united we have the opportunity to accomplish great things. Working together gives us the avenue to learn of one another's operations and the ability to support one another, particularly in policy issues with the state and federal government.

On Tuesday, December 6, 2016 4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. in the River Overlook Room E-F (upper level) at the DeVos Place Convention Center on 303 Monroe Avenue, NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 we will host our MFGC Annual Meeting. All Michigan Floriculture Growers Council members and other interested industry professionals are invited to attend this event. This will be an opportunity for an enjoyable social time and have an informative discussion of the Council's activities. There is NO Fee to attend this event. Each guest will receive two complimentary drink tickets and enjoy an array of Hors d'oeuvres. There will also be a cash bar for additional drinks. However, you must register by contacting val@julianvail.com, or Fax to: (517) 372-1501, or Mail your registration to: MFGC, 235 N Pine, Lansing, MI 48933.

We will conduct the election electronically with those using email and paper ballots for those who do not. There are two openings for the Board of Directors and the change in by-laws question. Their terms are for three years starting January 2017 and ending December 31, 2019. Your support lends credence to the Directors' efforts, so when you receive the notification, please take a moment, cast your votes and return your ballot no later than Friday, December 2, 2016. The results will be announced at the annual meeting.

Besides bylaw changes and elections, the annual meeting this year is sure to have an impact on your business. We will be covering the changes to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Worker Protection Standards (WPS). In September the MFGC Board welcomed Craig Anderson, of Michigan Farm Bureau to the meeting and he provided an update on the EPA's most recent changes. There are new rules greenhouse growers must comply with, most importantly communications to your employees. As a result of these changes we are going to provide information and information on training and signage to help our members communicate the protection standards to employees. However, please plan to attend the annual meeting, there is much to cover and it's important you are made aware of the requirements.

Finally, we are excited to tell you about a survey that is being conducted. Molly Woods from MSU Product Center visited with the Board of Directors in September. She discussed how MFGC might seek a grant to conduct a feasibility study on a recycling cooperative in Michigan. After a year of discussion on industry recycling we submitted a request for assistance to conduct a feasibility study on a recycling cooperative in Michigan. The Product Center reviewed and approved our request and they hired Tom Kalchik, professional services provider (PSC) to conduct the study. With her guidance, over the next few weeks, Tom will be contacting members to seek their input and opinions on recycling. Please be forthcoming and

courteous to Tom so we can make a decision on whether or not to go forward. As we all know, the real work comes if the study recommends moving ahead.

So to close, I hope you enjoy this newsletter and I look forward to seeing each and every member at the annual meeting.

Cheers!



Bill Tuinier, President

Membership renewals were mailed last month!

Your membership is important to the overall success of the entire Michigan Greenhouse Industry. Please renew as soon as possible.

Always feel free to contact the MFGC office staff or your MFGC board members if you have questions or need assistance. 517-367-2033

Plan to attend!

Annual Meeting
Tuesday, December 6, 2016 ~ 4:30 pm - 6:30 pm
DeVos Place Convention Center
303 Monroe Avenue, NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Panel discussion on the proposed Worker Protection Standards

RSVP to the office today!

[Printable PDF form](#)

Reach Out To Your Elected Officials Today!

As we are before the November Election, elected officials are back in their home districts and states spending time with their constituents. Now is the time to speak up and make your voice heard about issues important to you. Call and set up a private meeting or attend town hall meetings.

Click here to [find your congressman](#).

MAEAP Certified Members

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John Gernaat & Sons Greenhouse * Kalamazoo Specialty Plants, LLC *
Ken's Greenhouse * Lexington Gardens * Micandy Gardens *
Nash Greenhouse * Tom's Greenhouse * Westrate Greenhouse, Inc.



MFGC Annual Election

All members should receive an electronic ballot or a paper ballot for those without email. Please take a moment to cast your ballot for two board positions for 2017. If you did not receive a ballot, contact the MFGC office. An appreciatory thank you to all who have served on the MFGC Board of Directors and those new members to serve. Your time and effort is greatly appreciated.

As the greenhouse industry continues to change and grow with many new (different) plants and products, the MFGC Board of Directors has discussed an expansion of the council to include all greenhouse operations. As we all know there is power in numbers, if all greenhouses are united we have the opportunity to accomplish great things. Working together gives us the avenue to learn of one another's operations and the ability to support one another, particularly in policy issues with the state and federal government.

We propose a change from Michigan Floriculture Growers Council to the Michigan Greenhouse Growers Council. You will find this questions on your ballot for a yes or no vote.

Thank you for participating.

Greenhouse and Horticultural Lighting

Date: December 1, 2016 - February 28, 2017

Time: See description.

Location: Online

Contact: Heidi Wollaeger, wollaege@anr.msu.edu, 269-384-8010

Michigan State University Extension is now offering a winter term of the non-credit pre-recorded online course on greenhouse and horticultural lighting. It is the second course in the College of Knowledge Online series offered on the eXtension campus, the national Extension website. The course is intended for greenhouse and ornamental plant growers and others interested in learning about the fundamental concepts about how plants respond to light quality, quantity, and in duration. It provides introductory to moderately-challenging content based on experiments performed at Michigan State and Purdue Universities.

The 3-hours of pre-recorded lecture and video demonstrations are divided into seven units:

- Unit 1: What is Light?
- Unit 2: Importance of Light for Plant Growth
- Unit 3: Light Quality
- Unit 4: Light Intensity
- Unit 5: Light Quantity
- Unit 6: Photoperiod and Photoperiodic Lighting
- Unit 7: Low- and High-Intensity Lighting

The first and second units cover the properties of light and its importance for plant growth and development. The third unit discusses how light quality influences stem extension and flowering. The fourth unit of the course teaches students about light intensity and its importance for plant growth. It also covers the factors that affect light availability and how to manipulate and measure light intensity in the greenhouse. Unit four also features four videos that demonstrate how light transmission is affected by the glazing material of a greenhouse, how growers can measure instantaneous light intensity and daily light integral in their greenhouse, and also how to measure light intensity and quality from light-emitting diodes (LEDs). The fifth unit discusses how light quantity affects plant shoot and root growth and branching, focusing on responses to the average daily light integral (DLI). Unit six covers photoperiod and photoperiodic long-day lighting strategies, featuring the latest research on delivering long days with LEDs. The final unit on supplemental lighting discusses the advantages and limitations of different lamp types, provides guidelines of when to deliver supplemental lighting to increase DLI, and the factors to consider when selecting a lamp for your horticultural application.

The course is instructed by Heidi Wollaeger, Greenhouse and Nursery Extension Educator, with Michigan State University Extension. The course was adapted and updated from the original College of Knowledge

unit developed by Dr. Royal Heins (Professor Emeritus, MSU) and includes a substantial amount of recent research by Dr. Erik Runkle (Professor of Horticulture, MSU). Supplemental content including videos demonstrating concepts are from Dr. Roberto Lopez and Garrett Owen (Purdue University).

Students enrolled in this self-paced course will take a pre-test and a final exam to gauge their progress on the topics of the course. Self-assessment quizzes will engage students with the material throughout the course. The course also provides links to 36 trade articles published on pertinent lighting topics.

Greenhouse and Horticultural Lighting is available through campus.extension.org. Course offerings: This course is offered twice a year (summer and winter). The next enrollment period will begin on Oct. 7, 2016. Students will have access to the material from December 2016 through February 2017. Cost: \$129* per student

*Once students have paid for the course, completed the pre-test, final exam, and the post-course evaluation they will be eligible for a \$20 refund. The students must complete all criteria by Feb. 28, 2017 and have emailed the instructor, Heidi Wollaeger (wollaeg@anr.msu.edu), by Feb. 28, 2017 to receive the refund. If all conditions are met, the cost of the course is \$109.

NEW for Winter 2016:

There are four scholarships available for those that are interested in the course but do not currently have the financial means to take it. Greenhouse growers interested in the scholarship will be able to apply for it upon registering by writing a short paragraph about why you feel you should be awarded this scholarship and how you plan to use the information you learn in your business or professional endeavors. The applicants and winners will be kept confidential. The cost of the course will be \$39.99 for scholarship winners.

Cancellation policy: Due to the online nature of this course, students wishing to cancel their registration are subject to a \$129 fee.

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/events/greenhouse_and_horticultural_lighting_1?utm_source=Floriculture++MSU+Extension+News++10-14-16&utm_campaign=Floriculture+10-14-16&utm_medium=email



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Contact: Valarie Handy 231-499-0009

USDA Seeks Michigan Applications for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Loans and Grants

WASHINGTON, Oct. 18, 2016 - USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service Administrator Sam Ridders today encouraged rural small businesses and agricultural producers to apply for loans and grants to support renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.

"These projects create long-term, economic benefits for businesses and rural communities," Ridders said. "USDA's funding helps promote U.S. energy independence and supports the production of home-grown energy sources. I encourage all eligible applicants to take advantage of this opportunity. These investments can help a small business cut costs, expand operations, hire more workers and provide a better service to the communities in which they operate."

USDA is accepting Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) applications for: 1) energy audit and renewable energy development assistance grants, and 2) renewable energy system and energy efficiency guaranteed loans and grants. The application deadline for energy audit and renewable energy development assistance grants is Jan. 31, 2017.

Applications for renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvement grants of \$20,000 or less are due by Oct. 31, 2016, for the first funding cycle and March 31, 2017, for the second funding cycle. Applications for renewable energy system and energy efficiency grants of greater than \$20,000 and all combination grants and guaranteed loans are due by March 31, 2017. USDA will set aside 20 percent of the funds for grants of \$20,000 or less.

Applications for renewable energy system and energy efficiency grants or for loan/grant combinations that are received after March 31, 2017, will be considered in Fiscal Year 2018, which starts Oct. 1, 2017. Guaranteed loan applications will be reviewed and processed when received, with periodic competitions. For additional information, contact the USDA energy coordinator for your state, or see page 71689 of the October 18, 2016 Federal Register.

Eligible applicants for renewable energy system and energy efficiency loans and grants include agricultural producers and rural small businesses, which may include tribal business entities, rural electric cooperatives and public power entities. Renewable energy sources include wind, solar, renewable biomass (including anaerobic digesters), small hydro-electric, ocean, geothermal or hydrogen derived from these renewable resources. Eligible applicants for energy audit and renewable energy development assistance grants include State, tribal or local governments; institutions of higher education; and rural electric cooperatives and public power entities.

Committed to the future of rural communities.

Congress created the REAP program in the 2002 Farm Bill and reauthorized it in the 2014 Farm Bill with guaranteed funding of no less than \$50 million annually for the duration of the five- year bill. Nationwide, USDA has helped finance more than 12,000 REAP projects since 2009. When fully operational, these projects will generate or save enough energy to power more than 750,000 homes annually, and replace more than 36 million barrels of oil annually.

Since 2009, USDA Rural Development (@USDARD) has invested nearly \$13 billion to start or expand nearly 112,000 rural businesses; helped 1.1 million rural residents buy homes; funded nearly 9,200 community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care facilities; and helped bring high-speed Internet access to nearly 6 million rural residents and businesses. USDA also has invested \$31.3 billion in

963 electric projects that have financed more than 185,000 miles of transmission and distribution lines serving 4.6 million rural residents. For more information, visit www.usda.gov/results.

To read more about USDA's investments in rural America and its successful turnaround, visit USDA's entry on Medium.com, Rural America Is Back in Business

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD).

MFGC Submits Comments to APHIS on Importation of Growing Media

September 26, 2016

Dear Mr. Aley:

The Michigan Floriculture Growers Council (MFGC) is the statewide voice for Michigan floriculture growers, identifying and addressing grower issues and threats to profitability. On behalf of the MFGC, I am writing to vehemently oppose amending the regulations governing the importation of orchid plants in a growing media of the genera Phalaenopsis and Cymbidium from the Republic of Korea. The proposal to add them to the list of plants in a media that may be imported into the continental United States will negatively impact our industry. No growing media from the Republic of Korea, no matter if it is subject to specified growing, inspection, and certification requirements, can be considered safe because of the pests and fungi that might be present.

While we appreciate the request from the Republic of Korea, we do not believe these plants and the growing media can be imported under any condition, without resulting in the introduction into, or the dissemination within, the United States of a plant pest or noxious weed. History confirms the risk of plant pests and noxious weed introduction is too high and would be detrimental to the capabilities of the floriculture industry in Michigan to recover from such an introduction.

Michigan's 454 commercial growers show an expanded wholesale value of over \$405 million dollars. We can ill afford to have our industry jeopardized by the importation of these orchid plants in the proposed growing media from the Republic of Korea. Even if the plants are inspected and found free of evidence of plant pests we do not believe the leeway of inspection 30 days prior to the exportation of the plants is appropriate. Currently, orchid plants of the genera Cymbidium and Phalaenopsis may only be imported into the United States from the Republic of Korea as bare root plants, this has been an appropriate and successful way of transporting the plants. Why would USDA approve allowing even a "medium risk plant" that could potentially bring foreign moths, slugs, and fungi to the U.S., and damage our industry?

While USDA determined that the application of the measures required under § 319.37-8(e) will prevent the introduction or dissemination of plant pests into the United States, we are not the least bit assured. PLEASE DO NOT amend the regulations in § 319.37-8(e) by adding Cymbidium spp. and Phalaenopsis spp. plants from the Republic of Korea to the list of plants established in an approved growing media that may be imported into the United States.

Michigan growers are number one in the nation for Begonia hanging baskets, Geranium hanging baskets (cuttings), Geranium hanging baskets (Seeds), Impatiens hanging baskets, New Guinea Impatiens baskets, Pansy/Viola hanging baskets, Petunias hanging baskets, Potted Geraniums seed, and Potted New Guinea Impatiens. We believe this decision could negatively impact our \$405-million-dollar industry. Therefore, we respectfully request the Office of Management and Budget review this proposed rule. The negative economic effects of this action on Michigan floriculture growers is extremely high, therefore we respectfully request APHIS NOT amend the rule to allow the importation of Phalaenopsis and Cymbidium orchid plants in a growing medium from the Republic of Korea.

Sincerely,
William Tuinier, President
Michigan Floriculture Growers Council

SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendars! Ottawa County MSU Extension will be hosting a retirement reception for Senior Extension Educator Tom Dudek on Thursday, December 1, 2016 from 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. The reception will be held in the Main Conference Room of the Ottawa County Fillmore Complex located at 12220 Fillmore Street, West Olive, Michigan.

Tom's Extension career began in 1978. Since 1998 his work has focused on the nursery and greenhouse industries in West Michigan. In the past he had also served vegetable growers and other horticulture sectors in the region. Tom has been the recipient of many honors and awards, including the prestigious MSU Distinguished Staff Award in 2011. Throughout his years with Extension he has provided exceptional educational programming and outreach to the industries he has served.

We hope you will join us in celebrating Tom's many professional accomplishments and the goodwill he has helped build for MSU Extension. More details will be forthcoming.

If you have photos or memories from Tom's career for a display at the reception, please send them as soon as possible to Mary Frein at frein@msu.edu.

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