

## Crop Production

### Crop Briefs

#### Spokeswoman hired to tout health benefits of apples

To help spread the word about the health benefits of apples, the Michigan Apple Committee has announced the addition of a nutrition expert who will serve as an official spokeswoman. Judy MacNeill, the wellness director of Alpena Regional Medical Center, will address health issues on behalf of the organization. MacNeill is a registered dietician, a certified adult weight management specialist and a certified diabetes educator. Before working for Alpena Regional Medical Center as the wellness director, MacNeill served as the outpatient clinical dietician specializing in diabetes, cardiovascular and obesity treatment. She also owned a personal trainer business that provided in-home nutrition and fitness consulting services for individuals in northeast Michigan. For more on health benefits of apples, see the MAC Web site at [www.michiganapples.com/health](http://www.michiganapples.com/health).

#### Disaster assistance available for crops frozen in 2007

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has granted Michigan's request for frost and freeze assistance. Michigan farmers in several counties who have faced weather-related crop losses are now eligible for federal disaster assistance. The USDA designation addresses 29 Michigan counties

that experienced extreme frost and freeze conditions from April 4 to June 13, 2007. The weather conditions devastated crop yields across the state, particularly impacting fruit, vegetables, and other weather-sensitive crops. The 29 primary counties receiving disaster declaration due to frost and freeze damage and losses are Alger, Allegan, Antrim, Benzie, Berrien, Cass, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Delta, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Gratiot, Hillsdale, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Kalkaska, Kent, Leelanau, Manistee, Marquette, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Otsego, Ottawa, Presque Isle, Schoolcraft and Van Buren. A total of 32 other contiguous counties are also eligible. Farmers should contact their local or county FSA offices for more information. A list of offices is available online at [www.fsa.usda.gov/mi/st.html](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mi/st.html).

#### Michigan Forage Council to hold annual meeting

The Michigan Forage Council will have its annual meeting at 10 a.m. on Jan. 12 at Smith Hall on the Clinton County Fairgrounds in St. Johns. This event will feature a program for producers interested in all facets of forage production and grazing practices. Featured topics include: Grass-Based Dairy Management, Utilizing Poultry Litter and Other Soil Nutrient Alternatives, Economics of Pasture Irrigation, Slurry Seeding

Research, Alfalfa Insect Management Update, Cellulosic Ethanol Futures, and an update on the Kellogg Biological Station Grass-Based Dairy Project. Registration begins at 9 a.m. and is \$15 for members and \$25 for nonmembers. Questions can be directed to MFC President Craig Newland at [newlandseed@sbcglobal.net](mailto:newlandseed@sbcglobal.net).

#### Fruit survey summarized for pears, plums

Results from the 2006 Michigan Fruit Survey have been compiled for pears and plums. This inventory of commercial fruit farms was conducted by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Michigan Field Office. There were 210 pear and 185 plum growers at the end of the 2006 season. Pear trees covered 800 acres at the end of 2006, down 100 acres since 2003. There were 37 acres of pears planted from 2004 to 2006. Oceana, Mason, and Van Buren counties had more than half of the pear acreage. Bartletts accounted for 83% of all land in pears. There were 750 acres of plums at the end of 2006, down 150 acres from three years earlier. More information is at [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov). Select Michigan under Statistics by State to access the Michigan internet page. In the list of Michigan Publications, choose Michigan Rotational Surveys to find the Fruit Inventory 2006-07 information.

## Michigan dry bean production dips

Michigan's 2007 dry bean production is estimated at 3.02 million cwt., down 26% from 4.09 million cwt. in 2006, according to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Michigan Field Office.

Harvested area, at 195,000 acres, was 9% below 2006. The yield was 1,550 pounds per acre, down 350 pounds from last season.

Dry conditions from mid-June to the beginning of August reduced yield. Harvest began the first week of September for early planted fields and was mostly completed by mid-October.

U.S. dry bean production is forecast at 25.2 million cwt. for 2007, virtually unchanged from the October forecast but 4% above the 2006 production.

Harvested acreage is forecast at 1.48 million acres, 1% above the last forecast but 4% below the previous year's acreage.

The average U.S. yield is forecast at 1,708 pounds per acre, a decrease of 19 pounds from the October forecast, but 131 pounds above the 2006 yield.

Production increased from a year ago for large lima, baby lima, pinto, light red kidney, black and large chickpeas, while production decreased from a year ago for navy, great northern, small white, dark red kidney, pink, small red, cranberry, blackeye and small chickpeas.

Monsanto supports the work of the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan (CMPM) and congratulates them on their 15 years of hard work developing new markets and new uses for Michigan's corn crop while educating consumers, farmers and the media about the many uses of corn.

Since Monsanto stands behind the state's corn check-off, we chose to support the distribution of their annual research report. We think you will appreciate the time and resources the CMPM puts towards traditional livestock markets and also towards new uses and market opportunities for corn.

*"We hope you will join us in congratulating the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan on a job well done and ask that you support them in their upcoming referendum (January 28-February 8) for five more years of hard work, growth, and development of the corn industry!"*

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