



U.P. Ag Connections Newsletter

February 2023

Agricultural News from MSU Extension and AgBioResearch

Volume 27 Issue 2

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Upcoming MI Ag Ideas to Grow With

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension invites you to participate in the 2023 MI Ag Ideas to Grow With, a conference to be held virtually Feb. 27 - March 10, 2023, during the first two weeks of ANR Month. This unique event encompasses many aspects of the agricultural industry.

This two-week-long educational experience features tracks focused on animal agriculture, crop production, fruit and vegetable production, irrigation and drainage, farm business management, farm-to-school, and the environment. Sessions will be held using the Zoom platform. More detailed information can be found on the MI Ag Ideas to Grow With conference website, with more information being added regularly. Visit: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/miagideas/>.

February 27 - March 10, 2023

Online Via Zoom

Session tracks will focus on:

Animal Agriculture

Daily at 6 p.m. from February 27-March 2 and March 6 - 9

Community Food Systems

Thursday and Fridays at Noon, March 2, 3, 9, 10

Environmental

Daily at 2 p.m. from March 6-10

Farm Business Management for Beginners

Wednesdays at 10 a.m., March 1 and 8

March 1 at 11 a.m.

Farm Stress and Well Being

March 8 at 11 a.m.

Field Crops

February 28 from 8 a.m. to Noon

Fruit

Daily at Noon from February 27-March 2

Preserving MI Harvest

February 28 at 6 p.m.

March 3 at Noon

March 9 at Noon

Vegetable

Daily at 9 a.m. from March 6-10

Water Day: Managing Irrigation and Water

February 27 from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

The USDA Agriculture Mediation Program: A Tool for Resolving Conflicts on the Farm Introduction

By James DeDecker, MSU UPREC

Farming is full of opportunity and risk, be it physical, financial, emotional or otherwise. Individual ideas or an uneven balance of those opportunities and risks among partners in a farm operation, or members of a farm family, often leads to conflict. A change in circumstances, like a down/up-turn in the farm economy, addition or loss of an off-farm job, farm succession, marriage, disability or death in the family, can quickly bring things to a head and leave everyone struggling to see a productive path forward. If/when your farm is faced with difficult decisions and disagreement about how to proceed, know that there is professional help available from the USDA-FSA Certified Mediation Program. The rest of this article is copied from a national [FSA fact sheet highlighting the "Certified Mediation Program"](#). I've added some detail at the end regarding how to request services and the lack of cost to participants in Michigan.

Program Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Certified Mediation Program makes grants to state-designated entities that provide alternative dispute resolution through mediation to agricultural producers, their creditors (as applicable), persons directly affected by the actions of USDA, and any other persons involved in covered issues for which mediation services are provided by a Certified Mediation Program. In mediation, a trained, impartial mediator helps participants review and discuss their conflicts, identify options to resolve disputes and agree on solutions. Mediation helps to avoid expensive and time-consuming administrative appeals and/or litigation. These grants are administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

How Mediation Works

USDA program participants are offered the opportunity to request mediation prior to a formal administrative appeal. If this option is requested, some state programs are able to provide assistance to prepare participants for the mediation session, which is held at a time and place convenient to all parties. Unlike a judge or arbitrator, the mediator has no decision-making authority and is present only to help participants discuss and explore their issues in a useful, non-confrontational manner. Successful mediation is based on the cooperation and involvement of all participants. Mediation can be accomplished in one meeting or may take several sessions depending on the complexity of the issues and the number of participants. If an agreement is not reached, the case is closed, and all parties remain free to pursue other available administrative appeals and/or legal action.

Mediation Benefits

Successful mediation benefits participants in the following ways: Mediation may resolve disputes within a participant's financial means, providing a low-cost alternative to appeals or often expensive litigation. Mediation may reduce stress caused by lengthy litigation. While it can take years for a case to filter through the courts, mediation generally takes only a few meetings to complete.

What can be Mediated

- Agricultural loans, regardless of whether the loans are made or guaranteed by USDA or made by a third party.
- Wetland determinations.
- Compliance with farm programs, conservation programs, and the National Organic Program established under the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990.
- Rural water loan programs.
- Grazing on National Forest System lands.
- Pesticides.
- Lease issues, including land leases and equipment leases.
- Family farm transition.
- Farmer-neighbor disputes.
- Other issues as the Secretary or the head of the Agriculture Department of each participating state considers appropriate for better serving the agricultural community and persons eligible for mediation.

In addition, Certified Mediation Programs may provide credit counseling prior to the initiation of any mediation involving the USDA or unrelated to any ongoing dispute or mediation in which USDA is a party.

Requesting Services & Cost to Participants

The USDA-FSA Certified Mediation Program is available to Michigan residents free of charge through the Michigan Community Mediation Association (MCMA). In Michigan, first contact the MCMA. From there, your request will be forwarded to USDA and local service providers. In the U.P., these services are provided by Marquette Alger Resolution Service (Marquette and Alger Co.) and The Upper Peninsula Commission for Area Progress (UPCAP) (Delta, Baraga, Dickinson, Gogebic, Houghton, Iron, Keweenaw, Menominee, Ontonagon, Schoolcraft Co.).

Michigan Community Mediation Association

Phone: (800) 616-7863

Email: micommunitymediationassoc@gmail.com

Website: www.MICommunityMediation.org

2023
U.P. Food Summit

Save The Date!

Monday, March 27
10AM – 4PM

The Northern Center
on the campus of
Northern Michigan University
Marquette, MI

Everyone interested in supporting a socially, economically, and environmentally resilient food system is welcome.

Contact Sarah at 906.273.2287 for more information

Market Report

Choice Steers	\$120-\$158 per 100 lbs.
Holstein Steers	\$130-\$142 per 100 lbs.
Hogs	\$47-\$54 per 100 lbs.
Lambs	\$100-\$187 per 100 lbs.
Cull cows	\$75-\$90 per 100 lbs.
Calves	\$75-\$120 per 100 lbs.
Goats	\$250-\$350 per 100 lbs.

Breeding and Feeder Animals

Grade Holstein cows top	\$1700/head
Grade Holstein bred heifers top	\$1900/head

Feed Prices across the U.P.

	Avg. \$/cwt	Avg. \$/ton	Price Range
Corn	\$17.92	\$358.40	\$265-560
Soymeal	\$29.74	\$594.75	\$540-650
Oats	\$17.69	\$353.75	\$319-416
Barley	\$13.81	\$276.25	\$200-386
Average price/100 wt. for 1 ton lots			



**Funding Your Farm:
Selling Your Story in a Business Plan**

Program Overview Where and When?

Creating a business plan is an important part of managing a farm business. A business plan helps to evaluate alternatives, identify market opportunities, and communicate ideas to potential lenders and business partners.

In this webinar series we'll explore those key uses of a business plan and how to create this valuable document for your farm. We'll also explore how understanding what lenders look for in a business plan can aid your farm when seeking loan financing.

In addition to the webinar sessions, MSU Extension will be hosting "business planning office hours." These online sessions will provide an opportunity to work with business planning experts from lending institutions and MSU Extension.

Sessions are intended to help answer questions, review business plan drafts, or practice your business plan pitch! More information on office hours and how to sign up will be provided during the live webinar sessions.

How Much?
The program is free to anyone who registers.

Thursdays from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 2 - 23, 2023

Online Via Zoom

Register:
<https://events.nnr.msu.edu/fundingfarm23/>

For more information:
Jon LaPorte | laportej@msu.edu | 269-414-6418

Program Partners:
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Greetings Green Industry Personnel and/or Professionals!

As a Green Industry Professional are you interested in expanding your knowledge and skills in diagnosing plant concerns and issues? The MSU Extension Consumer Horticulture Team is putting on a Diagnostic Academy that is sure to fit the bill. Topics include understanding the diagnostic process and identifying and solving insect, weed, and disease issues. Hone your skills and gain confidence during this two-part series. Classroom sessions will be coupled with hands-on learning in a garden setting, giving participants a first-hand understanding of the diagnostic process

Join us at the MSU North Farm in Chatham, MI on a consecutive Thursday and Friday, July 27 and 28, 2023.

This training series will not be offered as individual sessions and is free due to generous funding from United States Department of Agriculture - National Institute of Food and Agriculture [grant no 2021-70006-35450]. Persons interested should be committed to the MSU Extension mission and able to become an active volunteer responder. For those who are not Extension Master Gardeners, there are limited spaces for people working in the green industry. If you have any additional questions about Diagnostic Academy, please contact Mary Yelland at yelland1@msu.edu or Rebecca Krans, kransr@msu.edu.

Applications are due by February 15th. We anticipate letting everyone know the status of their application in early March. Apply here: https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ex1i8DkX1xldCl0.



Hay Production 101

Tuesdays and Thursdays

February 21 - March 9, 2023

7-8:30 p.m. ET

Online via Zoom

Hay Production 101 is primarily aimed at first time and beginning hay growers, but anyone wanting to increase their knowledge of hay production is welcome. The virtual course is designed for participants to build a foundation of knowledge about growing hay. We will cover a variety of topics aimed at the unique challenges to growing hay in Michigan and the Great Lakes Region. Because of the systematic structure of the course and the importance of building steps of knowledge, participants should plan to attend all sessions. The MSU Extension teaching team is led by Forage Specialist Kim Cassida with other Specialists and Educators contributing.

Cost: \$85

2023 Session Schedule

- Tuesday, Feb 21 – Hay Industry Overview; Matching Hay Species to Farm Goals
- Thursday, Feb 23 – Soil Fertility and Health Management
- Tuesday, Feb 28 – Field Establishment and Renovation
- Thursday, March 2 - Harvest and Post-Harvest Management
- Tuesday, March 7- Managing Pests: Weeds, Insects, and Disease
- Thursday, March 9 - Cost of Production & Marketing

Please note the order of session topics may be modified throughout the course based on speaker availability, but all courses will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7-8:30 p.m. ET. Sessions will be recorded and available to all registered participants.

CCA credits are available for all participants for all sessions. RUP credits are available for the March 7 pest session for Michigan residents only. Participants must attend the live sessions for the entire 90 minutes to be awarded credit hours. Partial credit will not be awarded. Credits cannot be awarded to those who view the recorded sessions.

Register: [Event Summary for Hay Production 101 | ANR Events Management System \(msu.edu\)](#)

COLD STORAGE GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR U.P. FARMERS

The U.P. Food Exchange, in partnership with Upper Peninsula Food as Medicine Team and Upper Peninsula Commission for Area Progress, is excited to announce a grant opportunity for area farms to build cold storage facilities for storing fresh produce.

The grant program, funded by the Superior Health Foundation, will award up to \$14,000 to one farm from each of the U.P.'s three regional planning districts. Funds can be used for the materials and labor to build new or additional facilities, as well as access to technical assistance for construction and food safety training. This funding will support the increase of local food production by ensuring that farms have a place to safely store produce until it can be sold.

"Farm debt is a huge problem across the country. Even small-scale farming requires taking on a high amount of debt that is difficult to pay back, especially with an income that varies seasonally," said Sarah Monte, outreach director at the Marquette Food Co-op and UPFE member. "UPFE is thrilled to be working on a project that helps minimize or remove a financial barrier for our area farms. All of us in the community benefit when local farms succeed."

Adequate cold storage facilities are essential for farms to be able to expand their operations. Without cold storage, harvesting must be done hours before the delivery, limiting the farm's ability to take on more accounts or attend more farmers markets. The facilities also extend the agricultural sales season by providing space for keeping storage crops that can be sold well into the winter, directly supporting the growth of the U.P. farm economy and increasing access to local food for all residents.

"Currently, 1 in 7 individuals or approximately 14 percent of U.P. residents are food insecure. With the national average at 10.5 percent, the local numbers are significant," said Tammy Rosa, nutrition program manager at UPCAP. "UPCAP participates in many community initiatives throughout the region and is very excited to be a part of this collaboration of partners working to improve the food security of residents with economic barriers, while building a stronger regional food system."

- **Applications open January 31, 2023**
- **Application Deadline is March 1, 2023 at 5pm**
- **Awards Announced March 15, 2023**
- **Project Completion Deadline is September 30, 2023**

To learn more and to access the grant application, visit upfoodexchange.com/cold-storage-grant-program. Questions can be directed to info@upfoodexchange.com or 906-225-0671 x723.

This grant is tied to the U.P. Prescription for Health program, in which physicians "prescribe" fresh produce vouchers to individuals at risk or diagnosed with a chronic health condition that are also experiencing economic barriers to purchasing food. To learn more about Prescription for Health, visit <http://upcap.org/program/food-as-medicine>

USDA Value Added Producer Grant Workshop

By Parker Jones, Michigan State University Extension Product Center

I wanted to share some information on the USDA Value-Added Producer grant. The planning grant sub-type makes available up to \$75,000 per producer for activities like feasibility studies or business plans. The working capital grant sub-type can fund up to \$250,000 in processing costs, marketing and advertising expenses and some inventory and salary expenses. Working capital grant projects over \$50,000 will require a feasibility study to be completed prior to funding. Usually there is a 1:1 match for grant funds, but this will be formally announced when the 2023 grant opens.

The USDA Rural Development office is partnering with the MSU Product Center to hold educational workshops across the state. So, if you're interested in learning more, join us for one of these trainings in the UP!

- **February 14, 2-4 p.m. Waishkey Bay Farm, 10135 Brimley, MI 49715**
- **February 15, 9-11 a.m., Northern Initiatives, 101 W. Washington St., Suite 9, Marquette, MI 49855**
- **February 15, 1:30-3:30 p.m., MSU Extension Houghton County, 1500 Birch St., Hancock, MI 49930**

The workshop is free, but registration is required: <https://events.anr.msu.edu/event.cfm?eventID=ED07E06059D9F8403CE268464F2AF8F6D9D8278CBD6F03B3D0725C87D51D2D85>

Or search by going to [events.anr.msu](https://events.anr.msu.edu) and search for USDA Value added

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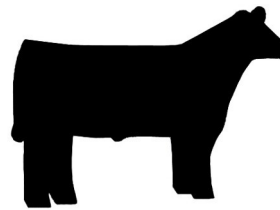
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Robert Filhart, Owner (989)330-6005

Haley Filhart, Owner (989)430-2055

Classifieds

WANTED: Pasture for 25-35 cow calf pairs for the summer of 2023 in the Eastern UP. Will consider a custom grazing arrangement as well. Call Ben at (989)370-3570.

FOR SALE: Mixed Grass Hay in Escanaba, 4x5 bales. Call Bill Johnson 906-630-4945 or 906-786-4878.

FOR SALE: Hay, mixed round bales, 700# stored inside. Also small square bales of straw. Call Jim Myers (906)399-1649 or (906) 466-2672.

FOR SALE: small square bales of straw and 2nd & 3rd crop hay bales. Call Marenger Potato Farm (906)384-6587.

FOR SALE: 1st crop alfalfa baleage. Call Jim Dalgord at (906) 644-2107.

FOR SALE: Mixed Hay round bales, 700#, \$20. Call Alan or Karen Raynard @ (906) 647-6697, Pickford.

FOR SALE: Black Wagyu Bulls, forage fed. For more information contact Paul Naasz, MSU UPREC, Chatham (906)439-5114 Ext. 2.

FOR SALE: Hay, 5x6 round bales legume grass hay, stored inside. Call Jon and Donna Ahlberg, Iron River (906)265-9333.

Looking for animals to custom graze on 120 acres. Henry Miller 2351 W 6 Mile Rd, Sault Ste Marie, 49783

FOR SALE: Simmental Bulls, mature and young, registered and non-registered. Call Duane Kolpack (906) 362-6862.

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If you do not wish to receive this publication, please contact Michelle at colema98@msu.edu or (906) 439-5114

MCA/MSU BULL EVALUATION

Open House.....Saturday, March 4th, 2023

Sale.....Saturday, March 18th, 2023



MIBulls.com

Remus, MI