



GROWING TOGETHER

CONFERENCE

2025 Guidebook

FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 2
MUSKEGON



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IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Dial 911 then alert the nearest MFB or hotel staff for assistance.

WIRELESS ACCESS

Network: Guest Wifi at the Convention Center

CONNECT WITH US!

#GrowingTogether2025 #MichiganFarmBureau



*For an electronic version of this event guide, scan the QR code or visit **michfb.com/growing-together**.*






AGENDA AT A GLANCE

Friday, February 28

- 10:00am Registration Opens *VanDyk Pre-Function*
11:00am Young Farmer and Promotion & Education
Chair Luncheon *Delta Hotel Muskegon & Mona Lake*
Sponsored by:  **Member Benefits & Relations**
- 11:30am Collegiate Member Luncheon *Delta Hotel White Lake*
1:00pm Tours Depart
6:00pm Tour Dinners *Downtown Muskegon*
WEAR YOUR CONFERENCE T-SHIRT!

Saturday, March 1

- 7:00am Registration Opens *VanDyk Pre-Function*
7:45am Breakfast and Program *VanDyk Ballroom BC*
Sponsored by:  **GreenStone®**
FARM CREDIT SERVICES
- 9:30am District Collaboration Meetings *See page 3 for locations*
10:30am Break
10:45am 45-Minute Breakout Sessions *See pages 4-5 for session info*
11:30pm Lunch and Program *VanDyk Ballroom BC*
Sponsored by:  **Consumers Energy**
Count on Us®
- 1:15pm 45-Minute Breakout Sessions *See pages 6-7 for session info*
2:00pm Break
2:30pm 30-Minute Roundtable Breakouts *See pages 8-9 for session info*
3:00pm Break
3:10pm 30-Minute Breakout Sessions *See pages 10-11 for session info*
3:40pm Break
4:00pm 30-Minute Breakout Sessions *See pages 12-13 for session info*
5:00pm Reception *VanDyk Pre-Function*
5:45pm Dinner and Keynote Program *VanDyk Ballroom BC*
Sponsored by:  **AGROLIQUID**
- 8:30-11:00pm Saturday Night Entertainment *Delta Hotel Lakeshore Ballroom*
See page 14 for more info

Sunday, March 2 *Optional Programming*

- 7:00am Registration Opens *VanDyk Pre-Function*
7:00am Morning Devotions *VanDyk Ballroom BC*
8:15am Breakfast for Workshop Attendees *VanDyk Ballroom BC*
9:15-11:00am Sunday Morning Workshops *See pages 14-15 for workshop info*
FOR PRE-REGISTERED ATTENDEES ONLY

DISTRICT COLLABORATION MEETINGS

District 1

VANDYK BALLROOM D

District 2

VANDYK BALLROOM A-1

District 3

DELTA HOTEL WHITE LAKE

District 4

DELTA HOTEL MONA LAKE

District 5

VANDYK BALLROOM A-2

District 6

DELTA HOTEL TWIN LAKE

District 7

VANDYK BALLROOM A-3

District 8

VANDYK BALLROOM BC

District 9

DELTA HOTEL FOX LAKE

District 10

DELTA HOTEL WOLF LAKE

District 11

DELTA HOTEL MUSKEGON LAKE

District 12

DELTA HOTEL DUCK LAKE

COMPLIMENTARY HEAD SHOTS

Opportunities to take complimentary head shots will be provided on Saturday during these time frames:

📍 VANDYK PRE-FUNCTION

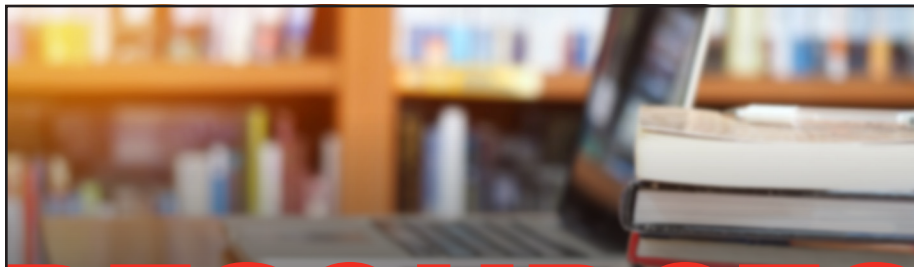
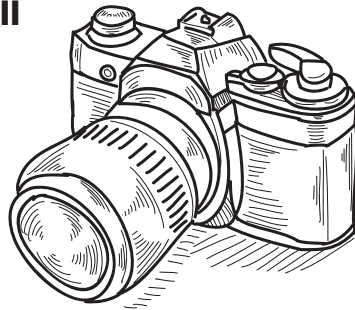
10:30-10:45am during break

2:00-2:30pm during break

3:00-3:10pm during break

3:40-4:00pm during break

5:00-5:45pm during reception



RESOURCES

Visit the P&E online store for
books, trinkets & more!

www.miagclassroom.org

45-MINUTE BREAKOUT SESSIONS 10:45AM

Every Acre Counts: Maximizing NRCS Programs

*Darcy Lipsky, U.S. Department of Agriculture District Conservationist
and Sanilac County Farm Bureau President*

📍 VANDYK BALLROOM A-1

Dive deep into USDA NRCS programs to learn about supplemental revenue when working to adopt new practices on your farm. Learn how government programs can boost bottom-line profitability and cost-assistance for adopting on-farm conservation practices.

Foundational Elements of Farm Financing (tiered)

Jennifer Whitford and Courtney Ross, GreenStone Farm Credit Services

📍 VANDYK BALLROOM A-2

Join us for a basic introduction to farm finance and how it applies to your operation. Whether starting your own farm or expanding your current business, this is the session for you! GreenStone will be leading two sessions — check out *Understanding Your Financial Metric* this afternoon.

Bringing Accurate Ag Books Alive

Michelle Blodgett and Alexis Feldpausch, Michigan Ag in the Classroom

📍 VANDYK BALLROOM A-3

Explore ag-accurate books, complementing lesson ideas and hands-on activities to bring agriculture to life for your K-5 students. Topics include pollinators, school gardens, poultry and eggs, dairy and more. We will also discuss tactics for connecting with schools in your community.

Understanding Culture, Access and Belonging in Agriculture

Dr. Quentin Tyler, MSU Extension Director; Dr. Antomia Farrell, MSU College of Ag and Natural Resources Office of Culture, Access and Belonging Director; and Beth Stuever, MSU Extension Director of Public Affairs

📍 DELTA HOTEL MUSKEGON LAKE

Equitable and inclusive communication is key to effectively addressing contemporary challenges requiring your leadership. This session offers a fresh perspective on culture, access and belonging, including best practices and an opportunity to learn and grow through scenarios similar to what leaders nationwide are experiencing.

Celebrate Your Farm's Legacy: Methods for Preserving and Honoring Your Farm Family Story

Emily Klingbeil, Green Meadow Farms

📍 DELTA HOTEL MONA LAKE

Learn how Michigan's centennial farm families tell their story and document their farms' history. Hear how to get involved in local history initiatives, connect with your community and preserve your older farm buildings. Bring your farm's history to life and celebrate its place in your community!

Equipment Loss Prevention: Safety and Preventative Maintenance (tiered)

Tom Piepkow, Farm Bureau Insurance Risk & Safety Management Representative

📍 DELTA HOTEL TWIN LAKE

Explore crucial strategies for farm safety and preventative maintenance. Reduce losses in equipment like combines, choppers, skid steers and loaders. Equip yourself with insights for protecting your resources and ensuring a safer, more productive harvest. Farm Bureau Insurance will be leading two sessions — check out *Breaking Down Your Farm's Emergency Action Plan* this afternoon.

Planning and Zoning's Impact on Your Community (repeats)

Ryan Coffey Hoag, MSU Extension Newaygo County Land Use Educator

📍 DELTA HOTEL WHITE LAKE

Learn about the process and importance of planning and zoning decisions in local communities. Attendees will then apply these principles in short, hands-on exercises that mimic participation in the process, ending with practical options and encouragement to engage in and lead local policy.

Mending the Stress Fence

Misty Oebel and Dr. Remington Rice, Health and Farm Stress MSU Extension Educators

📍 VANDYK BALLROOM D

This interactive presentation is designed as a conversation on topics like stress, suicide and resiliency. Centering on how to recognize the signs of stress, we will discuss how to build resiliency in our homes and communities.

LUNCH KEYNOTE SPEAKER: TREY MALONE

Farming Forward: Michigan Agriculture in 2040

Join Dr. Trey Malone, Boehlje Endowed Chair for Managerial Economics in Agribusiness at Purdue University, as he explores the future of Michigan farming.



Drawing on his expertise in agribusiness entrepreneurship and agri-food supply chains, Dr. Malone will examine the trends shaping agriculture today and those poised to define the next 15 years.

With insights backed by over 60 published research articles and funding from organizations like the National Science Foundation and USDA, this keynote will uncover the exciting innovations, challenges, and opportunities awaiting Michigan farmers in 2040. Don't miss this forward-looking discussion about the future of agriculture.

45-MINUTE BREAKOUT SESSIONS 1:15PM

Necropsy Philosophy: Getting the Most Out of Death

Dodd Sledge, DVM, PhD, DACVP, MSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

VANDYK BALLROOM A-1

Veterinarians and farmers know death is part of life — and an opportunity to investigate what diseases may have been present in life. Necropsies are powerful tools to help farmers confront and manage disease within herds or evaluate how to improve animal care. Still, necropsies have limitations. This session will address why a necropsy may be recommended, what you should and shouldn't expect to learn, and the role veterinarians play in interpreting and using the information necropsies provide.

Understanding Your Financial Metrics (tiered)

Jennifer Whitford and Courtney Ross, GreenStone Farm Credit Services

VANDYK BALLROOM A-2

Join us for a more in-depth look at farm financing. In this session we will focus on breaking down financial statements, generating ratios and learning why they are important.

Community Connections with Agriculture

Alysa Sanford and Katelyn Thompson, MFB State Promotion & Education Committee

VANDYK BALLROOM A-3

Explore innovative ways to connect with your community and foster a deeper appreciation for agriculture. County Farm Bureaus significantly enhanced their outreach efforts this year, forging stronger connections with local consumers. Delve into these successful projects, harvest your peers' valuable insights, and learn how to adapt these initiatives to boost your own community engagement!

When They Marry You for Your Benefits, and Not Just Health Insurance

Cathy McCune, Isabella County Farm Bureau President

DELTA HOTEL MUSKEGON LAKE

Explore the unique and vital roles farm spouses play in the farm's success and sustainability. We'll discuss balancing family life with farm responsibilities, managing the unexpected, and being the right support to keep the operation running smoothly. We'll share experiences, strategies and a few laughs about the challenges and rewards of being a true partner in life and business.

Diversify Farm Profits with Agritourism

Nicole Zaagman, Parkside Farm and Kent County Farm Bureau Board Member

DELTA HOTEL MONA LAKE

Agritourism was a foreign concept when Parkside Farm began in 2021, but in just three years it's evolved into an eight-acre ag destination! Learn ways to diversify your farm profits with offerings such as overnight stays, ag education, farm markets and tours. Nicole will share her best practices and inspire participants to take risks, set goals and persevere to achieve new prosperity through agritourism.

Breaking Down Your Farm's Emergency Action Plan (tiered)

Tom Piepkow, Farm Bureau Insurance Risk & Safety Management Representative

📍 DELTA HOTEL TWIN LAKE

Create an effective Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for your farm. Dive deeper into essential elements including emergency contacts, accurate location identification and implementing visual aids to improve employee safety. Learn how to prepare your team for a range of unexpected emergencies and promote a safeguard mindset for your workplace.

Planning and Zoning's Impact on Your Community (repeats)

Ryan Coffey Hoag, MSU Extension Newaygo County Land Use Educator

📍 DELTA HOTEL WHITE LAKE

Learn about the process and importance of planning and zoning decisions in local communities. Attendees will then apply these principles in short, hands-on exercises that mimic participation in the process, ending with practical options and encouragement to engage in and lead local policy.

Taming the Bullwhip: Navigating Uncertainty in Agricultural Supply Chains

Trey Malone, Purdue Univ. Boehlje Endowed Chair for Managerial Economics in Agribusiness

📍 VANDYK BALLROOM D

The "bullwhip effect" describes how small changes in consumer demand can create ripples — and even shocks — throughout the agricultural supply chain. In this interactive workshop, we'll explore the critical importance of understanding your end user, the role of international supply chains, and how input pricing affects your operation. Learn strategies to identify supply chain vulnerabilities, diversify sourcing, and align your business with customer needs.

Whether you're a farmer or an agribusiness professional, this session will help you anticipate challenges, make informed decisions, and build a more resilient operation.

A promotional poster for the 2025 Young Farmer Awards. The background is a stylized roller coaster track against a yellow, green, and blue gradient. The text is as follows:

2025 YOUNG FARMER
AWARDS

Application deadline:
March 12, 2025

Applications are available at
michfb.com/YFAwards

30-MINUTE ROUNDTABLE BREAKOUTS

Roundtable discussions allow for unstructured, open dialogue with other member peers on topics important to you all.

From Farm to Market: The Value-Added Advantage

 **VANDYK BALLROOM A-1**

Investigate how to enhance your products — whether through processing, packaging or branding — to capture higher prices and heighten consumer interest. Whether you're a seasoned pro or new to value-added ventures, come ready to exchange ideas and gain valuable insights into maximizing your products' potential and boost your bottom line!

Promotion & Education: Connecting and Impacting Your Local Communities

 **VANDYK BALLROOM A-2**

Come share strategies for effective community outreach and enhancing consumer engagement. Connect with other members over their recent events and brainstorm new ways to foster agricultural education in your community.

Sowing Seeds of Change: Returning to the Family Farm

 **VANDYK BALLROOM A-3**

Share stories, challenges and innovative ideas for tackling what can sometimes be both a financial and personal struggle to return to the family farm. Come ready to engage, ask questions and contribute to a vibrant conversation about the future of farming and the legacies we carry forward.

Members Become Movers: Empowering Involvement

 **DELTA HOTEL MUSKEGON LAKE**

Come together as Farm Bureau members to discuss how best to foster a culture of active engagement. Use this opportunity to discover how to enhance participation, empower members to take on leadership roles, and increase volunteerism.

Nourishing Communities: Tackling Hunger and Food Access

 **DELTA HOTEL MONA LAKE**

Engage in dynamic discussion about food security and local-level Harvest for All initiatives. Work together to devise new ways to fight food insecurity in your community.

Life in Sync: Achieving Balance Together

 **DELTA HOTEL TWIN LAKE**

Explore the concept of life balance in a supportive, collaborative environment. This session encourages you to share personal experiences, challenges and strategies for creating harmony in both your life's work and relationships. Join in to seek advice, offer insights or just connect with others along your journey.

Agritainment Marketing

📍 DELTA HOTEL WHITE LAKE

Join the fun with like-minded peers and discover how to offer effective agricultural activities that engage customers and attract repeat business. Dive into marketing, logistics and sustainability in this discussion around a fast-growing market.

Row Crop Marketing

📍 VANDYK CENTER BALLROOM D

Exchange effective strategies, tools and resources for marketing staple row crops like corn and soybeans. Learn what your fellow farmers are doing to increase their bottom lines with the latest digital marketing tools.



30-MINUTE BREAKOUTS 3:10PM

From the Field to Lansing: Where Policy Intersects with Your Farm (repeats)

Pierce Bennett, MFB Industry Relations Specialist; Nancy Nyquist, MFB Policy Specialist; and Theresa Sisung, MFB Industry Relations Specialist

📍 VANDYK BALLROOM A-1

MFB staff specialists will provide timely updates on Michigan-specific livestock and crop issues, with a focus on legislative measures impacting your farm business. This is your chance to get better informed about vital issues and legislative changes that could affect your operation.

Navigating the Lending Process to Help Grow Your Business

Jonathan LaPorte, MSU Extension Farm Business Management Educator

📍 VANDYK BALLROOM A-2

What benefits do loans really provide your farm business? How do you prepare to apply? What do lenders look for when reviewing a loan request? Get these answers and better understand how loans can help grow your farm business.

Come Build with Us! (repeats)

Katie Cooper, MFB Promotion & Education Specialist; Cody Baker, Michigan Ag in the Classroom Regional Ag Educator, Michelle Blodgett, Michigan Ag in the Classroom Manager

📍 VANDYK BALLROOM A-3

From fairs to classrooms to Project REDs, you'll find new and revamped hands-on activities for your local outreach programming, and return home with examples of fun new make-and-takes. Let's build together!

Agent Engagement: Working Together to End Hunger

Persis Sopariwala, Agent Charitable Fund Manager; Angela Shannon, Farm Bureau Insurance Agent; Audrey Carey, MFB Community Engagement Specialist; and Katelyn Packard, Washtenaw County Farm Bureau

📍 DELTA HOTEL MUSKEGON LAKE

Eager to fight hunger in your community? Learn how to magnify your Harvest for All efforts by collaborating with local Farm Bureau Insurance agents! This session covers several ways your Family of Companies fights hunger, and how building relationships with local agents can help you connect with resources and boost your hunger-relief efforts.

Farm Labor: Thinking Outside the Box (repeats)

Emily Klingbeil and Edgar Torres-Salinas, Great Lakes Ag Labor Services

📍 DELTA HOTEL MONA LAKE

Farm labor is nothing but hot topics. Learn how to address challenges in finding, keeping and managing farm labor, including the H-2A temporary worker program. Collaborate on best practices and resources for effective team development.

Your Grocery List for Mental Health, Sane Farming and Volunteer Retention *(repeats)*

Sarah Zastrow, Cultivate Balance and Midland County Farm Bureau Board Member

 DELTA HOTEL TWIN LAKE

Stabilize mood swings and afternoon crashes while balancing out lulls and ensuring everyone has the fuel to be at their best, whether on the farm, in the classroom or during a county Farm Bureau event! Whether you're wrangling toddlers or seniors, learn how your grocery list impacts your mental health.

Building Countywide Farm Networks

Katie Christie, Barry County Farm Bureau Promotion & Education Chair

 DELTA HOTEL WHITE LAKE

Join us to explore how a countywide consumer-friendly farm directory was created to connect local communities with farmers who sell directly to consumers. Learn about the process of setting up the website, gathering data, managing listings, and promoting the directory. We'll share insights into the challenges faced, successes achieved, and offer valuable lessons for creating similar community-driven projects.

Farm Safety and Fire Rescue: Protecting Michigan's Ag Community *(repeats)*

Jonathon Degen, Rural Rescue Educators

 VANDYK BALLROOM D


Join us to discuss the crucial importance of farm safety and the role of local fire departments in farm rescues. Through real-life case studies and practical recommendations, we'll empower attendees with the knowledge and tools needed to enhance farm safety and improve emergency response capabilities in Michigan's farm sector.

YF Awards Workshop *(repeats)*

MFB Staff and State Young Farmer Committee Members

 DELTA HOTEL BEAR LAKE

Unsure how to start applying for a Young Farmer award? Have an application started but want to polish your answers? Drop in to work with State Young Farmer Committee members and Michigan Farm Bureau staff eager to help whip your application into shape. (Applications are due March 12, 2025.)



 **MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU**

 **4-H Excellence in Agriculture**

NOMINATIONS DUE MARCH 15, 2025

 **MICHIGAN 4-H FOUNDATION**



30-MINUTE BREAKOUTS 4:00PM

From the Field to Lansing: Where Policy Intersects with Your Farm (repeats)

Pierce Bennett, MFB Industry Relations Specialist; Nancy Nyquist, MFB Policy Specialist; and Theresa Sisung, MFB Industry Relations Specialist

 **VANDYK BALLROOM A-1**

MFB staff specialists will provide timely updates on Michigan-specific livestock and crop issues, with a focus on legislative measures impacting your farm business. This is your chance to get better informed about vital issues and legislative changes that could affect your operation.

Alternatives to Financial Recordkeeping Software

Corey Clark, MSU Extension Farm Business Management Educator

 **VANDYK BALLROOM A-2**

As the landscape of financial software evolves, it's important to critically evaluate our options. In this session we'll compare common packages, including QuickBooks Online and PC Mars. We'll compare their relative strengths and weaknesses, and explore how to exploit their fullest potential.

Come Build with Us! (repeats)

Katie Cooper, MFB Promotion & Education Specialist; Cody Baker, Michigan Ag in the Classroom Regional Ag Educator, Michelle Blodgett, Michigan Ag in the Classroom Manager

 **VANDYK BALLROOM A-3**

From fairs to classrooms to Project REDs, you'll find new and revamped hands-on activities for your local outreach programming, and return home with examples of fun new make-and-takes. Let's build together!

Ag Retail Perspectives on Soil Health

Travis Christian, Nutrien Ag Solutions

 **DELTA HOTEL MUSKEGON LAKE**

The term "soil health" gets thrown around a lot and it's often hard to tell where buzzword meets substance. How are ag retailers defining soil health? And what trends can we expect to see around those definitions in the future?

Farm Labor: Thinking Outside the Box (repeats)

Emily Klingbeil and Edgar Torres-Salinas, Great Lakes Ag Labor Services

 **DELTA HOTEL MONA LAKE**

Farm labor is nothing but hot topics. Learn how to address challenges in finding, keeping and managing farm labor, including the H-2A temporary worker program. Collaborate on best practices and resources for effective team development.

Your Grocery List for Mental Health, Sane Farming and Volunteer Retention (repeats)

Sarah Zastrow, Cultivate Balance and Midland County Farm Bureau Board Member

 **DELTA HOTEL TWIN LAKE**

Stabilize mood swings and afternoon crashes while balancing out lulls and ensuring everyone has the fuel to be at their best, whether on the farm, in the classroom or during a county Farm Bureau event! Whether you're wrangling toddlers or seniors, learn how your grocery list impacts your mental health.

Bringing the Farm to School: Child Nutrition Market Opportunities

Cheyenne Liberti, Michigan Department of Education Farm to Program Consultant

📍 DELTA HOTEL WHITE LAKE

Did you know every public school in Michigan can receive grant funds to buy Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables and dry beans? Learn how the 10 Cents a Meal Program can support Michigan farmers — and how to build your capacity to launch or grow these marketing efforts. Experts from MDE, MSU Center for Regional Food Systems, and MSU Extension will answer your questions and help you connect with schools and childcare centers.

Farm Safety and Fire Rescue: Protecting Michigan's Ag Community (repeats)

Jonathon Degen, Rural Rescue Educators

📍 VANDYK BALLROOM D

Join us to discuss the crucial importance of farm safety and the role of local fire departments in farm rescues. Through real-life case studies and practical recommendations, we'll empower attendees with the knowledge and tools needed to enhance farm safety and improve emergency response capabilities in Michigan's farm sector.

YF Awards Workshop (repeats)

MFB Staff and State Young Farmer Committee Members

📍 DELTA HOTEL BEAR LAKE

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DINNER KEYNOTE SPEAKER: CHRIS KOCH

Chris Koch doesn't let limitations or obstacles stand in his way. Despite being born without arms and legs, Chris grew up like any other small-town kid — playing road hockey, causing mischief at school and helping on his family farm. Neither he nor his family treated his disability like a tragedy, and instead used it to fuel his dreams.

Today, Chris is a motivational speaker who inspires his audiences to continually challenge themselves and build the life they dream of. Chris loves sharing his story and spreading his message of, "If I Can..."

An avid traveler, marathoner, and farmer, his presentation reflects his full life. Simply put, Chris asks, "If I can do what I've done so far in my life, what's stopping others from doing the same?"



SATURDAY NIGHT ENTERTAINMENT

An evening of fun, games, and snack salad showdown! Join us for a casual and entertaining evening where fun and flavor take center stage! Whether you're looking to test your gaming skills, relax with fellow attendees, or create a snack masterpiece, this evening has it all.

 DELTA HOTEL LAKESHORE BALLROOM

Bingo Bonanza: Build Your Ultimate Snack Salad

Test your luck in a lively game of Bingo, but with a tasty twist! Each time you call "Bingo," you'll earn an extra scoop to add to your Snack Salad creation. Choose from a delightful array of sweet, savory, crunchy, and delicious toppings to craft your own unique mix. Once Bingo wraps up, your Snack Salad will be judged by our panel of celebrity judges based on creativity, taste, and presentation. Will your salad reign supreme?

Card Game Corner

Looking for some friendly competition? Challenge your colleagues to classic card games like poker or rummy, or try your hand at something new. Whether you're an expert or a beginner, it's a great way to bond over a deck of cards.

Board Game Blast

Rediscover your favorite board games or dive into a new one! From strategic games to fun party classics, there's a game for everyone, making it the perfect way to connect with fellow attendees.

Relax & Mingle

If games aren't your thing, feel free to kick back and relax. Mingle with other attendees, share stories, and make new connections in a cozy, welcoming space.

SUNDAY MORNING WORKSHOPS

For pre-registered attendees only

Real Colors Assessment

Betty Jo Krosnicki, MSU Extension Supervising Educator

 VANDYK BALLROOM A-1

Participants in this session will take a brief assessment to help them uncover their dominant "color." Then we'll dig deeper to learn how your temperament influences your communication, leadership style, interpersonal skills, teamwork, relationships, goal setting, learning preferences, and how you approach your work.

Communication Strategies to Inspire Trust and Confidence

Donna Moening, Center for Food Integrity Senior Director

 VANDYK BALLROOM A-2

Today, more than ever, interest in food goes beyond taste, nutrition and price. Consumers want to know how and where their food is produced, who produces it, and its impact on people, animals and the planet. This session unpacks consumer trends impacting food and agriculture, and provides communication strategies to address your most challenging questions and help you inspire trust and confidence.

Lean Thinking in Agriculture: Smarter Processes, Better Results

Trey Malone, Purdue University Boehlje Endowed Chair for Managerial Economics in Agribusiness

 VANDYK BALLROOM A-3

Maximize efficiency and minimize waste by applying Lean Farming and Six Sigma principles to your agricultural operation. In this hands-on session, you'll learn how to identify and eliminate the six key types of waste inspired by Toyota's manufacturing model and adapt them to the unique challenges of farming and agribusiness. We'll explore the Lean Canvas framework, a practical tool for analyzing your market, defining your value proposition, and making smarter business decisions on a tight budget. Whether you're a farmer or an agribusiness entrepreneur, this workshop will help you streamline operations, focus on what truly matters, and build a resilient, cost-effective business.

Practical Farm Finance: Solutions for Stability and Growth

Michael H. McKeown, Partner at McKeown Kraai Professional, CPAs

 VANDYK BALLROOM D

This session will simplify the financial strategies essential for today's farm operations. By exploring basic tools and working through real-life case studies, you'll gain tangible processes that can be implemented immediately to improve both the current and future financial health of your operation. Walk away with practical insights to enhance your farm's stability and success.

Around the World in Agriculture

Chris Koch, Keynote Speaker

 VANDYK BALLROOM BC

Join adventurer, farmer and agricultural advocate Chris Koch on a journey to explore farming practices around the world. From lush rice paddies in Southeast Asia to the Australia's vast wheat fields, Chris has gained unique insights into diverse agricultural landscapes. In this engaging session, Chris shares his firsthand experiences and offers a global perspective on farming that can enhance North American agriculture. Through his travels, he has observed innovative techniques, traditional methods and the endless challenges faced by farmers in regions around the globe. He'll share how these observations can enrich our understanding and critical thinking about agriculture right here at home.

STATE COMMITTEES 2025

YOUNG FARMER

Riley Brazo

Chair, At-Large

District 1, St. Joseph County

Ben Butcher

Harvest for All and ACF

Liaison, At-Large

District 5, Shiawassee County

Natalie Holbrook

High School & Collegiate Farm Bureau

Liaison, At-Large

District 6, Lapeer County

Matt Gibson

District 1, Kalamazoo County

Chris Sanford

Third Member

District 2, Jackson County

Chad Fusilier

District 3, Washtenaw County

Allan Robinette

District 4, Kent County

Cody Ferry

District 5, Genesee County

Nathan Beyerlein

District 6, Tuscola County

Kate Wernette

District 7, Mecosta County

Sarah Zastrow

Vice Chair

District 8, Midland County

Sam Schade

District 9, Mason County

Josh Aube

District 10, Huron Shores

Nate McGuire

District 11, Antrim County

Jimmy Love

District 12, Chippewa County

PROMOTION & EDUCATION

Alysa Sanford

Chair, At-Large

District 2, Jackson County

Katrina Bontekoe

Michigan Ag Council Liaison, At-Large

District 7, Osceola County

Joyce Neyer

Michigan Ag in the Classroom

Liaison, At-Large

District 8, Isabella County

Kristin Kubiszak

District 1, Van Buren County

Andrea Boughton

District 2, Calhoun County

Kim Graham

District 3, Wayne County

Mary Willcome

District 4, Ottawa County

Tami Shaw

District 5, Ingham County

Darcy Lipskey

District 6, Sanilac County

Breann Bonga

District 7, Montcalm County

Joe Bryant

Third Member

District 8, Isabella County

Mary Alway

Vice Chair

District 9, Mason County

Erika Schunk

District 10, Clare County

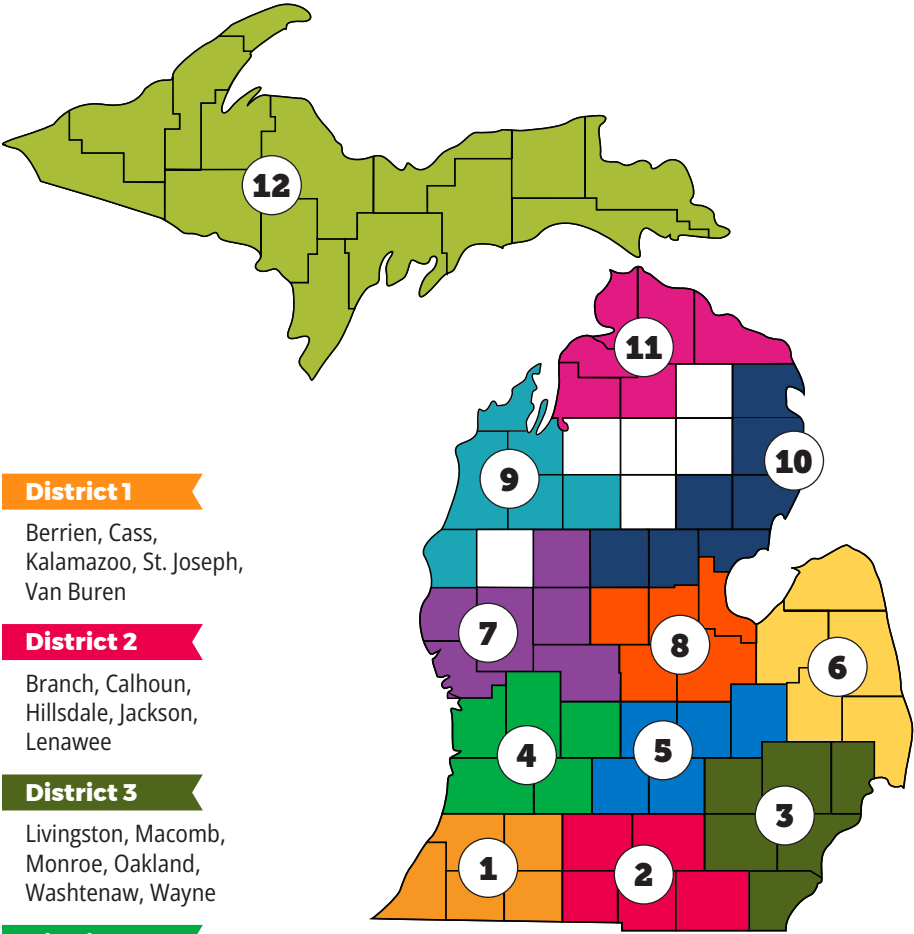
Kelly LaPeer

District 11, Cheboygan County

Lyle Harter

District 12, Chippewa County

DISTRICT MAP



District 1

Berrien, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, Van Buren

District 2

Branch, Calhoun, Hillsdale, Jackson, Lenawee

District 3

Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, Washtenaw, Wayne

District 4

Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Ottawa

District 5

Clinton, Eaton, Genesee, Ingham, Shiawassee

District 6

Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, St. Clair, Tuscola

District 7

Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola

District 8

Bay, Gratiot, Isabella, Midland, Saginaw

District 9

Benzie-Manistee, Mason, Missaukee, Northwest Michigan, Wexford

District 10

Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Huron Shores, Iosco, Ogemaw

District 11

Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, Otsego, Presque Isle

District 12

Chippewa, Copper Country, Hiawathaland, Iron Range, Mac-Luce Schoolcraft, Menominee



Watch for more details about the 2025-2026 school year subscriptions, or check out the Ag in the Classroom store to order individual crates now!



FARM

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Science & Programs

Bring a hands-on, field trip-style experience to your school with the FARM Science Lab or FARM Science Van!

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VENDOR MARKET

MEMBER-TO-MEMBER

DON'T FORGET TO VISIT THE VENDOR MARKET!

Open during breaks and Saturday's dinner reception.

2025 DISTRICT DISCUSSION MEETS

- › **District 1**
March 22 | Griner Farms, Jones
- › **District 2**
June 26 | River Dell Event Barn, Homer
- › **District 3**
April 4 | Farm of Dave and Denise Reaume, Newport
- › **District 4**
March 20 | Red Barn Market, Lowell
- › **District 5**
January 19 | COMPLETED
- › **District 6**
March 14 | Bootleggers, Port Huron
- › **District 7**
TBD
- › **District 8**
April 6 | Dow Diamond, Midland
- › **District 9**
TBD
- › **District 10**
April 6 | Dow Diamond, Midland
- › **District 11**
TBD
- › **District 12**
August 14 | UP State Fair, Escanaba

Visit www.michfb.com/YFDiscussionMeet for topics and more info.

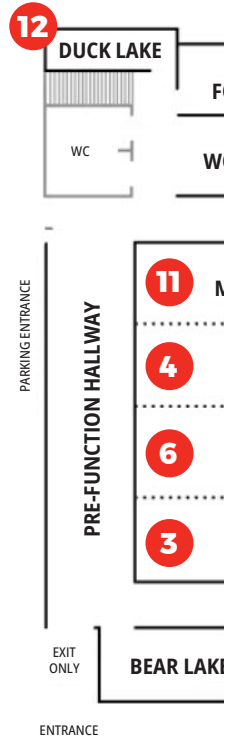
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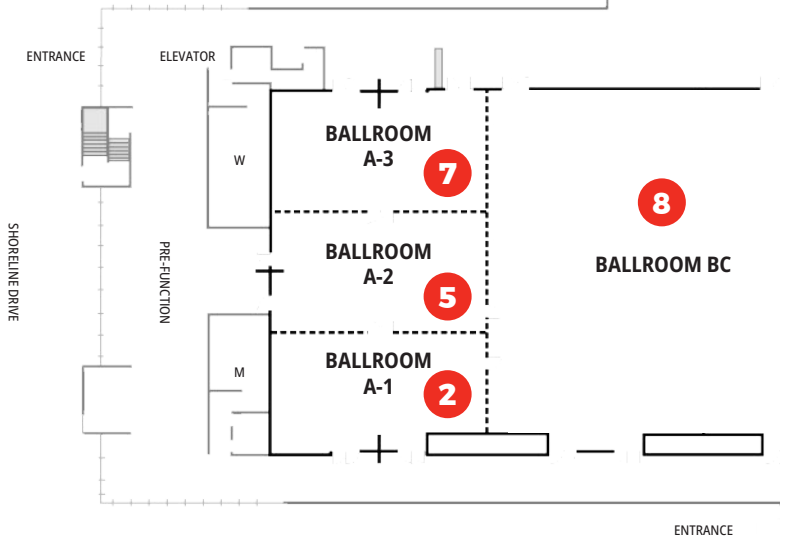
CONFERENCE MAPS

District Meetings

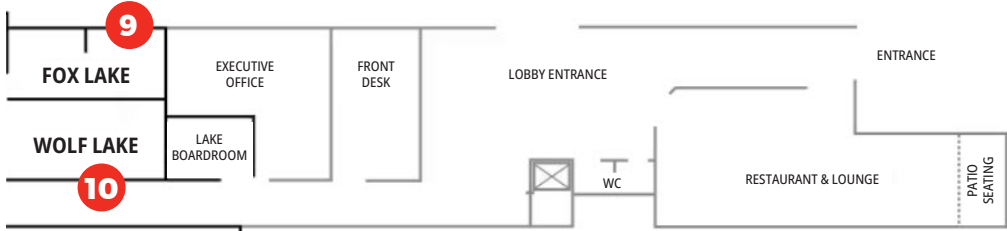
- 1** VanDyk Ballroom D
- 2** VanDyk Ballroom A-1
- 3** Delta Hotel White Lake
- 4** Delta Hotel Mona Lake
- 5** VanDyk Ballroom A-2
- 6** Delta Hotel Twin Lake
- 7** VanDyk Ballroom A-3
- 8** VanDyk Ballroom BC
- 9** Delta Hotel Fox Lake
- 10** Delta Hotel Wolf Lake
- 11** Delta Hotel Muskegon Lake
- 12** Delta Hotel Duck Lake



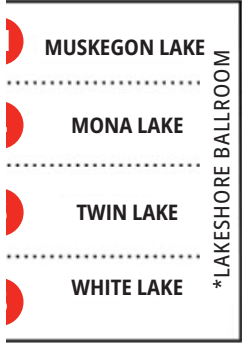
VANDYK MORTGAGE CONVENTION CENTER 1ST FLOOR



**Delta Hotel Lakeshore Ballroom is Muskegon Lake, Mona Lake, Twin Lake and White Lake rooms combined.*



DELTA HOTELS MUSKEGON CONVENTION CENTER



VANDYK MORTGAGE CONVENTION CENTER 2ND FLOOR

