



March 2020

MGGC ELSEWHERE

 [FOLLOW on FACEBOOK](#)

 [Visit our WEBSITE](#)

From the Executive Director's Desk ...

Welcome to the Spring Executive Director report for MGGC. We continue to work on making improvements to MGGC to make it even more of a value to our members while working on projects that are longer term and important to the industry.

Our new website is up and running! Have you checked it out yet? www.mggc.org

Our new webmaster has updated and changed the look completely to make it more user friendly. We have added a new Grower to Grower Marketplace for our members to sell items for no cost. Maybe you have some equipment you don't use anymore or have an over abundance of plant varieties you need a home for. It is easy to use and has been successful for the items listed by our members. Think of it as a Craig's list for greenhouses.



We continue to work on the Michigan Treasury sales tax issue and we have a plan we are working on that we will share soon with the membership. MGGC is taking the lead and moving forward with a solution to the Treasury's over-reach. Stay tuned for further updates as things progress.

The Farm Bill crop insurance study is now under way. It is being facilitated by Watts and Company through the federal government. They are reaching out to industry leaders around the country to get input on several things, such as feasibility, what perils we are trying to cover, any data on previous losses and trying to fit the new insurance in the current crop insurance language.

They are coming to Michigan in June to meet with all interested industry people. We have contacted The Kalamazoo Flower Group to use their facility to have the meeting. We will send out more information as it becomes available. They are also considering having meetings in Portland Or., southern California, Florida and at Cultivate in mid-July. We need everyone to attend these meetings to have your voice heard on this important opportunity for the greenhouse industry.

We hope you will join us this year in Traverse City October 19-21 for our first Conference/ Annual meeting at the Park Place Hotel. The survey we sent out showed a high interest in meeting at a destination to discuss the industry and have some business speakers give us some insight on policies and regulations that affect the greenhouse industry as well as tips on business and finance. We are planning some great member networking and socialization, so mark your calendars for October 19-21. Look for more information in your in box soon on how to sign up. Fall is a great time to be in Traverse City!

As I reach my first year with MGGC we have worked to make MGGC the premier greenhouse industry association. We have increased membership by almost 25% and continue to reach out to greenhouses to join our group. With our new benefits available from SBAM we continue to add value to your membership. Explore your premium member benefits at www.sbam.org. I will be visiting areas again this year and look forward to meeting our members and potential members on greenhouse tours. If you would like to join me on my tours, have any questions or suggestions, please contact me at mainstreet@sbam.org or 231-301-4888.

GOEFF

COVID-19 Update

Thank you for being a valuable partner in our efforts to combat the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). Following the announcement of the state's first presumptive positive cases of COVID-19, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) are providing recommendations designed to help prevent the spread of the virus.

These recommendations apply at the individual, organizational, and community levels. They apply to businesses, workplaces, schools, community organizations, health care institutions, and individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and health profiles; everyone has an important role to play. Please take a moment to [review the Interim Recommendations to Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19 \(March 11, 2020\)](#). Information about this outbreak is changing rapidly. You can stay informed by regularly visiting Michigan.gov/Coronavirus and CDC.gov/Coronavirus.

TRUCKING/AG COMMODITY LETTER SENT TO APPROPRIATORS

March 11 2020

Written by Tal Coley, AmericanHort Director of Government Affairs

A bipartisan Congressional letter was sent to the House Appropriations Subcommittee handling transportation issues last week, asking that the 'agricultural commodity' language from the Agricultural Trucking Relief Act be included in FY2021 appropriations bills. The effort, which was led by Reps. Austin Scott (R-GA) and Kurt Schrader (D-OR), yielded 33 signatures in total-- 26 Republicans and 7 Democrats representing 15 states. Of note, House Agriculture Chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN) was among the signatories.

The language would specifically include horticulture and floriculture in the "agricultural commodity" definition used for transportation policy. If included and passed into law, this would put the industry in a very positive position, allowing for peace of mind regarding use of existing hours of service exemptions, such as the agricultural exemption, as well as other regulations specific to agriculture.

To continue reading the AmericanHort article

visit <https://www.hortknowledgecenter.org/Article-Detail?DocumentID=3235>.



Recently Launched: www.MGCC.org

The newly rebranded website was launched in February. One of our newest features is the Grower to Grower Marketplace, as Goeff mentioned above. You must be a member of MGCC to place an ad on site. However, all are available to view by anyone visiting the site.

All members of MGCC should have received an invitation to update their password on the new site. If you did not receive this invitation, lost it or need some help - please contact Cindy at 517-367-2033, e-mail YourFriends@mgcc.org or Cindy.Ray@sbam.org - she will be happy to assist.

Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, March 19
9:00 am
Video Conference Call

2020 Annual Meeting

October 19 - 21
Park Place Hotel & Conference
Center, Traverse City
Registration info coming soon.

Welcome New Board Members

Craig Stevens, DGI Propagators, was appointed in November to fill a vacancy, with a term ending December 2020

David Mast (Andy Mast Greenhouses) and Chris Schwartz (Schwartz's Greenhouse) were elected to the 2020 Board of Directors through December 2022.

2020 Board of Directors

Dave Mast, President
Kevin Sportel, Vice-President
Mike Fassbender, Treasurer (Allied Trade Member)
Dale Buist
Susie Raker-Zimmerman
Kurt Elders
Craig Stevens
Chris Schwartz
Matt Staal (Allied Trade Member)
Heidi Lindberg (Education Committee)
Scott Gruppen (WMGA Rep)
Mark Watkins (MDFGA Rep.)

AG Day at the Capitol 2020



Ag Day was Wednesday, March 11. At our booth we talked with many legislators and their staff to promote Greenhouse Crop production in Michigan.



Flowers and information were given to all Senators, Representatives and other legislators on behalf of Michigan Greenhouse Growers Council.

Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)

Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Assistance

USDA Can Help You Make Your Rural Business, Farm or Ranch More Profitable

USDA is offering grants and loan guarantees to help rural businesses and agricultural producers reduce their energy costs and consumption.

The funding is being provided through USDA Rural Development's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). Loans and grants are available to install renewable energy systems or make energy efficiency improvements.

Renewable energy systems include solar, wind, geothermal, anaerobic digesters, renewable biomass, hydrogen and hydropower.

Energy efficiency improvements include lighting, refrigeration, facility improvements (such as adding insulation or replacing windows), heating and cooling upgrades, motor replacements and automated control upgrades.

Grants of up to 25% of a project's total costs are available.

- The maximum grants are \$250,000 for energy efficiency improvements and \$500,000 for renewable energy systems

Loans guarantees of up to 75% of a project's total costs are available.

- The minimum loan is \$5,000
- The maximum loan is \$25 million

Application deadline: March 31, 2020 - unrestricted grant requests (\$1,500 to \$500,000)
Guaranteed Loans will be accepted on a continuing basis

Application Templates are available at USDA Rural Development offices or on the [national website](#).

For more information, contact USDA Rural Development Business Programs at (517) 324-5157.

Consumer Energy Business Efficiency Program Resources

Consumers Energy has several Programs available - from Instant Discount Programs to Rebate Programs to Energy Efficiency Incentive Guides. An overview of all Consumers Energy Programs is available [HERE](#).

More information about the Instant Discount and Rebate Programs can be found at this link: [https://mcusercontent.com/7937bc4fb3e295b1a37abb55b/files/af614743-c53a-4a45-894b-087bedc2904c/Consumers Energy Greenhouse Rebate Program.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/7937bc4fb3e295b1a37abb55b/files/af614743-c53a-4a45-894b-087bedc2904c/Consumers_Energy_Greenhouse_Rebate_Program.pdf)

DTE has similar programs available. Contact Caile Richards, Energy Advocate at Small Business Association of Michigan at caile.richards@sbam.org or call 517-267-2209.

Michigan Greenhouse Growers Council
120 N Washington Square, Suite 1000
Lansing, MI 48933-1631

517-367-2033
YourFriends@mggc.org

Copyright © 2020 Michigan Greenhouse Growers Council, All rights reserved.