

Washtenaw County MSU Extension Field Crops Newsletter

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Regional Spray Clinic

A Regional Spray Clinic will be held on Tuesday, March 18, 8:00am to 4:00pm at the Butch Lincoln farm, 9221 North Parma Road, Springport. All Monroe, Wayne and Washtenaw County farmers who do their own pesticide spraying are invited and welcome to attend.

This educational program is sponsored by the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program, the Calhoun Conservation District and the Jackson County Conservation District. There is a \$5 charge to participate, which can be paid at the door if someone has pre-registered.

Topics include:

- Chemical Application Using Irrigation Systems
 - Sprayer calibration and Nozzle Performance
 - Pest Identification, Pest Development and I.P.M.
 - MAEAP Overview
 - Secondary Containment and Ag Containment Facility
 - New Sprayer Technologies
 - Legislative Update
- New Pest Management Strategies



WWW.IPM.MSU.EDU

Speakers will be present from Michigan State University Extension, Bayer CropScience, Michigan Department of Agriculture, USDA NRCS, D&G Equipment and Farm Bureau. Three Restricted Use Pesticide re-certification credits have been granted.

To register, for directions or for additional information, interested farmers should call the Calhoun Conservation District at 269-781-4867. The \$5 registration fee can be paid at the door if someone has called in their reservation ahead of time. For a copy of the agenda, contact the Monroe County Extension office at 734-240-3170 or Washtenaw County Extension office at 734-997-1678.

March is a great time for final 2008 preparations. One of these jobs is to roll up your sleeves and bookmark a great Internet reference as a favorite on your computer. This website is: www.ipm.msu.edu.

This site has a lot of great references that will be useful during the growing season, such as: weather, pest information, timely IPM newsletters, MSU Diagnostic Services and other resources and links.

Whether you have field crops, vegetables, fruit, landscape/ greenhouse/ nursery or lawn business, this web site has something for you. Hint: the MSU IPM newsletters can be sent to your computer, free of

Farm Bill Update

Five years ago this month we finished up having educational meetings about the 2002 Farm Bill. As of this writing, the 2007 Farm Bill is still being negotiated in a Senate – House conference committee. Good news for Michigan farmers is that Senator Debbie Stabenow is on the conference committee.

Once a new Farm Bill becomes law, we will work with USDA FSA to have educational meetings. Farmers can still sign up for CRP, CREP, grain bin loans, etc, but not 2008 crop programs.



“Nuts and Bolts” of Organic Certification

Vegetable or other farmers who are interested in learning more about organic food or feed production may be interested in a Thursday, March 27 educational program on the Nuts and Bolts of Organic Certification. This program will cost \$20 and will include educational materials and lunch.

Dr. Vicki Morrone, Michigan State University Extension Organic Vegetable and Crop Outreach Specialist, will be the speaker. This program is targeted to farmers and consultants who help farmers and will cover the basics of organic certification in Michigan.

This program will be held from 9:00am to 2:00pm at the Monroe County Extension office. For more information, contact Ned Birkey at the Monroe County Extension office at 734-260-3442. Registration is made with payment to the Monroe County Extension office, 963 South Raisinville Road, Monroe, MI 48161.

Sprayer Calibration Is Important

Although Asian soybean rust was not positively identified in Michigan in 2007, it was found in nearby Ontario. Many farmers were spraying for weeds, spider mites, soybean aphids and perhaps tank mixing manganese. March is an excellent time to “tune up” field crop ground sprayers.

Does your farm sprayer have the capacity to handle multiple nozzles, higher spray pressure and can you raise and keep the spray boom level? Can you adapt your farm sprayer with taller and narrower tires to spray taller soybeans in narrow rows?

Farmers have learned that sprays for aphids must penetrate the top of the soybean canopy to reach the stem and undersides of leaves. Fungicide spraying for soybean rust will likely require more thorough leaf coverage and deeper into the foliage than does aphid sprays.

Proper placement of pesticides will vary and will be critical to achieve effective control of insects, weeds or diseases. Plant growth stage, canopy density, pesticide rates, carrier volume, application speed, operating pressure and nozzle selection will all be important factors to achieve proper application and therefore proper control of the pest.

Michigan Right to Farm Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices for Pesticide Utilization and Pest Control guidelines suggest that farm field crop sprayers needs to be calibrated at least once per growing season to be sure that it is good working order and that the nozzles are applying the proper flow rate.

Farmers can check the ground speed and nozzle flow rate in an hour or less of a sprayer in good working order, the spray tank half full of water, and if you know the proper nozzle flow rate. Or, I will be happy to come on your farm and calibrate your field sprayer if the above conditions are met.

Michigan State University Extension has a free calibration sticker that can be affixed to the sprayer that explains one simple calibration procedure. Remember to write down the sprayer calibration date for Michigan Right to Farm record keeping. Right to Farm also suggests that farmers have a portable spill kit available for mixing and loading in the field.

Clean Sweep Pesticide Disposal Program for 2008

Now, before spring fieldwork activity begins in earnest, is a great time for farmers to get rid of old, unusable pesticides that may have been stored on the farm, possibly for many years. In these situations the container may be deteriorating, which may result in a spill of the pesticide.

Farmers can properly and safely dispose of old, unusable chemicals at the Monroe County Clean Sweep site on an appointment basis. Collection dates will include:

Monday, April 7	9:00am to 1:00pm
Wednesday, June 25	9:00am to 1:00pm
Wednesday, September 17	9:00am to 1:00pm
Wednesday, November 12	9:00am to 1:00pm

Interested persons should call the Monroe County MSUE Office at 734-240-3170 to request an appointment for one of the above dates. The Michigan Groundwater Stewardship program offers a separate pesticide container disposal program. Farmers with empty and clean plastic containers should contact Amy Gilhouse, Groundwater Stewardship Technician at 517-263-7400 x 117.

All individuals should carefully look over their old chemicals to be sure that they could load and transport them safely to the collection site. The Extension office would prefer to receive a listing of these pesticides in advance partly to be sure that the proper overpack containers are on hand once the materials are delivered.

The Clean Sweep Pesticide Disposal program takes old, unusable or no longer labeled pesticides from farmers, homeowners, hospitals, golf courses, and other Michigan businesses at no charge.

Examples of pesticides include: herbicides used for weed control, insecticides used for insect control, fungicides used for disease control, avicides used for bird control, rodenticides used for rodent control, miticides used for mite control, etc. For more information about this free program, contact the Monroe County MSUE Office at 734-240-3170.



MSU Biofuel Research: Can Cellulosic Ethanol Crops Enhance Conservation?

Cellulosic ethanol production promises greatly increased energy efficiency and could be a win-win for farmers, soil and water conservation, wildlife, and the environment. Michigan State University researchers are examining how different biofuels crops may affect conservation outcomes. They are studying the impact of potential biofuels crops on song and game bird numbers, beneficial insects, and soil microbes. They are currently looking for sites throughout southern Michigan to conduct these studies. Ideal sites would have a pure (or nearly pure) stand of switchgrass, a mixed grass and wildflower planting (for example a mixed prairie, CRP or Pheasants Forever type planting) and a nearby conventional corn field. Ideally, each would be at least 5 acres in size and within 2 miles of each other. The switchgrass and mixed prairie stands should be well established, i.e. at least 3 years old. From May to October a small team of researchers will periodically visit each site to survey bird, insect and soil microbe communities. They anticipate about 12 visits to each field during the year. All information will be kept confidential and landowners will not be identified without prior permission. If you or someone you know has questions about the project or might be interested in participating, please contact Lauren Bailey (517) 432-5282 e-mail: bailey65@msu.edu.



2008 Winter Meeting Calendar

Tuesday, March 18, 2008 Spray Clinic, Butch Lincoln farm, Jackson County. MAEAP Phase 1 meeting. **RUP.**

Wednesday, March 19, 2008 9:00am and 1:30pm M.D.A. Pesticide examinations. Fee.

Call Washtenaw County MSU Extension at 734-997-1678 for reservations.

Thursday, March 27, 2008 9:00am to 2:00pm Nuts and Bolts of Organic Certification at Monroe County Extension office. \$20. Register to Monroe County Extension office.

Wednesday, April 2, 2008 Pesticide Training and Review meeting 9:00am to 12:30pm at 4-H Activity Center at Monroe County fairgrounds. \$10 fee. Register to Monroe County Extension office at 734-240-3170. **2 RUP.**

Wednesday, April 2, 2008 M.D.A. Pesticide Examinations 1:00 to 4:00pm at 4-H Activity Center at Monroe County fairgrounds. \$10 fee. Register to Monroe County Extension office at 734-240-3170.