



MICHIGAN
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No News is Good News

BY CHRIS TIEDJE

In today's world headlines sell. The world is full of headlines: drought and the Mississippi, wild fires, Hurricane Ian devastation, rising costs of goods, inflation, recession, interest rates, falling stock market, the Ukraine war . . . It seems these all drive our fears, but somehow, we all seem to wake up in the morning to face a new day.

In Michigan we are not free from the impact of these, but in the Michigan seed world we are faring pretty well. If we look at the national drought distribution, some areas in Michigan were in moderate drought but nothing compared to other areas in the country where the Mississippi is at critical lows. It is amazing the difference between the historic floods and historic lows. As it rains here today, it is hard to imagine that areas in the country are so different.

Initial findings for seed production in Michigan this year is showing good results. Green stem is one factor which came to play this season. Soybean fields showed some variation in maturity. The dry weather ripened the pods before the stem was ready to stop growing. In edible beans this can be managed through desiccation. Desiccation is a good tool but there is an art of knowing the stage of the plant development and the variety so quality is maintained. Not all varieties are equal. In most cases it



Soybean fields, like the one above, showed some variation in maturity.

| Photo by MCIA

is important to monitor pod development more than the stem color in soybeans.

The MCIA seed lab continues to do more and more testing – from seed corn to vegetables. Tests are in the mid to upper 90's with little disease. In soybean samples there is a small amount of mechanical damage from dry seeds within the field and a few dead from what are commonly called pumpkins. This is reflective of the uneven maturity in fields. In summary, seed in Michigan is on par for what it should be – no headlines.

The President's Post

BY CHRIS SCHMIDT, MCIA PRESIDENT



What a difference a year makes. Most of you would probably like to forget the 2021 harvest, but I'm going

to bring it up anyway. You'll recall that everything was running on all cylinders through dry bean harvest and early wheat planting in September 2021, when all of a sudden, the monsoon struck in early October and a family of ducks took up residence in our side yard which had become a knee-deep pond overnight. Weeks went by before we turned a wheel again and by then the excessive rain had caused irreparable damage to the soybean seed crop. Wheat planting also ground to a crawl in 2021 and many retailers were trying to figure

out what to do with the seed wheat in their warehouses that wasn't going to get seeded last fall.

Fast forward a year and we've, once again, enjoyed a very favorable September but also an October conducive for harvesting and planting which we haven't seen in a while. While the soybean crop in our area suffered this season from a lack of summer rains, and is off by 10 bushel compared to 2021, at least the seed quality is exactly where it should be – phenomenal. Judging by the amount of wheat seed planted this fall I'm betting that Michigan is back on track to have planted well over 600,000 acres for the 2023 harvest – just a guess on my part. Another observation from my seed plant is that white wheat planting for 2023 harvest seems to have made a modest rebound from the dismal number of acres planted in 2021. I take this as an indication wheat growers truly

want to support the Michigan wheat milling industry and are willing to venture forth once again.

Those of you who know me or have at least read a few of my past Presidents Posts, know that I suffer the same ailment as every other farmer around the globe – that being eternal optimism. 2022 turned out to be decent after all and 2023 holds the promise to be even better. By the time you read this the 2022 harvest will be in the rear-view mirror and holidays fast approaching. Do me a favor and pat yourself on the back for a job well done. Enjoy the winter down time with those you love most and care most deeply about. Recharge and get the 2023 plans nailed down. I'm counting on all of you to do the very best you can.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Schmidt". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.

Updates in Food Safety Compliance at Michigan Crop Improvement

BY LEE SILER

Michigan Crop Improvement strives to maintain a successful food safety quality system. Our Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) recognized certification scheme; Brand Reputation Compliance Global Standards (BRCGS) establishes the requirements food processors must follow to build an effective food safety management system. The standard addresses the elements MCIA must

have in place to ensure the production of safe products and is important as more major manufacturers and retailers require facilities which process food products to have GFSI certification. BRCGS has revised their standard with additional requirements MCIA will need to comply with at the next audit. These additional requirements are outlined in version 9 of the standard. Version 9 is the ninth revision of the original standard written in 1998. There are numerous revisions to the standard, however the main revisions in version 9 which will pertain to our facility will include:

1. **An Increased Focus on Food Safety Culture.** The management team at MCIA will be required to demonstrate they are fully committed to the implementa-

tion of the food safety standard, its culture and a commitment to continually improve the sites food safety and culture.

2. **Ensure the Food Safety Plan Aligns with the Latest Publication of the Codex Alimentarius Principles.** All changes to our processes will be validated to ensure the changes will not diminish product safety, effectively control any identified hazards before implantation of the changes and that the changes are documented in our food safety plan.
3. **Internal Audit Results Presented at Management Review Meetings.** During MCIA management review meetings, action

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plan results identified during internal audits and of site inspections will be reviewed.

4. **Additional Information Required During Supplier Audits.** MCIA suppliers will be assessed on additional product safety risks including product security, food defense programs and the authenticity of supplied products.
5. **Requirements for Threat Assessments and Food Defense Plan.** Management will need to be knowledgeable of the site's compliance to food defense and in the principles of food defense to remain proactive to threats to food contamination or damage.
6. **Additions to Site Standards.** The following additions have been made to the Site Standards: a) Inspection of strip curtains focusing on zero food safety risk. b) New equipment purchases will require detailed documented specifications before seeking bids and the supplier will be required to provide evidence that they meet these specifications. c) Risk assessment regarding forklifts entering/exiting production areas will need to be written and adhered to. d) All battery charging equipment will need to be removed from production areas to non-production areas. e) Pens, pencils, mobile phones, tablets, flashlights will not be allowed in production areas. Production areas will have restrictions to only approved items. f) Watches and similar devices will not be allowed in any production areas.

MCIA recognizes the value and importance of updating procedures to strengthen the food safety culture. While these changes will require additional time and attention, they will also help us to continue to provide safe and high-quality products for our customers in a safe food environment. Thank you to those who have placed your trust in us.

Manager's Minute

BY C. JAMES PALMER, MCIA MANAGER



Besides summer, fall is my favorite season of the year. I especially enjoy harvest time where we finally see how the decisions we made at planting time and during the growing season contributed to, or detracted from, the bushels that come off each field we managed. For me, fall weekends are usually spent in a truck or combine working alongside of my oldest son who has taken keen interest in our farm operation. During these times I often listen to numerous hours of sports radio. Listening last week while hauling

corn to town, I heard the coach of a professional football team say, the best "ability" is "availability". After considering this statement it was clear what he meant. If a player is injured and can't play, it really doesn't matter how skillful, fast, or smart he is. He can't help the team if he is not on the field. In other words, good health of an athlete is very important to the success of the player and team, just like good health to employees is key to any business' success.

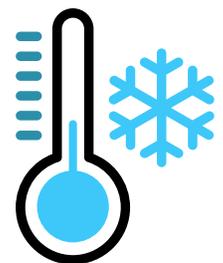
The average NFL player can expect to miss 12% of his games each year due to injury. Imagine having an employee who couldn't work 12% of the days he or she was scheduled? Lost time can cripple a business. As you know the Agricultural Industry is also a dangerous occupation. According to recent National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety statistics, in Agriculture, there are about 21 deaths per 100,000 workers and over 11,000 injuries that cause lost work each year. Therefore, safety should be engrained in the work culture of every business to ensure team members realize its immense importance in the workplace.

At MCIA, we visit safety frequently. Along with our mandatory safety reviews, bi-weekly "safety nuggets" are brought to the staff meetings by team members on a rotating basis. The team member chooses a topic of interest and gives a five-to-ten-minute presentation reviewing a subject which is relevant to most of our team. Past topics have been: hand safety, gutter cleaning, winter driving preparedness and active shooter awareness to name a few. These "safety nuggets" usually result in a good discussion from our team and remind them of the pitfalls that can occur during certain activities. We have these discussions in hopes of keeping our people safe, which will result in less time off from work due to avoidable injury.

As fall activities grind to a close, please keep safety in mind on your farm or business. Talk to your team frequently about things they can do to keep from being injured. Most injuries can be avoided! Helping your workers stay safe will have a positive impact on you, your workers, and your business. Have a great fall and Happy Thanksgiving!

Fun Fact

The lowest temperature ever recorded in Michigan was -51°F in 1934 in Vanderbilt. The highest was 112°F in 1936 in Stanwood.





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Calendar of Events 2022/2023

November 15 Seed Distribution Reports Due	<i>MCIA Office</i>
November 24-25 Thanksgiving	<i>MCIA Office Closed</i>
December 5-8 ASTA Seed Conference	<i>Chicago, IL.</i>
December 24 - January 2, 2023 Holiday Season	<i>MCIA Office Closed</i>
February 15, 2023 Order Changes for Spring Foundation Seed Due	<i>MCIA Office</i>
March 7, 2023 MCIA Annual Membership Meeting	<i>Eagle Eye Banquet Center, Bath, MI</i>