



**MICHIGAN**  
CROP IMPROVEMENT  
ASSOCIATION™

# Michigan Seed Bulletin

PUBLISHED BY THE MICHIGAN CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION  
**The Official Seed Certifying Agency**

WINTER ISSUE | FEBRUARY 2025

## Board of Directors

**Chris Schmidt**  
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Northern Region  
Auburn, MI

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**Alan Moore**

Central Region  
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**Carl Wagner III**

Southern Region  
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**Matt Lutz**

Thumb Region  
Sebewaing, MI

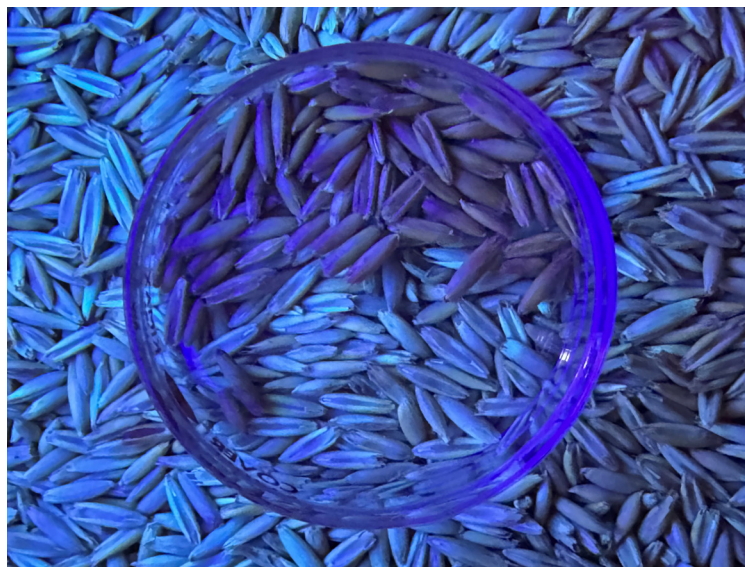
## MCIA Offers Varietal Purity Test

CHRIS TIEDJE

The Federal Seed Act requires all seed sold to be tested for: *Pure Seed* (kind and variety), *Other Crop* (other species and other variety), *Weeds*, and *Inert Matter*.

This is a sales and labeling requirement to show that seed is truthfully represented as claimed and is generally performed on a conditioned sample. The primary focus of seed Certification is the variety – for both identity and purity. Plant characters are used as verification in the field and seed characters, such as soybean hilum or oat seed coat color are used in the lab. A purity analysis is performed in the lab to capture this information. Sometimes aids, such as a black light, are used to accentuate the differences between seed characters for variety identification (see caption).

While both Certification and Federal Seed Act requirements can be accomplished in one test, it may be difficult if a sample is not conditioned. However, there are times varietal verification might be necessary on a



Black light analysis of oats.

bulk sample prior to seed conditioning. MCIA now offers two different purity tests – the standard purity test and a varietal purity test. The varietal purity test can be requested on unconditioned seed samples to check for varietal impurities prior to conditioning to eliminate the conditioning investment of a contaminated seed lot. If MCIA receives an unconditioned sample requesting a “purity” test, we usually assume it to be a varietal purity as it is difficult and impractical to perform a full analysis on an unconditioned sample. It may be important to understand that even if a varietal purity is requested on an unconditioned sample, an additional standard purity test will also be needed to meet the Federal Seed Act sales requirements.

# The President's Post

BY CHRIS SCHMIDT, MCIA PRESIDENT



## Winter greetings to all!

It's never easy to see something come to an end that one truly enjoys. But that's the situation I'm in as I pen my last Presidents Post for the MCIA Newsletter as my third, 3 year term on the Board of Directors comes to an end in February. I'll be "termed out".

The Association means very much to me, as I'm sure it does to numerous other members. For my operation outside beautiful downtown Auburn, MCIA

has provided opportunities that could never have been possible any other way for a little farmer with an interest in providing seed and services.

37 years ago, when I began down this path, I had no clue what I was doing or where it might eventually take me. I just knew that being a "seedsman" had a nice ring to it. The learning curve was mighty steep, and I blundered countless times as I learned the trade through hard knocks and rejection. But along that path of sizable sinkholes and quicksand, I met many association members who also shared the path I was on and were willing to part with some meaningful advice or lend me a hand when needed the most. The same was true for the folks running the show at MCIA. MCIA always made time to explain why things were the way they were and provide some advice/guidance but never interfered.

If you go back and read my previous 19 Presidents Posts which have been published in the MCIA newsletter, you'll find that I've consistently tried to convey some bits and pieces of knowledge with each post. This was in an effort to help

other members stay up to date with happenings in the industry, understand the workings of the association, and provide some insight into why things are the way they are. Other times writing to offer encouragement for you to reach further and do better. My mission and messages have consistently been aimed to help strengthen our "Certified Seed" brand.

While signing off as President of the MCIA BOD, I'm confident that the next person to chair the BOD will also strive to ensure that MCIA remains a viable and vibrant business for future generations of seed growers. I sincerely appreciate all the support from so many members over the past few decades while looking forward to a few more decades in the seed business.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Schmidt".

## Two New Black Bean Varieties Available for MCIA Seed Growers

JIM PALMER

MCIA has a limited supply of two new black bean varieties developed by Michigan State University and licensed by MCIA. Seed of both **Black Pearl** and **Kona** was produced in Idaho in the summer of 2024 and is now available as foundation seed for those who wish to grow either in 2025.

**Black Pearl** is resistant to both race 7 and 73 of anthracnose, has very erect plant architecture and matures in about 98 days. **Black Pearl** grows to about 18 inches tall and has a great lodging score. **Black Pearl** yields slightly less than **Kona** but has superior color retention in canned products.



**Kona** is the top yielding black bean variety in Michigan where it matures in 97 days and is slightly taller than **Black Pearl**. **Kona** has a very high agronomic index score which demonstrates it as a very grower friendly variety. **Kona** is resistant to anthracnose race 7 but is

susceptible to race 73 and has shown increased tolerance to blight compared to other commercial black varieties.

Supplies of **Kona** and **Black Pearl** are limited for 2025. Please call the office if you would like to try either of these or any of our other available varieties.



# Manager's Minute

BY C. JAMES PALMER, MCIA MANAGER



## Never Say Never

As I was pondering topics for this quarterly newsletter it quickly occurred to me the subject on which I should focus. Earlier in the day I was on a phone call with the President of MCIA, Chris Schmidt, discussing various topics, an exercise we participate in frequently. The topic of this day centered around his progress as the “nominating committee.” While the nominating committee is appointed by the President of the board to identify

potential candidates for an open Board seat, it has been a long-standing tradition that the person vacating the Board serves as the leader of this nominating committee. President Schmidt reported to me he had been dutifully working the phones in hopes of soliciting volunteers to run for the two open Board positions with some success. It was at that moment it finally sunk in, after 9 consecutive years and 18 of the past 22, Chris Schmidt would no longer be a MCIA Director.

Chris Schmidt has been a valued board member made evident by the confidence of his peers, who voted him President for the last five consecutive years. I too have appreciated Schmidt's steady hand leading the Board decisions while presiding as the President. Specifically, I have welcomed his expertise in matters relating to seed and especially his polished business acumen developed while working his “day job” for 30 years at Dow Corning. His vast experience in both the seed world and the corporate world made him an outstanding resource of information which I utilized on a very frequent basis. He always had time for a phone call and always had a unique perspective and well thought out answer to most any situation I presented to him. He has his fingerprints on many of the new policies and changes which MCIA put in place over the past two decades. He was on the committee to identify a new Manager when Randy retired, he oversaw the resolution with MSU on the Adams black bean challenge and he is currently heading the charge to develop an agreement with the Michigan Wheat Program

to work with them when new wheat varieties are released from MSU. Just a few of the many important issues he was involved with while on the Board.

While his work and the work of all the MCIA Board Members is very important, for the most part it goes unseen and unrecognized. It takes an extraordinary person to dedicate time and energy as well as the ability to set aside personal motives to make the decisions which best benefit MCIA. I can say with confidence that Chris always faithfully carried out his duties on the Board with the best interest of the organization as his top priority. One of the things Chris always said to me was “Jim, I can always make more money, I just can't make more time”. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Chris for the enormous amount of precious time he blessed MCIA with over the past two decades. MCIA will greatly miss Chris as a Board Member but will continue to appreciate him just the same as a good customer and a great friend! No one knows what the future holds and after a year off the board, when he is eligible to run again, maybe he'll dust that hat off and throw it in the ring one last time.

## Exciting Updates Coming to the Seed Lab

TOM SILER

We're excited to share that we're making big strides to improve efficiency in the seed lab. This year, we'll be transitioning to a digital platform to streamline the process of logging in samples, recording results, and generating reports.

This new system uses the same software as our field inspections. If you've worked with us for field reports, you'll already be familiar with the format of our new lab reports.

Here's how the system will work:

- When samples are received, they will be logged into the new system. For customers that send multiple samples in one shipment, there will be an option to send an excel file ahead of time containing information about the sample and specific tests requested. This will eliminate the need for customers to fill out multiple bags.
- Instead of recording test results on paper and manually entering them into the computer, results will be recorded directly onto iPads as the tests are completed.

- Once all tests are complete, customers will receive an email with their lab report. There will also be an option to download an Excel file that updates automatically with the latest results.

This transition will allow us to process samples faster and more efficiently, improving turnaround times and your overall experience.

We plan to start testing the system in early 2025, with a full rollout planned for the 2025 crop year starting June 1. We will continue to keep you updated on this process and welcome any comments or input you may have.

# 2024/2025 MCIA Annual Membership Meeting

Registration is now open!

**February 27, 2025 • 8:30 A.M.**

**EAGLE EYE BANQUET CENTER**

**15500 Chandler Rd. • Bath, MI 48808**

An excellent educational seminar will follow the 8:30 a.m. business meeting.

**2 RUP Credits for Core or 1A and CCA credits are available.**

**PLEASE MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND!**

## Agenda

**7:30 a.m. Registration (coffee and rolls)**

**8:30 a.m. Business Meeting**

Call to Order ..... Chris Schmidt, President

Determination of Quorum

Official Meeting Notice

Minutes of 2023/2024 Annual Meeting

Financial Report — Review 2024 Financial Statement .....Mark Lockwitz, C.P.A., Maner and Costerisan

Nomination Committee Report (see backside)

President's Report ..... Chris Schmidt, President

Manager's Report.....Jim Palmer, Manager

Election Results

Old Business

New Business

Adjourn

## Educational Session

**9:15 a.m. Wheat Breeding Report .....Dr. Eric Olson, MSU**

**9:45 a.m. Dry Bean Breeding Report ..... Dr. Valerio Villegas, MSU**

**10:15 a.m. Oat and Barley Research ..... Dr. Brook Wilke, MSU**

**10:35 a.m. Break**

**10:50 a.m. Estate/Succession Planning ..... Mr. Mike Fraleigh, Fraleigh Law**

**11:15 a.m. MDARD Update .....Dr. Tim Boring, MDARD**

**11:35 a.m. Conservation Opportunities w/ Cover Crops .....Ms. Abigail Smith, NRCS**

**11:50 a.m. Honorary Membership Award**

**12:00 p.m. Pesticide/CCA Credits**

**12:15 p.m. Invocation/Lunch**



**Learn more about MCIA's Annual Meeting**

Visit [michcrop.com](http://michcrop.com) or scan QR code to view the meeting details online and register.

# Two candidates running unopposed for open Board of Director seats

Alan Peters from Metz Seed Farm will be running for the open seat vacated by Chris Schmidt due to term limitation. Matt Lutz will be running to be re-elected to the Thumb seat which he has held for the past three years. All members will soon receive a ballot in the mail which can be mailed back or may be turned in at the MCIA Annual Meeting on February 27th. Both candidates are strong advocates for the value of certified seed and bring a wealth of experience to the board. Learn more about their backgrounds below.



**Alan Peters**

**Candidate for the Northern Region**

We are pleased to announce Alan Peters has declared his intention to run for the open seat representing the Northern Region. Alan, a resident of Ida, MI brings a wealth of agricultural knowledge and leadership experience to the table. A graduate of the Michigan State University Ag Tech Program, Alan has been deeply involved in the farming industry. He currently enjoys working at Metz Seed Farms, a 1900-acre, multi-generational family farm producing corn, soybeans, and seed wheat. Additionally, he collaborates in an agricultural retail business, providing essential inputs like seed, fertilizer, and chemicals to farmers across Michigan.

Beyond his professional work, Alan is an active member of the agricultural community, participating in organizations such as the Michigan Corn Growers Association and the Michigan FFA Alumni. He has also served as a Michigan FFA State Officer and held leadership roles within the National Corn Growers Association and the Michigan Corn Growers Association Board.

Alan values family time with his wife Corinna, along with their three children and their spouses, often enjoying the outdoors at their family cabin in Oscoda. His personal interests include MSU sports, Detroit Lions and Tigers games, hunting, ice fishing, and the occasional round of golf.

With his extensive experience in farming and agribusiness, Alan hopes to contribute to the Association by helping growers better understand the purpose of MCIA. He aims to enhance industry knowledge and advocate for the importance of seed certification and



**Matt Lutz**

**Candidate for the Thumb Region**

We are pleased to announce Matt Lutz of Sebewaing is seeking re-election for his second term as Thumb Region representative on the MCIA Board of Directors. Matt is a 3rd generation certified seed grower and has spent the last 38 years in the agriculture industry. Matt currently oversees 1,400 acres of crops including corn, sugar beets, white wheat, and black beans, many of those being certified seed acres. Matt also manages and operates a “farrow to finish” hog operation.

Matt is active in his community where he sits on the Sebewaing Township Board of Review, is a member of the Sebewaing Fire Department and is a Financial Officer for the New Salem Lutheran Church. He has been married to his wife Terri for 32 years and has two sons who are currently full-time farmers.

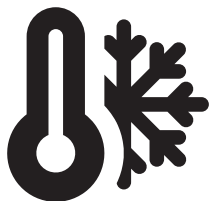
As stated above, Matt is a third-generation seed grower and has many years of experience in seed production. Matt cites that, “Seed production was an important part of our farm operation my whole life, and I understand the challenges and opportunities in the industry. If re-elected, I will make decisions that will make a positive impact on the industry and ensure its success for generations to come.”



Michigan Crop Improvement Association  
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## Fun Fact

The small Upper Peninsula town of Calumet is the snowiest place in Michigan with a yearly average of 187.4 inches and a record total of 390.4 inches set during the winter of 1978-79.



## Contact Us

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## Let's get social!

Find us on Facebook at:  
**Michigan Crop Improvement Association**

## Calendar of Events 2025

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Feb. 17</b><br>Order Change for Spring Foundation Seed Due                     | <i>MCIA Office</i>                         |
| <b>Feb. 27</b><br>MCIA Annual Membership Meeting                                  | <i>Eagle Eye Banquet Center • Bath, MI</i> |
| <b>April 15</b><br>Year-in-Advance Seed Orders Due<br>Membership Applications Due | <i>MCIA Office</i>                         |
| <b>April 15</b><br>AOSCA Regional Meeting   | <i>Virtual</i>                             |