



Michigan Organic Connections

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A Message from the Chair

I hope everyone is finding ways to enjoy the winter wonderland we have been living in for the last couple weeks. I recently got to see my kids build their first snowman, and am trying to enjoy every delight that winter brings, because I know that with each passing day there is more sunlight, and we are getting closer to the thaw of spring and the rush to get so many things done (30 days until equinox!). The season of conferences is well upon us and we have all enjoyed seeing familiar faces at our own Organic Intensives on January 12th, the Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference, and the Michigan Family Farms Conference. If you are interested in seed saving, we hope you'll join us at the last major event of the winter, the Central Michigan Seed Swap in Midland on February 24th.

And speaking of becoming more involved, we are actively recruiting members for our board. We aspire to expand and improve our programs this year, and that's only possible by bringing in some new faces and fresh energy. We have a short document outlining our expectations from board members and we are happy to share it with prospective members. Our board is a diverse group



of farmers & eaters alike, united by our commitment to the environment, learning, and community. Please do not hesitate to reach out if this sounds like something you might want to be a part of!

Another way to become better acquainted with our organization and mission is to scroll down to the list of organizations that we join every year. I was surprised to learn the breadth of our commitment, and am inspired by each and every organization on the list. Together we can make a difference!

Thanks for being a part of our community, and I wish you well as our growing season gets underway.

—Emily Nicholls

After managing CBI's Giving Tree Farm for seven years, Emily Nicholls changed gears this year to work on various agriculture-related consulting projects with MSU, MIFFS, and the USDA. She and her husband own Rust Belt Roastery, a certified organic coffee roasting company in Lansing, and chase around a 1 and a 3 year old. She was elected Chair of MOFFA's Board of Directors in April, 2018.

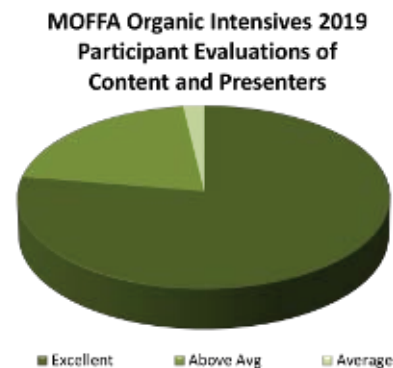
Fifth Annual MOFFA Organic Intensives

Final Report and Participant Evaluations

On January 12th MOFFA held its fifth annual Organic Intensives. This year for the first time we offered four separate sessions rather than three. More than 100 people attended and participated in in-depth educational sessions on one of four topics: Healthy Organic Livestock (with an emphasis on small ruminants (18), Organic Mushroom Production (31), Emerging Technology in Organic Row Crop Production (15), and Advanced Organic Soil Management (37).

ratings for various aspects of the program, across all four sessions.

The most gratifying comment was “This was the



Participants were asked to evaluate their experience at the end of the day, and 84% responded—78% of those in the livestock session, 84% in the mushrooms session, 80% in technology, and

89% of those attending the soils session.

Close to 40% of those returning evaluations said they were MOFFA members, and an additional 13% were not, but said that they plan to join. Just under half of the participants were farmers, 19% represented a food or farm related business or non-profit organization, 13% identified as organic gardeners, 6% were educators (including MSUE and Conservation District personnel), and 10% were students.

Once again, participants overwhelmingly felt that their time was well spent. The chart below shows

Rating "Excellent" or "Above Average" Across All Sessions	
Content / Information	97%
Presentation / Presenters	99%
Handouts	88%
Venue / Facilities / Location	95%
Registration Process	91%
Lunch	86%
Value (return on investment)	97%

most educational experience of my life.” But there were multiple comments along the lines of “Absolutely phenomenal presenter,” “Amazing day! Surprised & delighted with expertise level of speaker & attendees,” “Exceeded my expectations,” “Both presenters were excellent in depth of knowledge and ability to share it,” and lots of people just said “Thank You!”

There were some concerns about not being able to hear the speaker well in one session, and presenters occasionally getting off track, and there were concerns about lack of gluten-free and dairy-free options at lunch—but a couple people thanked us for the vegan dishes which made for a full lunch. In prior years some attendees expressed a desire to attend two less in-depth workshops rather than one full-day offering, but that wasn't the case this year—many people said they appreciated the depth of knowledge acquired from the full day.

Sessions in Review

Advanced Organic Soil Management

Dan Kittredge, the founder and executive director of the Bionutrient Food Association, was the presenter for this intensive. Dan is a seminal thinker who spoke both passionately and practically about the interweaving dance of soil biology, fully photosynthesizing plants, and human health. For those who might wish to go into greater depth with these principles, Dan will be back in Michigan on the 2nd and 3rd of March in Howell, Michigan.

Throughout the day, Dan provided lots of practical information on how we can produce food with heightened nutrition and at the same time have lower disease and pest pressure. He pointed out that we could greatly reduce inputs and thus lower the cost of food if we use cultural practices that cooperate with the soil biology to release nutrients already present in our soils. Dan mentioned that he likes to "see" his soil no more than 2 weeks a year. He does a light, very shallow tilling on his vegetable beds to prep them for spring planting. He then mulches heavily after planting. In August, when the mulch has broken down considerably, he broadcasts a cover crop cocktail. Dan pointed out that if we practiced what he and many others in regenerative agriculture have spoken about, we could raise our soil organic matter level one-half to one percent per acre per year. This translates to sequestering a lot of carbon from the atmosphere.

This intensive provided us with a foundation for a practical vision for renewed and deepened health of our food, the soil food web, our bodies, and the earth!

Healthy Organic Livestock



This session provided its attendees with four very informed speakers on the topic. Matt Shane, an organic sheep farmer and

currently Director of District 12 of the MSU Extension Service, took the lead and spoke on considerations and recordkeeping for certified organic livestock, and parasite management. Karry Trickey of the NRCS addressed pasture management. Mike Metzger, an Extension Educator in small ruminants

(among other areas) spoke on keeping meat and dairy goats healthy and productive, and Aimee Swenson Buckley talked about issues for small-scale sheep producers, from breed selection to market access. Most of the participants were new or relatively new to small ruminants, and their comments indicated that they felt they learned a lot about the considerations involved in small ruminant production. One participant said, "Encourages me to consider small scale goat/sheep production," and another expressed appreciation of the extensive materials provided—"Lots of important info included in the book. Very helpful. I will keep this for future reference."

Organic Mushroom Production

The enigmatic world of mushrooms and the ease of its organic production piqued the curiosity of 31 participants at this year's Organic Intensives. Our



attendees, who ranged from novice to experienced hobbyist, heard from two presenters whose combined experience and knowledge covered lab grown to yard grown, the scientific to the practical, and everything in between. Chris Wright began the session with an overview of fungal biology, mushroom growing, and the species most commonly grown. Chris, who conducts post-doctorate mycological research at MSU, has established the Easygrow Mushrooms and Composting company, selling spawn for mushroom production. This section alone generated enough questions and interest from the audience to constitute another OI topic.

The next section, presented by Mike Levine of Nature and Nurture, covered gourmet mushroom production on logs, and dove into practical application. Mike has been producing mushrooms on logs since 2000 and currently produces shiitakes for sale to local restaurants and stores. Again, the intense interest of the audience had to be kept on track. The speakers next presented more practical knowledge on outdoor cultivation of mushrooms in beds and the



producing mushrooms on logs since 2000 and currently produces shiitakes for sale to local restaurants and stores. Again, the intense interest of the audience had to be kept on track. The speakers next presented more practical knowledge on outdoor cultivation of mushrooms in beds and the

preparation of the substrates used. Finally, the hands-on demonstrations, when the participants saw Mike wield an angle grinder and Chris's 55-gallon drum set-up used to pasteurize straw, really capped off this worthwhile session; to say nothing of the opportunity for the "hands-on-learners" to hammer plugs into logs and plunge their hands into soggy straw. Each participant went home with a bag of straw inoculated with oyster mushroom spawn and an oak log plugged with shitake spawn. At least one participant was harvesting oyster mushrooms at home 3 weeks later.

Technology in Organic Field Crops



Our first presenter (Brent Shettler) talked about a fairly new tool that will be available in Michigan this year

that actually shoots electricity through the weed's stem, boiling the water within the stem causing the cell walls to burst. He also talked about the use of tillage with a purpose. Mike Houghtaling, our main presenter, discussed precision planting, downforce pressure, auto steer, and return on investment, speaking from knowledge gained and studies he conducted on his own farm. Participants seemed pleasantly surprised with how these advancements in technology might relate to their organic farms. Finally, Ben Sattelberg discussed the latest cultivation tools including camera guided cultivation.

We had very positive feedback from those who attended the session, with comments like "great speakers" and "exceeded my expectations."

A unique value of the Organic Intensives is the course materials compiled for each participant. Presentation powerpoints and supplemental reading materials were provided to maximize the learning in and after class. We appreciate the work our presenters did to help us make this information available.

Participants were asked to identify knowledge or techniques they learned that they plan to put into practice, and over 79% of the respondents took the time to do that. The information they provided will help us improve our future offerings. We received many, many suggestions for future Intensives. The three topics mentioned most often were more about livestock, more about mushrooms, and more about soil ... and most but not all of those comments were from people who attended those sessions this year. A wide variety of other topics were mentioned, but the most common were about homesteading, hoophouse culture, and permaculture.

In addition to participant fees, the program was made possible by our Sponsors for 2019 (see following article). Eleven of the participants attended on full-coverage scholarships made possible by a SARE mini-grant, and 13 received registration fee subsidies of \$55 to \$80 thanks to a generous donation by George and Anne Bird and other donors.

The Organic Intensives planning committee is gratified and encouraged to see the continued positive feedback expressed by the participants, and will begin planning soon for Organic Intensives 2019. If you have suggestions for next year's event, or would like to participate in the planning, please let us know. The date currently selected is Saturday, January 11th, 2020..

A Big Shout Out To Our 2019 Sponsors...THANK YOU!

by Dane Terrill

On behalf of the MOFFA board and our members, we would like to acknowledge the support of the following individuals and organizations who have so graciously made donations (sponsorships) for the 2019 calendar year. Their logos appear at the end of this newsletter, as well as [on our website](#).

As a non-profit membership-driven organization, these sponsorships enable MOFFA to carry on our mission of "Promoting organic agriculture and the development and support of food systems that revitalize and sustain local communities." Our

primary focus is providing educational opportunities, access to markets and processors, and support systems to current and future members regarding the benefits of growing (and consuming) organic crops that improve human, livestock, and environmental health.

Our annual flagship educational opportunity is called Organic Intensives. Over 120 attendees traveled from around the state to the Crop and Soil Sciences Building on the MSU campus for the 2019 Organic Intensives (covered above in this publication) on

January 12th. The support from these organizations allowed us to bring in top-notch speakers that otherwise couldn't be afforded, provided scholarships to qualifying registrants, and income streams that offset the costs for event promotion and printed materials for each attendee.

The financial support from these organizations has also given MOFFA the wherewithal to expand educational outreach events including partnering with OEFFA (Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association) to increase offerings of farm visits and supporting local and national organizations that represent growers, processors, and regulators focused on Organic Principles.

We cannot thank these individuals and organizations enough for their support; this translates to more offerings to our current and future members. If the need arises please support these organizations.

THANK YOU to EACH SPONSOR!

Dane Terrill is Director of Sales and Marketing at Crop Services International and Flowerfield Enterprises. He has served on the MOFFA Board of Directors since 2012 and has served as Treasurer since December, 2015.

Organizations MOFFA Supports

by Emily Nicholls

Many of our members may not know just how many organizations we support annually, both through paying membership dues as well as active involvement. Below is a list of each organization we joined for 2019 and a word about their mission. Please explore the list and become acquainted with all of the organizations that we hold dear to our own mission of promoting organic agriculture and sustaining local communities.

- [Michigan Food and Farming Systems](#) (MIFFS), a statewide non-profit with a mission to connect beginning and historically underserved farmers to each other and resource opportunities; ensuring social justice, environmental stewardship, and profitability.
- [Cornucopia](#), through research and investigations on agricultural and food issues, it provides needed information to family farmers, consumers, and other stakeholders in the good food movement and to the media.
- [National Organic Coalition](#), a national alliance of organizations working to provide a "Washington voice" for farmers, ranchers, environmentalists, consumers, and industry members involved in organic agriculture.
- [Organic Consumers Association](#), an online and grassroots 501(c)3 non-profit public interest organization, and the only organization in the U.S. focused exclusively on promoting the views and interests of the nation's estimated 50 million consumers of organically and socially responsibly produced food and other products.
- [Michigan Land Trustees](#), a non-profit dedicated to the goal of revitalizing rural and urban communities by promoting responsible land use

- and the development of localized food and energy systems, founded by Maynard Kaufman.
- [Crosshatch Center for Art & Ecology](#), builds strong communities through the intersections of art, farming, ecology, and economy.
- [Groundwork](#), a non-profit collaborating respectfully with citizens and leaders to protect everything we love about Michigan. We focus on solutions that improve daily life and build community health—things like food, energy, transportation, and economy.
- [Organic Farmers Association](#), whose mission is to provide a strong and unified national voice for domestic certified organic producers.
- [International Federation of Agriculture Movements](#) (IFOAM), the only international umbrella organization for the organic world, uniting diverse range of stakeholders contributing to the organic vision.
- [Michigan Environmental Council](#) (MEC), drives the environmental agenda in Michigan. We develop innovative policy ideas; communicate them to key audiences in a compelling fashion; and engage our members, community leaders and residents as effective local advocates for shared goals.
- [National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition](#) (NSAC) advocates for federal policy reform for the sustainability of food systems, natural resources, and rural communities.

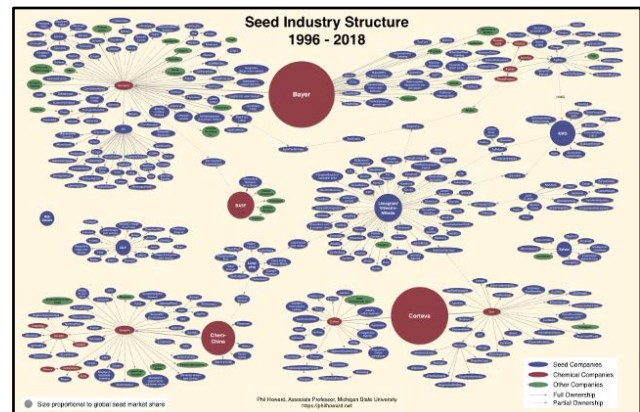
As we continue to strive to increase and strengthen our network, being involved and aware of the work that others are doing is invaluable. We are not doing this work alone, and it is important to honor and encourage the many ways we can work together.

Phil Howard Update—The Seed Industry

We've drawn readers' attention to Phil Howard's work in the past, with a review of his 2016 book, *Concentration and Power in the Food System: Who Controls What We Eat?* in [February 2017](#), and a two-part interview in [May](#) and [September](#) of that year. Since that time, Dr. Howard has set up a website to share his work on the power structure of a number of food-related industries at <https://philhoward.net/>.

In 2018 he released a new chart documenting changes in seed company ownership 1996-2018. <https://philhoward.net/2018/12/31/global-seed-industry-changes-since-2013/> notes that through mergers and acquisitions over the last four years, today just four companies—Bayer, Corteva, ChemChina, and BASF, all chemical companies—control 60% of global proprietary seed sales. This page also

links to the two earlier versions of this chart for comparison over time.



Why It Is Important To Contribute

by John Hooper

Recently we snail mailed to approximately 350 folks a request to renew, or reinstate, or join for the initial time our non-profit. We do this only twice a year and it is always a challenge to choose the words. As one who is daily inundated with requests for a myriad of just and worthy causes I understand the dilemma of designating those entities that will be the beneficiaries of one's generosity.

Years ago, with more awareness of the industrialization of our food and the contamination of the planet, many of us began to make informed decisions that we believed would spread through the population to rectify what was becoming the poisoning of mother earth. Our offspring and their children have continued to bring awareness and more scientific based information to bare. We – all of this earth's inhabitants – did not believe decades ago that change of the magnitude we are witnessing would be upon us so rapidly. Time is not on our side, as it once was.

Many changes need to happen, but carbon sequestration is the number one doable action that can have immediate and life affirming impact. Regenerative organic farming/growing principles and practices, if implemented on every continent, would reverse this trend toward self-annihilation.

MOFFA emerged 27 years ago, it metamorphosed from an astute collection of growers to become a non-profit all-inclusive entity, and at its core has been the desire to inform and educate. We who volunteer our time and energies do so because the mission of promoting organic agriculture and viable community food systems was foremost as our collective priority. All individuals prioritize their available discretionary agendas. Society can support those collection of folks that are addressing a critical issue even if time does not allow one to actively participate themselves.

The MOFFA Board realizes that many of you reading this piece find it difficult to allot real time to assist in our daily work but we sincerely would like you to know that contributing through membership is equally important. Our current work is to inform and teach as many individuals as possible about the critical imperative of protecting and regenerating our soil, water, and air, and the ecological biome which has evolved from these essential life sustaining components. We are not naïve enough or under the delusion that our impact will have a profound effect, but each individual conversation, each grower/farmer assisted, each community group spoken to, each event sponsored, all have significance. It will take all of us to change the direction, many hands in conjunction.

Our pockets are not deep! Almost all income is sourced from membership and sponsorship. The generosity of those of you that agree with our efforts and work bolsters us. We could not exist without our members, and the efforts we put forth would be enormously curtailed if not for your generous commitment.

It is with profound gratitude that we, the MOFFA board, acknowledges the importance of the partnership with all our community members as we

move forward through 2019! We welcome suggestions and thoughts on how to implement best our mission and vision. Contact us at moffaorganic@gmail.com, and/or [join MOFFA now](#). Thanks!

For over 40 years John Hooper has been an advocate and practitioner of the organic method of food production. He has been a member of MOFFA's Board of Directors since 2009 and served as its Chair from 2011 through 2015.

Money Well Spent

by Leah Smith

In this newsletter, various individuals have shared their enthusiasm for the work MOFFA does, and wants to continue to do and expand on in the future. Hopefully with your support! But we are not in this alone.



The Organic Farmers Association (OFA), as indicated above, is an organization MOFFA supports and, again, whose mission is to provide a strong and unified national voice for domestic certified organic producers.

We wanted to take this opportunity to tell you that for those of you who are a member of MOFFA, but as yet not of OFA, the association is generously offering membership to you as a MOFFA member at \$25 off the normal fee. Go give them a look!

And the benefits of being a MOFFA member continue! With a discount code available to MOFFA members who request it by email, you can register for the two-day workshop "Principles of Biological Systems" presented by Executive Director of the Bionutrient Food Association (BFA) and organic farmer Dan Kittredge. This training session on soil

building and the production of nutrient dense food will be on March 2nd and 3rd at Cross W Ranch, 3111 Pickney Road in Howell, MI. [Register now](#). In addition to the two-day workshop, he is also giving an evening talk on the 28th of February entitled, "[Unlocking Healing with Real Food](#)," which gives further insights into the connection between human health and food (same location). This talk is free to those registered for the workshop and \$10 to all others who wish to attend.



AND Michigan's cup runneth over as Kittredge will also be giving a talk on the campus of MSU. "Soil Health, Plant Nutrition, and Human Health: Making the Connections" is to be the topic on Thursday, February 28th from 3 to 4 p.m. in Room 225 of the Natural Resources Building.

Keep all of these opportunities and organizations in mind as you think about what you want from the year to come and the future beyond.

Who is MOFFA?

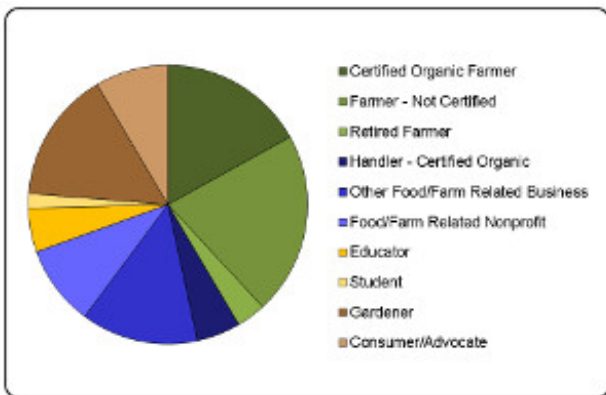
by Julia Christianson

When MOFFA was founded in 1992, its mission was very much the same as it is today—Promoting organic agriculture and the development and support of food systems that revitalize and sustain local communities. Although it arose from the earlier organization Organic Growers of Michigan whose members were all commercial growers, MOFFA's

focus from the first was toward a broader base—not just organic farmers, and not even just farmers, but all people who are invested in supporting local food systems that are based on ecologically sustainable growing principles and local community support. So MOFFA's membership has always included a wide variety of people, from various walks of life, who are

connected by their concern about the food we eat and how it is grown. While we are the Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance, the meaning of “organic” has in some senses undergone several major shifts in the years since 1992. MOFFA recognized then, and continues to recognize today, that many growers who are true to organic principles have chosen not to be USDA certified, for many reasons.

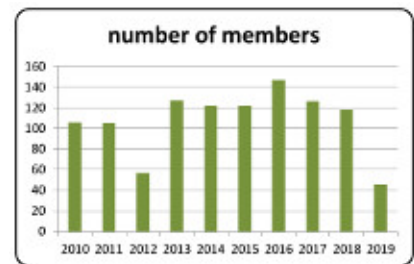
Today, MOFFA’s membership consists of approximately 42% farmers, fewer than half of whom are Certified Organic. In 2018, approximately 25% of MOFFA’s members were involved in business or non-profit organizations which are food and/or farm related; nearly 8% were educators or students, and the remaining 25% were organic gardeners or people who eat organically as much as they can,



and advocate for organic options for all.

In 2018, just short of 15% were new members and 69% had been members in the prior year, meaning another 16% were former members who had not been members in 2017. This illustrates a pattern that we tend to see year after year ... people do express their ongoing support of MOFFA, but in many cases only every other year. Nearly half—45%—of the 2018 members had been members in 2013, but only 27% had been members in every year since.

In spite of the fact that we only sent our 2019 membership campaign letter this week, we already have 46 members for 2019.



Eight of these are life members, and we appreciate them very much. Another 16 are representatives of our corporate sponsors, whose support enables us to present Organic Intensives and our other educational activities throughout the year. Board member Dane Terrill reports on these sponsors earlier in this newsletter. The chart above shows the number of members over the last ten years. During this period, 2016 stands out as the year with the greatest number of members (146); oddly enough, 2016 was the year in which we raised membership dues for the first time since the 1990s. In view of the fact that there are more than 800 USDA-certified organic operations in Michigan, not to mention all those which are growing organically but are not USDA-certified, and nearly 1,600 people have elected to receive our quarterly newsletter, we are somewhat at a loss to know why our membership numbers have never climbed above this level. We would welcome feedback on this issue, most gratefully.

The bottom line is this: Members are the lifeblood of the organization. Without member support, MOFFA could not exist. We hope that if you’ve been on the line about joining, 2019 will be the year you decide to do so; and for all of our long-time members, a big THANK YOU, and we look forward to hearing from you again this year.

Julia Christianson is MOFFA's "very part-time" Administrative Coordinator, and in her capacity as a MOFFA member serves as the volunteer Chair of MOFFA's Policy Committee.

MOFFA Farm Guide, Always Growing

by Julia Christianson

We’d like to welcome [Tortoise & Hare Farm](#) to MOFFA’s Guide to Michigan’s Organic and Ecologically Sustainable Growers and Farms. Tortoise & Hare, the newest listing in the Farm Guide, is a small farm that grows a diverse variety of vegetables using sustainable, chemical-free methods. Their first year in production was 2018 and they already serve four farmers’ markets a week in season, and have a 35-member CSA. They grow



close to 250 varieties of vegetables and fruits in addition to keeping honeybees and pasture raised chickens. “We believe in farming with the most ecologically friendly practices possible. For us, that starts with building soil health through composting and minimal tillage methods, as well as

supporting a diversity of wildlife on our farm including native plants, pollinators, and beneficial insects. By working with nature, rather than against it, we seek to provide the healthiest food directly to our community and build a deeper connection to what we eat and where it comes from!" Learn more

about Tortoise & Hare, and the other 151 Michigan farms listed in the Farm Guide, at www.moffa.net/farm-guide.html. In addition to the online Guide, a paper copy is also available for purchase on Amazon, or at www.moffa.net/farm-guide-book.html.



Central Michigan
SEED SWAP
SWAP, SHARE & SAVE!

MOFFA is pleased to be a sponsor of the Central Michigan Seed Swap which takes place this Sunday, February 24, at the Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S Badour Road in Midland, Michigan. Beginning at 11:00 am and continuing until 4:00 pm, the day includes six educational workshops, family fun and kids' activities, seed vendors and artisans, a keynote by legendary seedsman John Coykendall, and of course the opportunity to swap seeds with other seed savers. If you don't have seeds to swap, no problem—everyone is welcome, some of the vendors will have seeds for sale, and thanks to generous donations from progressive seed companies, there will be FREE seeds, as well. For more information visit www.smallhousefarm.com/seedswap/.

Farmer Seeking Temporary Housing for (Soon to be Certified) Farm Animals ... and other breaking news



In addition to the Michigan Organic Connections newsletter and special emailing to the list, MOFFA is also active on Facebook, sharing information and getting the word out on events and happenings in a hurry. And, when needed, requests like this.

A MOFFA member is seeking temporary (3-4 month) housing for her half dozen goats, 28-hen flock of chickens, and pigs. Lodging must be on a Certified Organic farm. She will provide feed (and leasing

fees, if needed), and will be happy to perform daily chores herself if the housing location makes this a viable option (she is in the Lansing area). Animals do not all need to go to the same home.

If you can help, please [let us know](#).

And remember, this and other useful announcements for the MOFFA community can be found on the MOFFA Facebook page.

From the Editor

We are now approaching the end of February and thoughts are turning towards the coming spring with anticipation and enthusiasm. Something to keep your eyes open for is the comprehensive scorecard

rating from the [Cornucopia Institute](#) (an organization I am very proud MOFFA supports) of every U.S. certifier of organics. Who is remaining true to organics and who is certifying industrial "organic"

operations? Currently, only the preliminary findings are available. Let their findings help you to be a more informed consumer of organics.

The subject of homesteading—complex, dynamic, and engaging—is going to be the theme of a forthcoming Michigan Organic Connections in 2019. If you have a specific subject you would like to see covered, an individual you would like to hear from, or would like to make your voice heard on this topic, please [get in touch](#) and share your thoughts.

In Money Well Spent, not only were MOFFA and OFA highlighted as two worthwhile organizations, but future talks in Michigan from Dan Kittredge were also featured. If you weren't lucky enough to hear Dan speak at our OI this year on Advanced Organic Soil Management, I strongly encourage you to go and hear him speak at these events. I was lucky enough to see his presentation; he is knowledge-

able, practical, innovative, and passionate on the subjects of organic farming and nutrient dense food. If you are not yet aware of the Bionutrient Meter being developed by the BFA, which we have been reporting on over the last year, [go read about it](#). They, too, could use your support in their efforts to educate farmers on the production of nutrient dense foods, and consumers on the importance of it. Kittredge has in mind a path forward for what seems, at times, an uphill battle of herculean proportions.

And let's all continue to look forward to the coming year with anticipation, enthusiasm, and even a touch more optimism.

Leah Smith
MOFFA Newsletter Editor

Memo

Interested in a **PRODUCE SAFETY GROWER TRAINING COURSE FOR SPANISH SPEAKERS?** Sponsored by MIFFS. The class is free to growers and will be offered two different days, Feb. 21 in South Haven and Feb 22 in Grand Rapids; [have a look](#).

Interested in **DAIRY GRAZING APPRENTICESHIP?** Sponsored by MSU. An informational meeting will be held at W.K. Kellogg Farm, 10461 N. 40th St. in Hickory Corners, on Feb. 26, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Attendance (and lunch) is free, but registration is encouraged; [have a look](#).

MOFFA News

Board – We are still actively seeking a member from the southeastern area of the state, ideally someone who is involved in urban agriculture. In fact, no matter who or where you are, if you are a MOFFA member who would be interested in serving on the board, please [let us know](#).

Michigan Organic Connections Newsletter – We continue to be interested in featuring new voices in the newsletter. If you are interested in contributing, or if you have a suggestion about content or can recommend someone who would be interested in contributing, please [contact Leah](#), our newsletter editor. We are currently selecting the themes for the newsletters of 2019. What do you want to hear about? If you're not interested in writing an article, please consider contributing photos of your farm or

your harvest; we're always looking for more illustrations.

Sponsors – MOFFA is now accepting Sponsorship from organizations and individuals who are willing to demonstrate their support of our mission with a financial contribution. The change to soliciting sponsorships generally, rather than specifically for Organic Intensives, will enable us to increase our activities throughout the year. Please take a moment to view the logos of those who have already pledged their support at the end of this message, and let them know you appreciate their sponsorship. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor for 2019, please [email us](#) or view the [sponsorship page](#) on the website.

WHY JOIN MOFFA : To position yourself and every dollar you donate toward spreading a wholesome, just, ecologically focused organic ethos across all of our local Michigan communities. Join online at <http://www.moffa.net/membership.html> or call 248-262-6826.

MOFFA Sponsors 2019

