



MOFFA
P.O. Box 26102
Lansing, MI 48909-6102
248-262-6826
moffaorganic@gmail.com
www.moffa.net

2013 Annual Report

2013 will long remain with us as a reminder of how perfect nature is to behold with both a spring, summer and autumn beyond compare and a winter that humbled—with power beyond mere mortal reckoning. This annual summation speaks not to volatility but rather to the consistency which MOFFA has steadfastly through these last decades been available and ready to lend a hand.

This past year MOFFA augmented our partnership with other fellow organizations, exhibiting at the Michigan Family Farms Conference, the Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference, Everybody Eats, the Michigan Farmers Market Conference, MSU's Organic Reporting Session, Southwest Michigan Harvest Fest, Bioneers Detroit, and the Great



John Hooper at MOFFA's Conference Booth

Lakes Fruit and Vegetable Expo, all of which allowed us to reach many more individuals with our limited resources. Look for a very likely “Organic University” intensive learning experience piggybacked with a conference in the near future. Our financial support for sponsoring, presenting and exhibiting at these events continues to be derived primarily from memberships and donations—for this we thank you.

MOFFA was very fortunate to have hired, on a very limited part-time basis, an extremely multi-talented administrative assistant, Julia Christianson, this year. Her excellent skills have graced almost every aspect of the organization. Three

enthusiastic and knowledgeable individuals joined the MOFFA board of directors in early 2013—Lee Arboreal, Dane Terrill, and Linda Torony. Their positive impact has made a huge difference already during their short tenure. MOFFA board members are on a daily basis working with some aspect of organic agriculture.

In 2013, four programs dominated the monthly meeting agendas, and rightly so as they had a significant role in our organization's future:

- Development of a Loan Policy, Loan Committee and the establishment of a three-way partnership with the Organic Farmer Training Program of the MSU Student Organic Farm (SOF), Michigan State University Federal Credit Union, and MOFFA to offer low interest loans to incoming candidates in the Organic Farmer Training Program (who are ineligible for ordinary student loans). MOFFA will act strictly as the fiduciary and be reimbursed from the loan funds for any costs incurred, and will not be responsible for the raising of those donated monies. MSUFCU will administer the program free of any fees, and individuals who may not have had the opportunity to attend the SOF will now have the ability to do so. Our loan policy also extends to other programs we may establish in the future.
- Revision of the MOFFA By-laws to facilitate changing the structure of the organization from a "Membership" to a "Directorship". MOFFA is and continues to be a membership-driven organization; redefining our legal status has allowed us more flexibility and common sense application of day to day procedures. We spent a very considerable amount of time on this including a member survey and a member vote which all were invited to participate in.
- Our Annual Meeting which saw the development of members' activities wish lists, and the establishment of a volunteer committee.
- And last but foremost, the Farm Guide previously titled Eating Organically, which now has a more defined, albeit lengthy title, the Guide to Michigan's Organic and Ecologically Sustainable Growers and Farms.

While the aforementioned items dominated our time, numerous other endeavors took place this past year. MOFFA is acting as the fiduciary sponsor of a \$35,000 high tunnel grant. We distributed hundreds of organic seed packets printed with instructions to 3rd graders in the Thumb Area of Michigan. Our policy committee has been active with sign-ons and comment letters on a variety of topics, but most impressively a wonderfully-crafted piece from a small farmer's perspective to the FDA in regard to the Food Safety Modernization Act. MOFFA continues to work and communicate with Senator Debbie Stabenow and would like to believe that with that support, she fought even more valiantly for strong inclusion of, and increased funding to, the organic programs in the new Farm Bill.

MOFFA maintains membership in the Organic Consumers Association, the Michigan Environmental Council, Michigan Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS), the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, and the Cornucopia Institute, and supports their work. We are resolved to continually upgrade the MOFFA website with the addition of new tabs (educational events, employment opportunities) and the welcome submission by members and non-members alike of relevant information to post; it has been most gratifying to the board to create a website that is befitting your organization. Of highest priority is the MOFFA Board of Directors' absolute willingness to be always just an email, telephone call or letter away from assistance with any question or concern you may have.

As a volunteer organization we oftentimes struggle to accomplish all we envision or attempt; but the commitment is solid and the mission statement our credo of daily life. We always welcome your input and wholeheartedly thank you for your support. Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance's relevance is each one of us seeking a healthy existence for all.

—John W. Hooper, Chair