



MOFFA
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2021 Annual Report

Each year the Chairperson of the Board of Directors prepares an annual report to share with the Board and membership. The year 2021 was unique in that we did not have a chairperson for the majority of the year and this report has been prepared by the Secretary. The purpose of this report is to document and review accomplishments and growth while providing inspiration for the next year of activity.

Perspective and Context

The year 2021 marked our 29th year of existence as a 501(3)(c) non-profit, statewide, organization. We continued to build on our long-standing commitment to education and outreach in pursuit of our mission of *"Promoting organic agriculture and the development and support of food systems that revitalize and sustain local communities"*. MOFFA continues to be a group of active volunteer Board members and a part-time, paid administrative coordinator working with the support of members and sponsors to prioritize organic policy, practices, and principles. The 2021 year was similarly constrained as 2020 and though some of the restrictions due to COVID-19 were lifted, the presence of the virus still affected the willingness of people to gather in groups.

Board of Directors

Long time Board member John Biernbaum resigned from his position as Chair and MOFFA Board member in early 2021. Dr. Biernbaum made major contributions to MOFFA since joining the Board in 2009, including leading a virtual one-man education committee.

The [Board of Directors](#) gained two new members, Merry Clark and Shara Trierweiler. Merry is following in the foot steps of her mother, Merrill Clark who was a founding member of MOFFA. Shara attended an OI in 2020 and demonstrated a real passion for organic agriculture education.



Merry Clark and Shara Trierweiler

Continuing members included: Tony Browne (2019), John Edgerton (2017), John Hooper (2009), Kido Pielack (2019), Linda Purdy (2019), Dan Rossman (2015), Dane Terrill (2012), Julia Christianson (2020), and Stacey Wilcox (2020). The board continues to be the sustaining force of the organization.

Officers were Dane Terrill, Treasurer; and John Hooper, Secretary. Our goal for 2023 is to continue to attract more members in order to keep the Board at a minimum of 12 members and to improve the diversity and geographic representation of the board.

We would also like to recognize that in 2021, MOFFA lost two good friends. Julia Christianson, served as our administrative coordinator 2013–2020 and was then nominated to the Board of Directors. Maynard Kaufman was a founding father and tireless supporter of MOFFA. Their contributions made MOFFA what it is today.



Julia Christianson and Maynard Kaufman

Board Meetings

To facilitate involvement of members from across the state, the Board of Directors uses a combination of in person, conference call, and video meetings. We have established a schedule of eight meetings per year with three in person and five conference phone calls. Once again, the Annual Meeting, which is usually held in person, was changed to a virtual meeting due to COVID. However, we felt able to hold our July meeting in-person at an out-door location. For 2021 we were invited to the home of our Board member Linda Purdy and her husband Lee Purdy, Westwind Farm. For convenience, the October meeting was held via conference call. The [schedule of meetings](#) is established at the start of the year and the schedule for 2022 is available on our website. We invite members to join us for any meeting. Contact us for details.

Policy Efforts

MOFFA is active as a member of the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC). Jessica Smith is the Chair of the Policy Committee and is the primary contact who participates in the calls and keeps the Board informed of developments with the organization. MOFFA also supports the Real Organic Project, the National Organic Coalition, and other organizations which are working to hold the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) to its legislatively mandated function. While MOFFA sees ecologically sound agriculture as ever-evolving, we continue to support the use of the word “organic” and the organizations that work to maintain the integrity of organic agriculture principles.

Organic Connections Newsletter

The quarterly [Michigan Organic Connections](#) newsletter continues to be a primary method of connecting and reaching our membership and many more organic supporters. Leah Smith continued to serve as Editor in 2021. Seeds, Food, and People’s Rights; Marginalized Members of the Agricultural Community; Human Connections; and Focus on Organic Intensives, were the themes for the quarterly

newsletter. This year a new column was added to the newsletter, Farm Profile. In this space we publish interviews with sustainable/organic farms around the state of Michigan. Farms in Barry, Genesee, Leelanau, Wayne, and Livingston counties were interviewed in 2021. The year 2021 included articles from guest authors C.R. Lawn and Akua Woolbright, and a re-print of an article written by Leah and Jessica Smith and published in Farming Magazine, "Homogenized Farming Parts I & II". There were also several book reviews, giving everyone some good ideas for winter reading. We continue to request and prioritize contributions from members and others. The complete archive of the newsletter from 1992 through 2021 is available on our website and provides a legacy of MOFFA's contributions. At the end of the year, the newsletter was reaching over 1,750 email addresses, and is mailed on paper to members who do not have internet access.

Website

The content of the [website](#) has continued to grow. It is a broad source of information and contacts about organic farming and gardening, local food and business related events and announcements. Historical aspects including past newsletters and annual reports are available. Information about educational and employment opportunities and land available for organic production is maintained up to date for the community. In 2021 a small committee began investigating the procedure to update the website to make it mobile friendly and give it an updated look. This work has been paused because of the loss of a board member but will be taken up again in 2023.

Publications

The most recent paper version of our Farm Guide was published in 2020. Though the paper version is a snapshot of the farms listed on May 11, 2020, the Farm Guide is continually updated on our website to reflect new farms started and those who have retired. At the end of the year, the Farm Guide listed 143 farms all over the state, 87 of which were certified organic. [The Organic Movement in Michigan](#), published by MOFFA in 2017, along with the paper version of the [Farm Guide](#), are available for purchase through the website, and royalties from these publications provide a small but consistent source of revenue. Our collection of [fact sheets](#), which are available on the website free of charge and provide a convenient source of information for consumers and growers new to organic practices.

Education Programs

Unfortunately, we were forced to cancel the 2021 Organic Intensives (OI), which would have been held in early January of the year. The OI is a project and event that all of the Board of Directors work on together. It requires advance discussion and selection of topics and speakers, working with the speakers on content and supplemental materials, and coordinating the myriad details necessary to produce this kind of event. Even though there was no OI in January 2021, much time was spent in late 2021 preparing for the 2022 OI.

Farm Tours

The Farm Tours were canceled for 2021 due to the presence of COVID-19. If you are interested in hosting a farm tour in the future, [please contact us](#).

Conferences and Meetings Attended

MOFFA typically attends about six conferences a year hosted by similar organizations that encourage ecological and local farming initiatives and the development of beginning farmers. We support these organizations through sponsorship and or by attending and setting up a table to display our literature and a wide range of agricultural books. Our thanks to Board member John Hooper who most often is the friendly face that conference participants greet at the MOFFA table.



John Hooper and Merry Clark with the books at the Great Lakes Bioneers2022 conference.

This past year, once again, saw many virtual conferences, but we were able to attend the Great Lakes Bioneers conference in person.

Membership

For the year 2021 we hoped to maintain 2020's memberships level of approximately 150, however our number only reached 114. These precious memberships included 67 individual or family memberships (\$40 per year), 12 small business memberships (\$60), 13 larger business memberships (\$100), and three students or persons with limited resources (\$20). We added two new life members bringing that total to 11 and eight sponsor members. The total of 2021 memberships was \$5,760 in dues with an additional \$320 in donations members included when paying their dues, for a total of \$6,080.

The importance of your participation as a financial supporting MOFFA member deserves to be emphasized. Your continued support each year is a reflection of how you value the benefits of organic farming as it contributes to your business and or life. Those of us benefiting from the organic tradition and the decades of hard work of those who built awareness of organic farming, can show our gratitude by continuing the tradition. Our contributions support educational and policy activities that insure the integrity of organic farming and nurture future organic farmers and organic food supporters.

Sponsorships

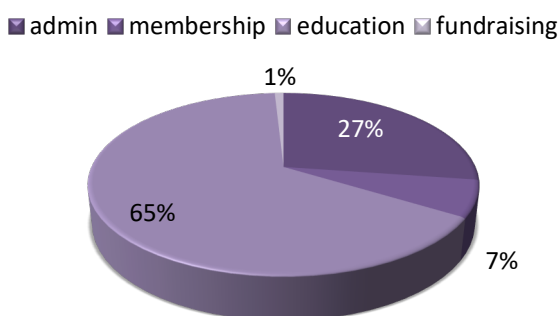
We would like to recognize the support of the following organizations in 2021. These organizations are committed to the success of MOFFA and organic farming for the long term.

Whole Foods	Blue River Hybrids	Ruesink Organic Farms
Morgan Composting	Everbest Organics	The Fertrell Co
GreenStone Farm Credit Services	Eden Foods	Plymouth Orchards

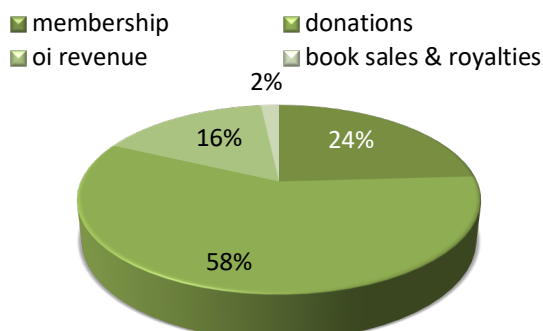
Financials

Total revenue for the year was \$29,625 on a cash basis, almost \$14,000 more than budgeted. This excess is almost entirely due to a \$10,000 donation from the Maynard Kaufman estate. There were also more membership dues, Organic Intensive registrations, and book sales than predicted as we were unaware how the pandemic would affect the year. MOFFA event expense was much higher than budgeted as well as contract labor, marketing, and supplies. This was mostly due to preparing for the 2022 Organic Intensive, which we had not planned on when the budget was drawn up.

Expenses by Class, 2021



Sources of Revenue, 2021



Total expenditures were \$16,552, approximately \$1,300 more than budgeted, for a net gain of \$13,072.

Emerging Priorities for 2022

- We have functioned for a year without a named Chairperson and though this has not caused any major problems it is not a state we can remain in. To this end we have two objectives for the Board of Directors for 2022. The first is to institute a committee with the goal of obtaining the funding for and searching for possible candidates to be an Executive Director. The second is to add three or four new members.
- Continue the Organic Intensives program with a date in January 2023, at the Plant and Soils Sciences Building at MSU.

- Maintain and increase membership with a more extensive membership campaign for the 2023 year starting in November of 2022. This campaign will be linked in with promotion of 2023 Organic Intensives.
- Improve the website's visibility and ease of use and continue to add valuable content.

Respectfully Submitted by Jessica Smith on behalf of the board of directors