

# 2022 Growing Together

FEBRUARY 18-20 | GRAND RAPIDS

## Friday, February 18

**7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m. Take Root Registration and Breakfast, Center Concourse**  
*(separate registration required, agenda available online)*

**11:30 a.m. Growing Together Conference Registration Opens, Center Concourse**

**1:00 p.m. Tours Depart** *(lunch is not included)*

### **Grandiose Grand Rapids**

Whether this is your first time in Grand Rapids or your 100th, take some time to learn about the city. From the history of the Pantlind Hotel to the Grand River, to Heritage Hill, a city tour guide will join us as we drive around town, sharing knowledge of the past and present. Then, visit Fredrick Meijer Gardens for a behind the scenes tour of the on-site greenhouses that supply these majestic gardens. Hear from the horticulture staff what it takes to maintain the landscapes, sculptures and indoor exhibits. Then, take some free time to wander the indoor spaces.

### **Syrup, Spuds and Safety**

Planning to include a maple syrup station at your next Project RED? Have you used the Potato Ag Mag during a classroom visit? Maybe your Young Farmers are hosting a county wide farm tour for high school students. Whatever your teaching method, this tour will offer you tips and tricks when reaching audiences of all ages. Visit a sugar shack and explore maple syrup resources from the Agriculture in the Classroom website. Tour a potato farm to watch how potatoes are processed while learning how to safely provide tours for large groups on your own farm. Educating others about agriculture can get sticky, but with the right tools and techniques it can flow pretty smooth!

### **Great Grilling**

Two engineers go on a fishing trip and...find out how locally owned Grilla Grills got started in the grill and pellet smoker business. Hear from their in-house chef how to perfectly smoke cuts of meat, trends in grilling and what the home-BBQ chef is looking for in locally raised and butchered meats. Round out the tour learning more about consumer purchasing preferences and direct from farm sales.

**6:00 p.m. Tours arrive at Grand Rapids Public Museum, Take Root participants join**

**6:00-10:00 p.m. Evening Reception at Grand Rapids Public Museum**

*Shuttle buses will be returning to the hotel in 15-20 minute intervals throughout the evening.*

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## Saturday, February 19

**7:00 a.m. Registration Opens, Center Concourse**

**7:15—9:45 a.m. Breakfast and program, Ambassador Ballroom**

### **10:00—11:00 a.m. District Meetings**

District 1	Winchester
District 2	Haldane
District 3	Gerald R Ford Room
District 4	Nelson
District 5	Kendall
District 6	Emerald
District 7	Heritage Hill
District 8	Pearl
District 9	Ruby
District 10	Grand View
District 11	Thornapple
District 12	Berkey

**11:00-11:15 a.m. Break, Center Concourse**

### **11:15 a.m.—12:15 p.m. Breakout Sessions**

#### **How to Create your Brand, Vandenburg A**

Learn how to build your farm or personal brand with the folks who brought us Cream and Sugar ice cream! Michigan Sugar and Michigan Milk Producers teamed up with a marketing group to develop the brand folks in agriculture, and beyond, love. Learn how they mix delicious products with agricultural knowledge to create a unique experience and meet consumers where they are.

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## **Cultivating Stories, Vandenburg B**

*Peggy Thomas, Author*

Share your love of agriculture by writing a children's book. Peggy Thomas, author of *Full of Beans*, the AFBFA 2020 Book of the Year will share ten easy steps to writing engaging stories. Learn how to develop your idea, choose a plot structure, capture a reader's attention, and turn your farming experiences into books kids will want to read again and again.

## **Sensory Inclusivity: How to Make your Event Work for Everyone, Governors**

*Katelyn Thompson and Tiffany Howell, State Promotion and Education Committee members*

Promotion and Education events reach children of all ages. Planning interactive learning activities for all abilities can be a challenge and as volunteers, sometimes we are at a loss for how to include everyone. Learn from a Potter Park Zoo docent and a pre-school teacher, tips for student management and creative activities to engage all children.

## **When Mind Reading is Not Enough: Communications Among Generations, Ford**

*Jolene Brown, Professional Speaker, Farmer, Family Business Consultant*

All too often it's the unspoken words and communication behavior patterns that cause the most frustration when living or working with others. With a range of preferences from those who would rather text and tweet to those who want to talk and meet, we need some specific management tools to bridge the gap and aid positive communication. Come to this upbeat session if you're interested in less frustration, cussing and ulcers...and more interested in productive communication, cooperation and positive results.

## **Am I on the FSMA hook? Continuing to Grow Safe Fresh Fruits and Vegetables without Running Afoul of the Law, Grand view**

*Phil Tocco, Extension Educator, Michigan State University Extension; Heather Borden, Logistics Coordinator, Michigan State University Extension; Emily Hollingsworth, Produce Safety Specialist, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development*

Growers may not know about the Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Rule. Still others may not know where to start or if they qualify. This workshop will give you enough background to help you ask the right questions about where to start.

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## **Give it the Old College Try!, Emerald**

*Katie Eisenberger and Collegiate Member Panel*

Network. Build. Advocate. - the three main goals of MFB's Collegiate Farm Bureau membership -but how? Both collegiate and county members should attend this session to network with one another and collegiate advisors, learn how to build a successful program of activities involving collegiate members, and receive promotional materials to advocate for others to join collegiate Farm Bureau once you return to your county and/or chapter!

## **Automated accounting is it right for you?, Ruby**

*Lisa Pruden, MFB County Office Support Supervisor*

In today's economy, it is vitally important for farm businesses to have access to financial information in a timely manner. Automated accounting programs are a great way to meet this need. Join us for an overview of how your business can benefit from such a program. Quick Books Online is what your county Farm Bureaus utilize now for their record keeping. During this class I will show you an example of what Quick Books can do for you, on a cash basis, to track your business and harness the power of knowledge and information.

## **Helping Families Manage Challenging Times, Pearl**

*Courtney Aldrich, Program Instructor, Child and Family Development, MSU Extension*

There are never enough hours in the day. Managing your farm, numerous schedules and moving pieces while balancing the demands of work and life can be challenging. Join us to learn some different ways to manage stress, family dynamics, and plan ahead from experts in this space.

**12:30—1:45 p.m. Lunch Program, Ambassador Ballroom**

**2:00—2:30 p.m. Mini Breakout Sessions**

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## **From the Ground Up, Planning Valuable County Events, Vandenberg A**

*Hannah Meyers and Becca Gulliver, MFB Regional Managers*

Ever find yourself at the end of the event and wonder what could have gone better? Join some event veterans to gain key event planning tips, learn how to effectively work with your fellow committee members, and how to utilize the resources of the county and state Farm Bureau.

## **Reinvigorate your Project RED, Vandenberg B**

*Volunteer panel*

Hosting school children on a field trip is no small task! Let us lighten the Project RED planning load by providing updated templates, talking points, best practices, and volunteer recruitment tips. Hear from fellow Farm Bureau members who host different style events to learn from their experiences. Grab an update Project RED guide book to take back to your county.

## **Booth in a Box: Putting Consumer Conversations in Action, Governors**

You have participated in Consumer Conversation Training, maybe even adjusted how you speak with your city-slicker cousin, but now what? Put this training into action by engaging consumers in your community. Use these ready-made display kits to meet consumers where they are at by hosting a booth at the farmers' market, local charity 5K, local cider mill or greenhouse.

## **Business Management for Farms, Gerald R Ford Room**

Details coming soon!

## **Michigan Farm Bureau Legislative Update, Grand View**

*Industry, Conservation, and Regulatory Relations (ICRR) Department Staff*

Sit-in on a state and federal legislative update from Michigan Farm Bureau's government relations staff. Learn some tips on how to build relationships with elected officials and use information and resources from Farm Bureau to be a voice for agriculture through a Young Farmer moderated panel.

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## **Small Budget, Big Results, Emerald**

Making an impact doesn't always require large financial investments. Farm Bureau leaders have been busy engaging other farmers or community members in meaningful ways with small budgets. Check out these examples then consider how your county Farm Bureau could plan something with little cash and a few volunteers to make a large impact!

## **So you want to sell direct?, Ruby**

*Carla Schultz, Eight Plates Farm*

Who is your audience? Where are they located? How do you decide what your offerings or products will be? Hear from Tuscola County farmer, Carla Schultz share her experiences selling her farm's meats through their online retail business and local in-person sales. Find out what technology worked for her payment options, website and marketing.

## **Dealing with Uncertain Times, Pearl**

*MSU Extension and Farmer Panel*

Uncertain times and stress affect us all. Join this panel to learn how they handle uncertainty and stress in their lives, who they have on their team and who they turn to when it all seems too heavy.

**2:30—2:45 p.m. Break, Center Concourse**

**2:45—3:15 p.m. Mini Breakout Sessions Repeat**

**3:15—3:30 p.m. Break**

**3:30—4:30 p.m. Breakout Sessions**

## **Thinking Outside the Box, Engaging with Members through New Events Leadership Development, Vandenberg A**

*Bridget Moore and MFB Members*

Have you done the same event every year in your county? Come to this session to refresh your ideas and hear about fun and creative events that can be easily implemented. This session will encourage you to step outside the box with your next event and will feature a panel of members who put on these events.

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## **Unboxing the FARM Crate, Vandenberg B**

*Michelle Blodgett, Manager, Michigan Agriculture in the Classroom*

So what is a FARM Crate anyway? Many county Farm Bureaus have shipped these directly to schools so now is your chance to explore all 10 crate themes. Try out a few of the hands-on activities, watch the farm videos and learn how you can engage, as a volunteer, to help teachers use crates in their classrooms. Consider how the FARM Crate fits into your county's Promotion and Education activity line up.

## **P&E Idea Expo, Governors**

Learn from five county Farm Bureaus' successful projects! Gain an in-depth perspective on the five projects shared at MFB's State Annual P&E Showcase. Hear from the volunteer leaders specifically how they planned and executed these unique events. Events include a public library partnership, community festival, food donations, Halloween activities, and even the construction of a learning exhibit trailer!

## **Grant Writing for Beginners, Gerald R Ford Room**

*MSU Product Center*

Staring at a grant application and don't know how to start? Or struggling to find grant funding in the first place? Look no further. The experts at the MSU Product Center will help you identify funding sources, how to get started on your grant, and better understanding the jargon and limits of different types of grants.

## **Market Update, Grand View**

*MSU Agriculture, Food and Resource Economics Faculty*

Details coming soon!

## **Policy Development 101, Emerald**

*Emily Reinart, Grassroots Policy Outreach Specialist*

With more than 100 different policies in the MFB Policy Book, our organization is anchored by solid policy positions crafted and voted on by you, the members to serve as the year's navigational chart....so how can you get involved? This session will provide you with an in-

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depth understanding of our grassroots policy development process and immediate action steps to help you get started.

## **Speaking Ag through Social: How to Become an Agfluencer**, *Ruby*

*Tony Hansen, Katie Eisenberger, Makaila Kent, Michigan Farm Bureau*

Using social to tell your agriculture story? Join this session to help take your social to the next level. Learn about the latest trends, creating Instagram stories, visualizing a weekly content calendar, and what apps will help you create engaging content.

## **What to Do on Your Farm's Worst Day**, *Pearl*

*Craig Anderson, Michigan Farm Bureau and Wayne Bauer,*

Life is unpredictable and sometimes unforeseen circumstances put us in the driver's seat on our farm's worst day. Learn from these safety experts about how to mitigate risk, who to call and what to do when challenges or tragedy strike.

**5:00 p.m. Reception**, *Center Concourse*

**5:00 p.m. Young Farmer and Promotion and Education Chairperson Reception**,

**6:00 p.m. Evening Banquet**, *Ambassador Ballroom*

**8:30—11:00 p.m. Casino Night**, *Imperial Ballroom*

## Sunday, February 20

**7:30 a.m. Morning Devotions**

**8:00 a.m. Breakfast and Closing Session**, *Ambassador Ballroom*

**9:15—11:00 a.m. Morning Workshops**

**Successful Living in a Turbulent World**, *Vandenburg A*

*Bruce Boguski, Keynote Speaker*

In this tumultuous world, each day brings new challenges. Volatility in the markets, the

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strain of an unprecedented pandemic, rising inflation and unemployment plus countless other factors have made it impossible for Americans to live without tremendous pressure and stress. In this powerful workshop, you will receive the tools needed to reduce stress and calm anxiety. Now is the time to become mentally resilient to successfully overcome the serious challenges facing us in today's world. Covered in this presentation: strategies for overcoming anxiety and stress, specific techniques for performing at a high level under pressure, and managing emotions for steady, powerful performance

**Center for Food Integrity, Vandenburg B**

*Donna Moenning, Center for Food Integrity*

Details coming soon!

**P&E County Chairperson Networking, Governors**

*Tonia Ritter and Amelia Miller, Michigan Farm Bureau*

Whether you are brand new to leading your county Promotion and Education efforts or you have served your county Farm Bureau for many years, this workshop is for you. Learn about new resources, share ideas with other P&E volunteers, and help shape future resources with your ideas. Build your network of likeminded leaders to share Michigan agriculture's story!

**Money, Markets and Me: Hedging and Management Tips, Emerald**

Navigating fluctuating markets, global demand and on-farm decisions is a tall order for any farmer. Join this workshop to hear from commodity and hedging pros about navigating these tenuous spaces for your farm and family.

**Business and Financial Planning 101, Gerald R Ford Room**

*GreenStone Farm Credit Services*

Looking to boost your business plan? Interested in taking a deeper dive into farm financials? Join GreenStone Farm Credit Service experts to walk through farm business management practices and opportunities in detail at this hands-on workshop!

**11:00 a.m. Adjourn**