



MICHIGAN
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
P.O. Box 30014
LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909-7514

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND THE
SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, June 13, 2019 9:30 a.m. Michigan State University Pavilion for
Agriculture and Livestock Education, 4301 Farm Ln, Lansing**

The Senate Agriculture Committee was called to order by Senator Daley at 9:30 a.m.

The House Agriculture Committee was called to order by Representative Alexander at 9:30 a.m.

The Chair requested attendance be called:

**MEMBERS PRESENT: Representatives Alexander, Meerman, Eisen, Elder, Coleman,
Garza, Cynthia Johnson, Witwer.**

ABSENT/EXCUSED: Representatives LaFave, Wendzel.

Representative Alexander made a motion to excuse all absent members. There being no objections, all absent members were excused.

Representative Meerman made a motion to adopt the minutes of the meeting held on May 8, 2019. No objections being offered, the minutes were accepted as presented.

Michigan State Executive Director Joel Johnson, representing the United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency, Michigan State Conservationist Garry Lee, representing the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Senior Risk Management Specialist Adrienne McTaggart, representing the United States Department of Agriculture Risk Management Agency, provided a presentation regarding the United States Department of Agriculture Farm Production and Conservation and reviewed the following topics: Assistance Programs; Loans, Incentives, and Grants; Safety Net programs, financial Assistance, and Insurance for Mitigating Risk; Financial and Technical Assistance to Implement Conservation Activities; and Customer Service. Questions and discussion followed. State Public Affairs and Outreach Coordinator Savannah Halleaux, representing the United States Department of Agriculture Michigan Farm Service Agency, approached to answer questions from committee members.

Director Gary McDowell, and Chief Deputy Director Ken McFarlane, both representing the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, provided testimony regarding various Michigan programs and initiatives to help farmers with ongoing challenges due to recent effects of weather on Michigan's agriculture industry. Questions and discussion followed.

President and CEO Dave Armstrong, representing the Greenstone Farm Credit Service, provided testimony regarding individual solutions and programs available to farmers from the Greenstone Farm Credit Service. Questions and discussion followed.

Ron Hendrick, Dean of the Michigan State University College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Jeff Dwyer, Director of Michigan State University Extension, provided a presentation regarding: The College of Agriculture and Natural Resource's Role in Michigan's Agriculture System; Current Challenges in Agriculture and How They Affect Producers; Programs and Efforts to Help Farmers; the Extension Program; AgBio Research; and Outreach Programs. Questions and discussion followed.

Rebecca Park, representing the Michigan Farm Bureau, Doug Darling, a Monroe County Farmer, and Stephanie Schafer, a Clinton County Farmer, provided testimony on the personal stories of being farmers in Michigan, and the current and future challenges that have arisen as a result of the recent wet spring. Questions and discussion followed.

President Tim Boring, representing the Michigan Agri-Business Association, provided testimony on the past, present, and potential future challenges to Michigan's Agriculture Industry due to changing climate. Questions and discussion followed.

Philip Korson, representing Michigan Cherry Growers, provided testimony regarding the challenges to the Michigan Cherry Industry due to increased sales of imported cherries. Questions and discussion followed.

Senator Daley adjourned the Senate Agriculture Committee meeting at 12:03 p.m.

There being no further business before the committee, Representative Alexander adjourned the House Agriculture Committee meeting at 12:03 p.m.

Representative Julie Alexander, Chair

Dakota Soda, Committee Clerk (517) 373-0350