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Michigan Corn Grower Discusses Trade on National Level

LANSING, MICH. – Michigan Corn Growers Association (MCGA) chairman and Corn Marketing Program of Michigan (CMPM) board member Ed Breitmeyer, of Buckley, attended the U.S. Grains Council's 51st Annual Board of Delegates Meeting to discuss new markets and opportunities to increase foreign trade. Also in attendance was Nikki Beattie, the membership coordinator for Michigan Corn.

The U.S. Grains Council is an organization that develops export markets for U.S. corn, barley, grain sorghum and related products. "Through the Council, we work to maintain and increase exports that are vital to global economic development and to the profitability of U.S. agriculture," explained Breitmeyer. Breitmeyer attended this year's Annual Board of Delegates Meeting, held in San Francisco, Calif., to learn more about international markets and potential opportunities for new markets that would increase dramatically with the adoption of free trade agreements.

Over the course of four days, farmers and agribusiness representatives from across the United States gathered to strategize and discuss issues related to the Council's work during the past year, as well as set priorities and directives for the upcoming year. They worked to develop strategies to increase market opportunities, enable increased trade and provide product to growing international economies through the U.S. corn, barley and sorghum trade.

"We have a high-quality product that is being exported throughout the world and the low value of the U.S. dollar is only helping our cause," said Breitmeyer. "We believe that even as the U.S. dollar strengthens, these countries will realize the quality of our product and continue to import from us."

The meeting also featured a variety of guest speakers, ranging from agricultural experts to scholars from around the world. Delegates also learned about the ever-growing export market opportunities for dried distiller's grains, which are a valuable co-product of the corn-ethanol production process. The event concluded with the Council delegates electing the 2011/12 Board of Directors. While at the event, Breitmeyer also attended a meeting of the Membership and Communication Advisory Team, for which he was elected to serve for a two-year term beginning in 2009 and will reapply for this year.

Headquartered in Lansing, the CMPM is a legislatively-established statewide program that utilizes one-cent per bushel of Michigan corn sold. Investments are made in the areas of research, education, market development, and new uses in an effort to enhance the economic position of Michigan corn farmers. The CMPM works cooperatively with the Michigan Corn Growers Association (MCGA), a grassroots-membership association representing the state's corn grower's political interests since the 1970's. Michigan's corn industry adds more than one billion dollars to the state's economy annually and in 2010, Michigan's corn farmers harvested a record setting crop of more than 315 million bushels.. For more information, visit the website of the MCGA and the CMPM at www.micorn.org.

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