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Michigan Corn Growers Association in High Gear

LANSING, Mich. – Members are in high gear as the Michigan Corn Growers Association (MCGA) kicks into full-swing in the New Year. With membership events coming up, scholarship deadlines approaching and new benefit programs being revealed, membership in the MCGA has never been more valuable or exciting.

Annual Meeting:

Join your neighbors, fellow corn growers and industry leaders from across the state for a day full of information, networking and more at the 2012 MCGA Annual Meeting! The meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 7 at Thomas M. Cooley Law School in downtown Lansing.

As a special bonus, anyone signing up to become a member at the Annual Meeting, or other membership events throughout the past year, will be entered into a drawing for a \$500 Visa gift card that will be awarded at the meeting.

This year's event will feature topics and speakers including the future of Michigan's agricultural industry with Lieutenant Governor Brian Calley and Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Chief Deputy Director Gordon Wenk; market strategies with Virgil Robinson of Pioneer Hi-Bred International; a national perspective from Rick Tolman, CEO of the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA); an ethanol update from Jeff Sandborn, MCGA president and NCGA Ethanol Committee member; and a report of the U.S. Grains Council 2011 Corn Mission to Japan, China, Korea and Vietnam from Pat Feldpausch, Corn Marketing Program of Michigan president.

The annual meeting begins with registration, including a full breakfast, starting at 9 a.m., with the program to follow at 9:30 a.m. MCGA members may attend the annual meeting free of charge, and non-MCGA members may attend at a cost of \$20 per person. For further information on attending the annual meeting, please contact the Michigan Corn office.

Collegiate Scholarship:

MCGA understands that the future of Michigan's agricultural industry depends on developing and educating our young people. Another valuable benefit for our members is the 2012 MCGA Scholarship Program, which is directed toward Michigan students who are interested in working in the ag industry.

The MCGA board sees the program as a great way to give back to members while promoting higher education to young adults. With an aging population, a priority must be put on young peoples' education and this is a wonderful way to support their education, and help ensure that the future of agriculture will be in good hands.

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The MCGA is currently accepting applications for the 2012 collegiate scholarship program -- but the deadline is approaching fast! The board will award a minimum of two scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each. All members of the MCGA, including students, growers and associates, as well as children of members, between the ages of 17 and 25 are qualified. To be eligible, applicants must be enrolled as a full-time student at a post-secondary educational institution during the fall 2012 semester. All applications must be received in the Michigan Corn Growers Association office no later than 5 p.m. Monday, February 13, 2012.

Applications can be obtained from the MCGA office or on the Michigan Corn website. Only one application per membership number will be accepted. Students enrolled in a full-time educational program with an interest in the agriculture industry are eligible for a one-year membership in the MCGA for \$20. Grower and associate memberships in the MCGA are \$60 for one year, \$155 for three years, or \$500 for a lifetime.

Membership Events:

The annual meeting and scholarships are just the beginning. MCGA is hosting several other events that will provide members the opportunity to mingle with industry leaders and fellow growers. These events include our annual golf outings in August and Ethanol Night at the Races in September.

Golfers have the option of participating in one of two golf outings for 2012. The eighteenth annual Thumb Area Golf Outing will be held on Aug. 14 at Verona Hills Golf Club in Bad Axe. The Central Michigan Golf Outing will be held on Aug. 16 at Centennial Acres Golf Course in Sunfield. This is a change from the past in that the golf outings will take place on different days. Mark your calendars now!

Check-in for both outings begins at 9 a.m. with a shotgun start at 10 a.m. Both outings will be a scramble format (hit from the best team shot) so golfers of all skill levels will have a great time. Participants will enjoy lunch while on the course and will conclude the day with dinner and a short awards ceremony.

Ethanol Night at the Races will take place on Saturday, Sept. 8 at Dixie Motor Speedway in Birch Run. MCGA members must pre-register for the event and will receive free entry for themselves, while spouses and guests are welcome to attend for a fee. The first four adult guests of an MCGA member will receive a reduced rate of \$15 per person and additional adult guests will be charged \$20 per person. Children under the age of 12 will be admitted for \$5 per child and children under the age of 6 are free.

Registrants will each receive a free commemorative t-shirt, as well as a steak dinner from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Participants will also have the opportunity to examine ethanol-powered projects from Kettering University, and enjoy a full night of racing with the green flag dropping at 7 p.m.

The MCGA is proud to provide these along with other opportunities and benefits to members. For further information about any of the membership events, activities or opportunities, please contact the Michigan Corn office at 1-888-323-6601 or visit the website at www.micorn.org.

Headquartered in Lansing, the MCGA is a grassroots-membership association that has represented the political interests of the state's corn growers since the 1970s. The MCGA works cooperatively with the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan (CMPM) a legislatively established program that utilizes one-cent per bushel of Michigan corn sold and invests in research, education, new uses and market development. 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.