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Veteran Michigan grower honored as Master Farmer

Frank Lipinski's positive influence on state's agriculture, farmers spans more than 50 years

LANSING, Mich. – When a Michigan farmer or a reporter in the media has a question regarding farming operations or the agricultural industry, it's a good bet that Frank Lipinski will have the answer.

In a career spanning more than 50 years, Lipinski has grown from a novice but enthusiastic young farmer from Chicago into an experienced and knowledgeable agriculture authority who has tended Tralane Farms in Buckley, Michigan for more than 40 years.

During the recent Michigan Agribusiness Association Conference in Lansing, Lipinski was recognized by his peers and honored as a 2012 Master Farmer. Each year, the Master Farmers are nominated by peers and chosen by a committee of agricultural industry leaders based on farm management, innovation, conservation and leadership.

"It's quite a privilege," Lipinski said. "I know a lot of people are qualified to be considered for Master Farmer, so to be in that group is really a great honor. I'm very fortunate to have thoughtful neighbors who, unknown to me, nominated me."

Lipinski said his road to farming success was different from many of his peers.

"It's really quite amazing, after growing up in Chicago I was a little bit behind the curve when I started at Michigan State to study farming," Lipinski said. "But in my first dairy class, my professor, "Woody" Snyder, said something that I've never forgotten: 'Those of you who will be successful farmers are the ones who will do the ordinary things extraordinarily well.' That attitude has governed the way I have farmed over the years and how I've tried to contribute to the organizations I've worked with."

The argument for Lipinski's inclusion is a strong one, as not only has he been an educational advocate for agriculture, but he has also been an active producer. In the past Lipinski has had a dairy operation along with being an outstanding crop producer and seed salesman.

"Frank is not only a farmer, but has dedicated himself to educating others about agriculture and what goes on on the farm," said Jody Pollok-Newsom, Executive Director of the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan. "He is an outstanding spokesperson for agriculture and has built an extensive knowledge, from crop production and livestock to fruits and vegetables. And he is very generous about sharing his expertise with others to help their operations."

Lipinski has served on numerous boards, including the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan; the Michigan Corn Growers Association; Michigan Milk Producers Association; United Dairy Industry of Michigan; Farm Service Agency; as well as more than 40 years on the Buckley Township board of review.



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In 2008, Lipinski retired from full-time farming, but continues selling sweet corn and seed corn.

“If you are ever up in the Buckley area in the summer, you have to stop by Frank’s to get some sweet corn,” added Pollok-Newsom. “It is some of the best corn you will ever have and it is certainly worth the drive!”

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.

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