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Spartan Fans Learn About Corn Heat During Pregame Tailgate

LANSING, MI – A last-second touchdown pass and victory for Michigan State University was not the only thing to bring a warm glow to MSU’s campus last Saturday.

Thanks to America’s homegrown energy source – corn – MSU fans were able to stop by the Spartan Sports Network’s broadcasting booth to learn about corn heat during WJR radio’s football pregame show.

For the final MSU home football games of the season, the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan has partnered with corn stove dealer Teresa Wood of Wood & Sons Corn Bin in Williamston to heat the WJR broadcast tent. WJR broadcasters and their guests will be kept warm using heat from corn stoves, while also educating Spartan fans about the benefits of heating with corn. Corn heating units provide an environmentally friendly heat source throughout the three-hour events.

Before the thrilling Oct. 22 game versus Wisconsin, attendees learned about corn heat firsthand by examining the heating unit in the booth and reading informational flyers that were handed out. Corn heating units include stoves, furnaces or boilers that generate heat from burning corn kernels. Although these units are similar to wood-burning stoves, they are designed to burn a dry, granular fuel, such as shelled corn. Some units are multi-fuel or biomass units and can burn other fuels in addition to corn, such as pellets, nutshells, wood chips and small grains like rye, wheat and barley.

“Heating the broadcast tent is a great opportunity for us to showcase the fact that corn is a very versatile crop and has a multitude of uses, including heating purposes,” said Jody Pollok-Newsom, Executive Director of the CPM. “Michigan’s farmers continue to improve their efficiency while growing more and more corn each year on the same number of acres.

“We have expanded the use for this wonder crop from food for the nation and our livestock to heating our homes and businesses with corn heating units.”

Pollok-Newsom, who has overseen the MSU Tailgate-Corn Heat partnership for its five-year run, will be interviewed during the Nov. 5 pregame show prior to the MSU-Minnesota game. Corn Heaters will be provided for the Nov. 5 pregame as well as the Nov. 19 pregame before the MSU-Indiana game.

Corn heating units can be used for a variety of heating purposes. Corn can take the place of other heating sources that have been used in the past, such as electricity, propane, heating oil, natural gas or wood. In addition, corn heating units are also environmentally friendly.

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“By using corn for heating purposes, we can help decrease our use of fossil fuels. As forests, oil and other energy sources continue to be depleted, it is comforting to know that our corn supply is replenished annually and can be used to create an alternative heat source that is renewable year after year,” added Pollok-Newsom. “Michigan’s corn farmers are once again expected to grow and harvest a record crop of more than 335 million bushels this year. The crop will be more than enough to meet the feed, fuel and energy needs of our many consumers.”

Headquartered in Lansing, the CPM 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 CPM 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 2009, Michigan’s corn farmers harvested a record-setting crop of more than 309 million bushels. For more information, visit the website of the MCGA and the CPM at www.micorn.org.

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