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Michigan Corn Growers Appointed to National Posts

LANSING, MI – Michigan corn growers are positively influencing the future for farmers statewide and nationally with the recent appointment of five Michigan Corn Growers Association (MCGA) members to prestigious national corn grower work groups.

Pat Feldpausch, Clark Gerstacker, Scott Miller, Jeff Sandborn and Val Vail-Shirey are among members and state staff appointed to serve on the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) Action Teams and Committees.

“The NCGA and the MCGA are both grassroots organizations, so it is vital to have active involvement by our grower members,” said Jody Pollok-Newsom, Executive Director of the MCGA and Corn Marketing Program of Michigan (CMPM). “The NCGA Action Teams take the lead in facilitating problem-solving efforts and addressing policy issues that impact corn growers across the nation. These selected teams decide the path NCGA will take throughout the next year. As one of 28 active corn-growing states, we are very excited to have five representatives appointed to national positions.”

Feldpausch, a MCGA board member, CMPM President and corn grower from Fowler, was appointed to serve on the Production & Stewardship Action Team. This action team is responsible for conservation and environmental issues, including water quality. The team also focuses on transportation and grower education. The main focus was water and transportation issues, including water quality, railroads, and the locks and dams of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers.

Gerstacker, MCGA board member, NCGA corn board member and a corn grower from Midland, was appointed to serve as the corn board liaison on the Research & Business Development Action Team. The team focuses on building a renewable products industry with corn as a chief feedstock to increase utilization of corn and increase the opportunity for grower profit. Gerstacker is in his second term on the RBD Action Team.

Miller, a MCGA board member and a corn grower from Elsie, was appointed to serve his third term on the Trade Policy and Biotechnology Action Team. The team works to support the availability, marketability and acceptance of biotechnology around the world, while protecting the integrity of U.S. corn. The group is also charged with providing quality information to NCGA member organizations and members on current approvals and marketability of biotechnology products.

Sandborn, MCGA president and corn grower from Portland, was appointed to serve a third term on the NCGA Ethanol Committee. This committee works to unify the promotion, marketing and policy development for the ethanol industry in the United States. As part of his role in the ethanol committee, Sandborn participated in the September 21 stock-car event announcing that the NASCAR Biofuels Program had reached one million competition miles on ethanol.

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Vail-Shirey, MCGA's Policy Director, was appointed to the Public Policy Action team. She will be serving her first term on the committee that is responsible for giving direction to NCGA efforts in addressing public policy issues that impact the U.S. corn economy as well as coordinating NCGA policy efforts to reflect the policies adopted by the NCGA Corn Congress. Vail-Shirey has engaged in the 2012 Farm Bill, working to assure Michigan Corn Growers' needs are met and yet finding ways to equitably cut spending where it makes sense.

"It is a positive reflection on not only these growers, but on Michigan as a whole when our corn farmers and staff are recognized and asked to bring their knowledge and experience to provide input on the national level," said Pollok-Newsom. "Their work on the action teams will greatly benefit all corn farmers and the entire corn industry."

Headquartered in Lansing, the MCGA is a grassroots-membership association that has represented the state's corn growers' political interests 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 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 CMPM at www.micorn.org.

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