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Deadline Fast Approaching for “Free Groceries for a Year” Contest

LANSING, MI. – Michigan’s corn farmers would like to remind residents that the deadline for the Michigan Farmers Feed US “Free Groceries for a Year!” contest is fast approaching. This opportunity, which allows a Michigander to win a \$5,000 gift card for groceries, is a great way for residents to grab a cart and stock it with their favorite locally grown and processed foods.

To take advantage of this opportunity, you must act quickly. To enter the contest, which runs through Oct. 12, you must register online at www.farmersfeedus.org/mi. Visitors will watch a series of short videos to learn about Michigan’s dedicated and caring farmers and catch a glimpse of how diverse Michigan agriculture really is.

The sweepstakes showcases ten Michigan farmers who, through their online videos, guide consumers through the simple registration process, dish out some agricultural trivia and open up their farms for a virtual tour. Featured commodities include apples, beef, corn, dairy, eggs, lamb, pork, vegetables, and soybeans.

“As a farmer producing Michigan’s most abundant field crop, it’s great to see educational opportunities like this for consumers,” said Clark Gerstacker, Corn Marketing Program of Michigan (CMPM) president, National Corn Growers Association Corn Board member and a corn grower from Midland. “Farmers are the original stewards of the land and we appreciate being able to showcase our production, as well as our conservation practices to consumers.”

Contestants can register with each of the featured farmers daily through Wednesday, Oct. 12. One winner will be randomly selected from all the registered contestants and announced in early November. The \$5,000 prize value is based on research conducted by the Food Marketing Institute, which indicates \$5,000, on average, will feed one adult for one year.

The agricultural commodity organizations sponsoring Michigan Farmers Feed US selected the farmers featured in the sweepstakes with the goal of showcasing farmers who represent Michigan's different "food groups" and farming regions. The 10 featured farmers are:

- Jennifer Bixby, apple farmer, Berrien Springs, Berrien County
- Jennifer Lewis, dairy farmer, Jonesville, Hillsdale County
- Harry Herbruck, egg farmer, Saranac, Ionia County
- Ed Cagney, soybean farmer, Scotts, Kalamazoo County
- Scott Oswalt, sheep farmer, Vicksburg, Kalamazoo County
- Annie Link, dairy farmer, Alto, Kent County
- Bret Schapman, cattle farmer, Romeo, Macomb County
- Clark Gerstacker, corn farmer, Midland County
- Jason Ruhlig, vegetable farmer, Carleton, Monroe County
- Erin Ehinger, hog farmer, Holland, Ottawa County

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The Michigan Farmers Feed US program is supported by local farmers represented by the Michigan Ag Council which is funded by: Michigan Farm Bureau, Michigan Milk Producers Association, Michigan Pork Producers Association, Corn Marketing Program of Michigan, Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee and GreenStone Farm Credit Services.

"The contest is another way to spread the message of the importance of knowing where your food comes from and the sponsors have done a great job of highlighting different commodities grown right here in Michigan," said Jeff Sandborn, Michigan Corn Growers Association (MCGA) president and a corn grower from Portland. "We hope the Farmers Feed Us Campaign will continue to spark interest in agriculture from consumers who want to know more about where their food comes from."

To learn more, "like" Michigan Farmers Feed US on Facebook, follow Mich Farmers Feed US on Twitter at @MIFarmersFeedUS or visit www.farmersfeedus.org/mi.

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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