



13750 S. Sedona Parkway, Ste 5
Lansing, MI 48906

For Immediate Release
October 9, 2009

Contact: Betsy Braid
Phone: (517) 668-2676

Michigan Farmers Are Creating Cleaner Energy

LANSING, MICH. – The Corn Marketing Program of Michigan (CMPM), the Michigan Corn Growers Association (MCGA) and Ottawa County Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) invite you to explore the latest clean energy technologies during their On-Farm Bio-Energy Bus Tour. The event will showcase two of Michigan's agricultural pioneers who are making a difference by producing renewable energy right on the farm.

On Monday, October 26, 2009, state legislators, local officials, municipal leaders and city planners will all join in on the fun as they visit two west Michigan agricultural facilities. The On-Farm Bio-Energy Tour is a great opportunity for participants to see first-hand how agricultural clean energy technologies look, smell and sound. They will have the chance to discuss with facility managers just how these innovative new technologies work and learn about the positive role that on-farm renewable energy can safely play in our rural and urban communities.

The Bio-Energy Bus tour will kick off Monday morning in West Olive. From there, the bus will depart to its first stop; the Rasch Farm ethanol production facility in Conklin. "The Rasch's have managed to utilize the corn-ethanol production cycle in full circle. They grow their own corn, process that corn into ethanol on their property, utilize the fuel in their farm equipment, feed the co-products to livestock and then use the livestock waste to fertilize next year's corn crop," explained Jody Pollok-Newsom, executive director of the CMPM. Attendees will hear from the owner of the Rasch farm about the challenges associated with his on-farm ethanol facility and how the system is benefiting him today. Participants will also be able to visit with the engineers behind the unique process, as well as learn about additional marketing opportunities outside of the agricultural sector that are available for similar production facilities.

After departing from the Rasch's, the bus will head southwest, stopping for lunch along the way. The second farm stop on the agenda is the Scenic View Dairy anaerobic digester in Fennville. Owners of the Scenic View Dairy convert the waste from their livestock into valuable products such as electricity, gas and animal bedding. "Their state-of-the art anaerobic digester makes it all possible right there on the farm," said Pollok-Newsom. "Much of the bedding and electricity is used by the farm itself, but excess of both gas and electricity are sold as sustainable energy to utility companies, creating another source of income for the dairy." Bus tour participants will meet with the anaerobic digester project manager to learn about this innovative waste to renewable energy operation and how it is proving to be a great investment for Scenic View Dairy.

The On-Farm Bio-Energy Bus Tour is scheduled to run from 8 a.m. to approximately 4:30 p.m. Anyone interested in learning more about how Michigan's strong agricultural industry is adding to the state's bottom line and leading the way in renewable energy is invited to join. This is a free event, but space is limited so call now to reserve a seat on the bus. To learn more or register for the event, please call Jamie Cook or Penni Sweeney at the CMPM office at 1-888-323-6601. The deadline to register is Monday, October 19.

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 MCGA, a grassroots-membership association representing the state's corn grower's political interests. For more information on the CMPM and the MCGA, visit the web site at www.micorn.org.