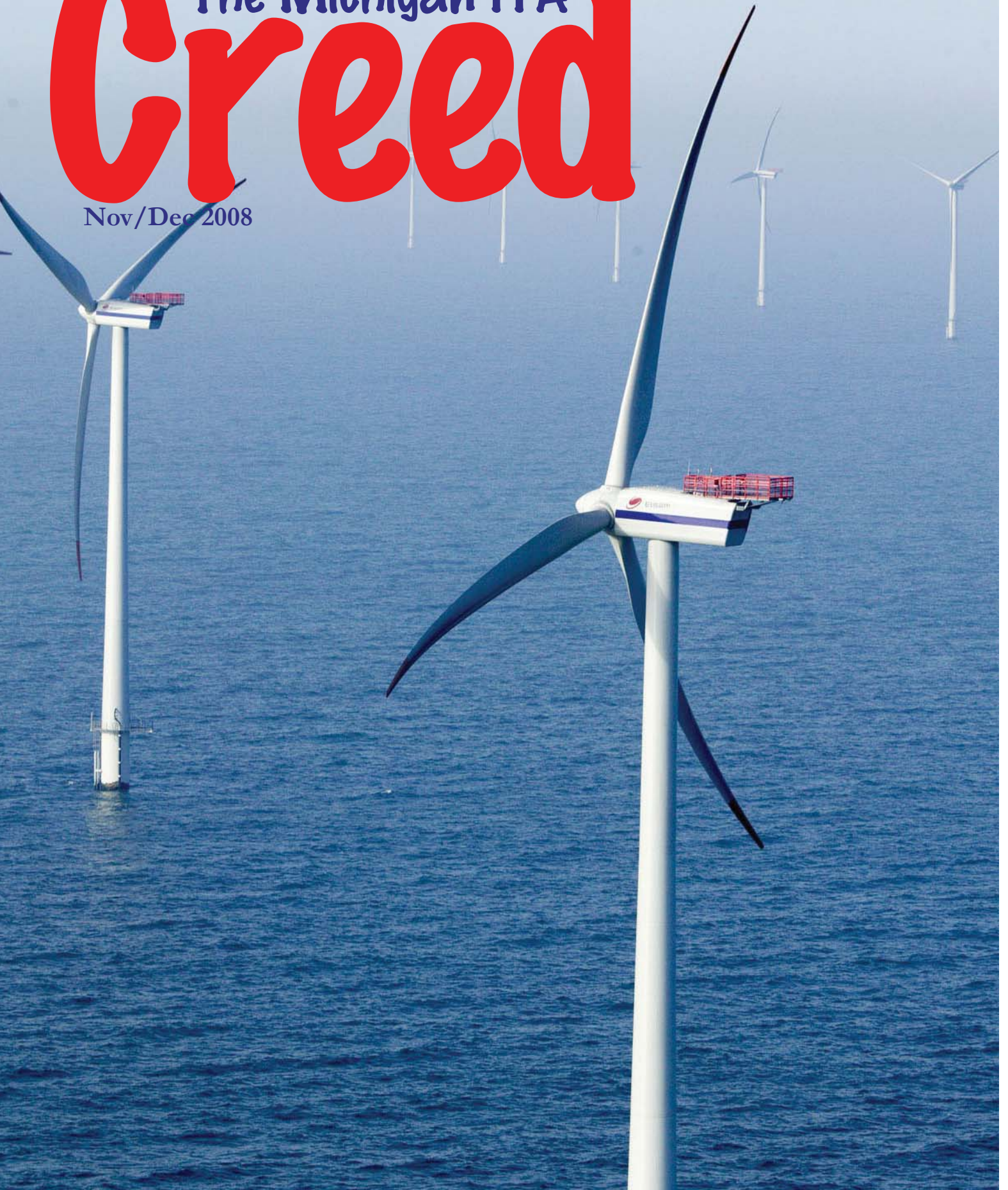


The Michigan FFA Creed

Nov/Dec 2008



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Issue 2 Volume 7

The State FFA Office
108 Natural Resources
East Lansing, MI 48824
www.michiganffa.com
association@michiganffa.com
(517) 353-9221
(517) 432-5632 (fax)

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The Michigan FFA will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, marital status, weight, sexual orientation or disability. Any student requiring an accommodation as a result of a disability should contact the chapter advisor to arrange such accommodation.

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Staff Editor Kaitlyn Hard
Writers Alex Henry
Jason Koning
Dustin Petty
Advising Editor Michelle Sidel

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I believe in...

....FFA. And what it stands for.

Have you ever had to explain what FFA is? When asked this question most would state, “The National FFA Organization is dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.” That is the official mission statement of the FFA, but what does that really mean?

In my mind FFA stands for leadership. What other organization can take a shy freshmen and turn them into one of the best speakers in the school? What other organization can teach you about the second largest industry in the state AND prepare you to work in that industry? What other organization allows you to compete at the state and national level in competitions that you love? None come to mind better than FFA. FFA brings you out of your shell. As

freshmen in high school we are all shy and scared to get involved. FFA allows you to get involved while meeting new people and bettering yourself. It helps members to realize their potential and continually build on their strengths. We build relationships with community and state leaders giving members opportunities for jobs and internships.

Ralph Waldo Emerson spoke, “No great man ever complains of want of opportunity.” The FFA is filled with endless opportunities. Every type of person can find something to be passionate about. Whether your passion is animals or the environment, teaching or communications, the FFA has something that will fit you perfectly.

FFA is the best youth organization in the world. Its members are the leaders of tomorrow. Continue to believe in the FFA and what it stands for. We are the future and with FFA anything is possible.

Dates to Remember...

November

- 3 Broiler Weigh Date
- 5-6 Poultry Contest - Fowlerville Poultry Processing Plant
- 14 FFA Membership Rosters and POAs due

December

- 1 Star Candidate Applications and Regional Grant Applications due to State FFA Office
- 4 Star Finalist Selections
- 15 MFB/FFA Ag Career and Leadership Conference - East Lansing

An Old Idea Gets a New Spin

By: Jason Koning
MSU ANR Education Major



The next time you happen to venture up to Elkton in Huron County, it may be hard to miss the huge group of structures that have sprung up across the vast agricultural landscape.

Driving through Oliver & Chandler Townships one would see the wind turbines that make up the new Harvest Wind Farm outside Elkton. The enormous windmill-type structures have been up and creating clean energy for Michiganders since April 2008.

Harvest Wind Farm, which is owned by John Deere Wind Energy, is the first commercial wind farm in the state of Michigan. Construction of Harvest Wind Farm created dozens of temporary jobs and has created ten full-time jobs to maintain and operate the turbines. A 46-turbine farm called Noble Thumb Windpark near Uby will also begin construction soon.

Let's get down to some numbers. Each of Harvest's 32 massive white structures can generate 1.65 MW (megawatts) of energy. Combined, they have a capacity of 53 MW, which is enough to power a whopping 15,000 homes! To put this number in perspective, that is enough electricity for about 75% of the homes in Huron County alone according to the U.S. Census. Farmers who lease land for the turbines will share in the profit of the \$90 million investment.

Wind energy has become a popular, environmentally-friendly concept in recent years, similar to the ethanol fuel movement. Turbines take kinetic energy from the wind and convert it into mechanical energy, or electricity. Wind is a renewable resource and is of course, free. Wind turbines in the Midwest have replaced grain elevators as the tallest structures around, with the Huron County turbines topping out at 396 feet tall! Each turbine has three fiberglass blades that are 131-feet long. To get the blades rotating, they need a wind speed of about 8 mph before the rotor becomes engaged and it starts producing energy. The Great Lakes region is a great location for wind

power because the wind coming off of the lakes is consistent and relatively strong.

Anyone that has ever crossed the Mackinac Bridge since 2001 has probably noticed Mackinaw City's two wind turbines. The Straits of Mackinac produce extremely high winds and Mackinaw City decided to take full advantage of this. Their turbines produce enough electricity to power 600 homes each year at 0.9 MW each. These turbines are almost ½ the size of Harvest Wind Farm's turbines though. They are located on the city's waste water treatment plant just south of the Bridge. However the first wind turbine built in Michigan was built in 1996 in Traverse City at the base of the Leelanau Peninsula. At the time it was built it was the biggest in the country but now its 0.6MW output is considered miniscule compared to state-of-the-art 3.5 MW turbines that technology has produced.

Other sites in Michigan have been named as possible sites for wind farms, but Huron County remains the best possible candidate for more, including an offshore wind farm. Detroit Edison has proposed a seemingly massive offshore wind farm that would produce approximately a massive 520 MW! The proposed idea is for 320 wind turbines to be put up a mile offshore in Saginaw Bay from Sand Point (southwest of Caseville) north to Port Austin. This massive offshore wind project would be a mile wide and an eye-dropping 22 miles long! Detroit Edison has also expressed interest in adding another 1,000 turbines throughout Huron County. While many have become excited with these developments, others have expressed more caution.

Controversy has arisen because the shoreline along the proposed offshore site has some of the highest residential land value in the entire Thumb region and is a popular summertime resort. The fear of landowners within visible distance of turbines is that their property value will plummet due to the turbines. Landowners across the U.S. are concerned about wind turbines in their area for this reason. Despite the benefits

to small communities (and the vast environmental benefits to really the entire world), wind turbines are viewed by some as a monumental eyesore. The sight of a 400-foot tall structure with three enormous rotating blades is not appealing to some. However, to others, the sight of rising energy prices is a worse blemish.

Other concerns people have with wind turbines is the disruption they are rumored to have on migration paths of some birds. Though you may not think the blades move fast, the blade tips of the turbines move at over 100 mph in reality. These fast moving blades can kill birds who fly too close. Some are also concerned about noise levels from the turbines. However, wind turbines are extremely quiet (especially compared to other forms of industry) and from 350 meters distance, decibel (dB) level is only 35-45. To put this in perspective, a quiet bedroom is about 35 dB. The sound of the blades rotating is described as a “whooshing” sound.

Whether or not you support wind power, it may be here to stay. A government report estimates that wind power could provide as much as 20% of the U.S. electricity needs by 2030. Wind could become more viable in the next few years in the Great Lakes region, especially for fellow Thumbians. We may not be able to see the wind, but we can see its effects and the effects could help power our nation.



AP Photo



Roots of a Tradition

At Michigan State University, the program and trained countless generations of agricultural resources educators is turning



**By: Dr. O. Donald Meaders, MSU Professor Emeritus
Dustin Petty, MSU ANR Communications Major**

In the Beginning...

The roots of agricultural education in Michigan reach deep into the work of early settlers who established primary schools on land set aside in each township for a school. Although the early educational programs were modeled after European systems with emphasis on “speaking, reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic,” by the late 1880s, the people of Michigan wanted the type of education which would fit the youth for the activities of life. During the last years of the 19th Century, faculty at Michigan Agricultural College were constantly receiving requests for help forming instruction on agricultural principles.

In the early 1900s, Michigan legislation was passed to help develop schools of agriculture in the counties and townships of the state. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction recommended in 1907 that “the legislature should authorize an appropriation for state aid to be given...to schools that introduce courses in elementary agriculture, manual training and domestic science.”

And then came Walter H. French...

A Noteworthy Recommendation

Jonathan L. Snyder had been president of the Michigan Agricultural College for twelve years when, in 1908, he made a recommendation to his board that the time had come to hire a man to develop a program for the training of agricultural instructors that would go into the rural communities of the state.

A farmer and an educator, Snyder had been looking for such a man for two or three years and waited to make this recommendation to the State Board of Agriculture (the governing body of MAC) until he found the right individual. Finally, he encountered Walter H. French.

The Father of Michigan Ag Ed

Walter H. French was raised on an Otsego, Michigan farm. The son of two educators, French became a teacher, principal and superintendent before making his name known as an advocate of change in the current educational status-quo. As the head of MAC's Department of Agriculture (in the



President Jonathan Snyder (left) hired Walter H. French in 1908, initiating a legacy of education and excellence.





beginning, a department of one), he was known for his enthusiasm for teaching and educating the rural educators. French was devoted to the service of his community and instilled this value into his students and fellow faculty. When he died January 1, 1924, French left a program of instruction at the future Michigan State University that continues to develop ANR educators today.

Tomorrow

With all this in mind – the genesis and evolution of ANR education training at Michigan State University – it is important to begin looking into the future.

At the recent Michigan Association of Agriscience Educators annual banquet, Dr. Jenó Rivera of MSU was asked to give some remarks about where ANR teacher training and education will go in the next 100 years.

“As we dialogue over the next 100 years about ANR education it becomes apparent that in today’s political and educational

landscape, the idea that ANR education can remain strictly vocational in orientation and continue to thrive as a school program is myopic. At the same time, no responsible leader in the realm of school based ANR education would support the recasting of the program as merely applied science. A vision of agricultural education as either “occupational” or “academic” is unsupportable and that the truth must fall somewhere between those two extremes. This gray area between the two extremes has served as the foundation for restructuring post secondary ANR teacher preparation programs at MSU. Educating teachers in the new and emerging ANR content and pedagogical knowledge are enhancements to the curriculum. We hope to remain strong and serve as leaders for ANR education programs nationally.

“We want to pursue a future in combining agriculture education with broader natural resource and environmental education. This will ensure that students and educators will develop the skills to be effective citizens in the world of agriculture and natural resource management for sustainable food and fiber production for the next 100 years.”

Chapter Chatter

By: **Kaitlyn Hard**
MSU Crop & Soil Science



Region I Countryside Charter - Robin Kniebes, advisor

“The Countryside FFA Chapter recently came together to work on a ‘Give Back to the Community’ project. Even though all of our members were not able to join us on this project we still came together as a team and put our best foot forward. Our very own chapter has participated in the ‘Adopt a Road’ program which helped open up the opportunity for us to give our share.”

Region II Springport - Megan Merrill, advisor

“The Springport FFA Chapter held their Annual Ag-on-Wheels Event. The event calls for FFA members to wake up several hours before daylight to mask the brisk air on the seat of a tractor as transportation to school for the day. Upon their arrival students park their families pride and joy on the front lawn of the high school to spark conversations about agriculture. This year they developed a chapter scholarship program to add more value to the event. FFA members sought pledges to make the journey, and with match from the chapter were able to jump start the scholarship with \$1,100.00.”



Region III Saginaw - Nadene Blakeley, advisor

“This picture was taken at our annual Harvest Fest. Our class has a petting zoo, which is also one of our major fundraisers. People buy tickets and are let into the ‘petting zoo’ and are allowed to hold and take pictures with mini horses, rabbits that we raise, chickens, dogs and a variety of birds.”





Region IV Oakland SW FFA - Deb Gaunt, advisor

“On September 17th and 18th, 2008, 22 students of the Oakland Schools Technical Campus Southwest Biotechnology / Environmental cluster participated in the Adopt-A-Road service project. The students collected 36 bags of trash as they groomed four miles of Oakland country roads. Each student agreed to participate in this cleanup again in the spring of 2009.”

Region V Muskegon Area CTC - Jennifer Woods

“The members of the Muskegon Area Career Tech Center FFA Chapter have been very busy over the past year. One activity we participated in was the Third Grade Cabbage Program sponsored by Bonnie Plants. Our members presented to four third grade classes totaling about sixty students. The chapter demonstrated to the students what a plant needs to grow and how to care for their cabbage. Members also participated in Lawn Mower Safety Day. The head of our building maintenance demonstrated safe mowing practices and techniques. The members were then allowed to practice driving the mowers safely.”



Region VI Traverse Bay - Michael Eagan, advisor

“We had three students working in the Community Market Garden in Traverse City over this summer. They helped to plant, maintain, and harvest organic produce. They helped prepare the produce for sale and sold it every Friday at market. The produce included lettuce, greens, herbs, tomatoes, beans, beets, and many other vegetables. They also grew cut flowers. It was a great opportunity!”



Advisors and students: do you want to see YOUR chapter highlighted here? It's easy! Email State Reporter Kaitlyn Hard at hardkait@anr.msu.edu for more information.

The Rest of the Story...



Jillian Holdwick
State Secretary

Chapter: Harbor Beach

SAE: Beef Placement & Landscape Management

College: Michigan State University

Major: Animal Science sophomore

High school activities: Students Against Destructive Decisions, National Honor Society, band, 4-H, senior class secretary, volleyball, track, cross country

Personal theme song: *Standing Outside the Fire* by Garth Brooks

Who do you look to for strength: my parents

Favorite FFA activity: state convention

Favorite book: *The Wedding* by Nicholas Sparks

Favorite athletic team: Detroit Lions

Favorite quote: "Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take but by the moments that take our breath away."



Clint Steketee
State Sentinel

Chapter: Caledonia

SAE: Beef Production & Turfgrass Management

College: Michigan State University

Major: Crop & Soil Science freshman

High school activities: 4-h, Michigan Junior Hereford Association president, golf, National Honor Society

Personal theme song: *Hard Workin' Man* by Brooks & Dunn

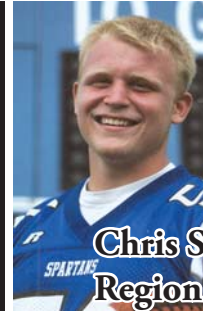
Personal goals for the future: become a golf superintendant or PGA Tour agronomist

Favorite FFA activity: leadership contests

Favorite thing to do with friends: bowling and bonfires

Personal hobby: showing cattle and golfing

Personal message to the Michigan FFA members: Be content but never satisfied. Be happy with who you are and your accomplishments but always strive for excellence and seek to improve yourself.



Chris Sanford
Region II State VP

Chapter: Springport

SAE: Swine & Dairy Production Placement

College: Lansing Community College

Major: Ag Economics sophomore

High school activities: football, wrestling, musicals and choir

Word that best describes you: passionate - when it comes to the things I love to do, I will be there in a heart beat and find every way to help

Reason for joining FFA: I joined because I followed in my brother's footsteps like everything else he did. I loved being around agriculture and I wanted to experience it through the FFA.

Favorite FFA activity: state convention

Favorite thing to do with friends: bowling and bonfires

Favorite homemade meal: steak with potatoes, salad and rolls

Personal hobby: watching & playing sports, hunting, raising & showing pigs

COMING TO A PUMP NEAR YOU



By: Alex Henry
MSU ANR Communications Major

It's in our schools. It runs through our transportation systems. It has perpetrated our homes and infiltrated our communication systems. It has started wars and its name has been plastered on every news channel and Wall Street Journal page since its discovery. "It" is oil.

With rising food and fuel costs, it's not a surprise that everyone is talking about oil. Have you ever wondered why? Oil is just used for gasoline so why are we so worried about it, right? Wrong! From the plastic of your Mt. Dew bottle to your great aunt's makeup to that old Backstreet Boys CD you just can't seem to throw away, oil can be found in almost everything!

According to research by Robert Zubrin, author of, *Energy Victory* the average American (man, woman and child) will spend \$3,300 for oil in 2008. That's over 250 times your FFA dues! In addition, he states that the United States imports 60 percent of our oil from other countries. This dependence has made alternative energy a hot topic in Washington, D.C. and Lansing.

On September 17th, professionals in the Michigan agricultural industry attended the Michigan Bio-Economy Summit at the Lansing Center to discuss this issue. From 7 am to 4 pm, these agriculturalists explored our reliance on foreign oil and what Michiganders are doing about it. Some of the topics covered were ethanol, biodiesel, methane, and cellulosic ethanol. Experts on each topic presented to attendees and answered questions.

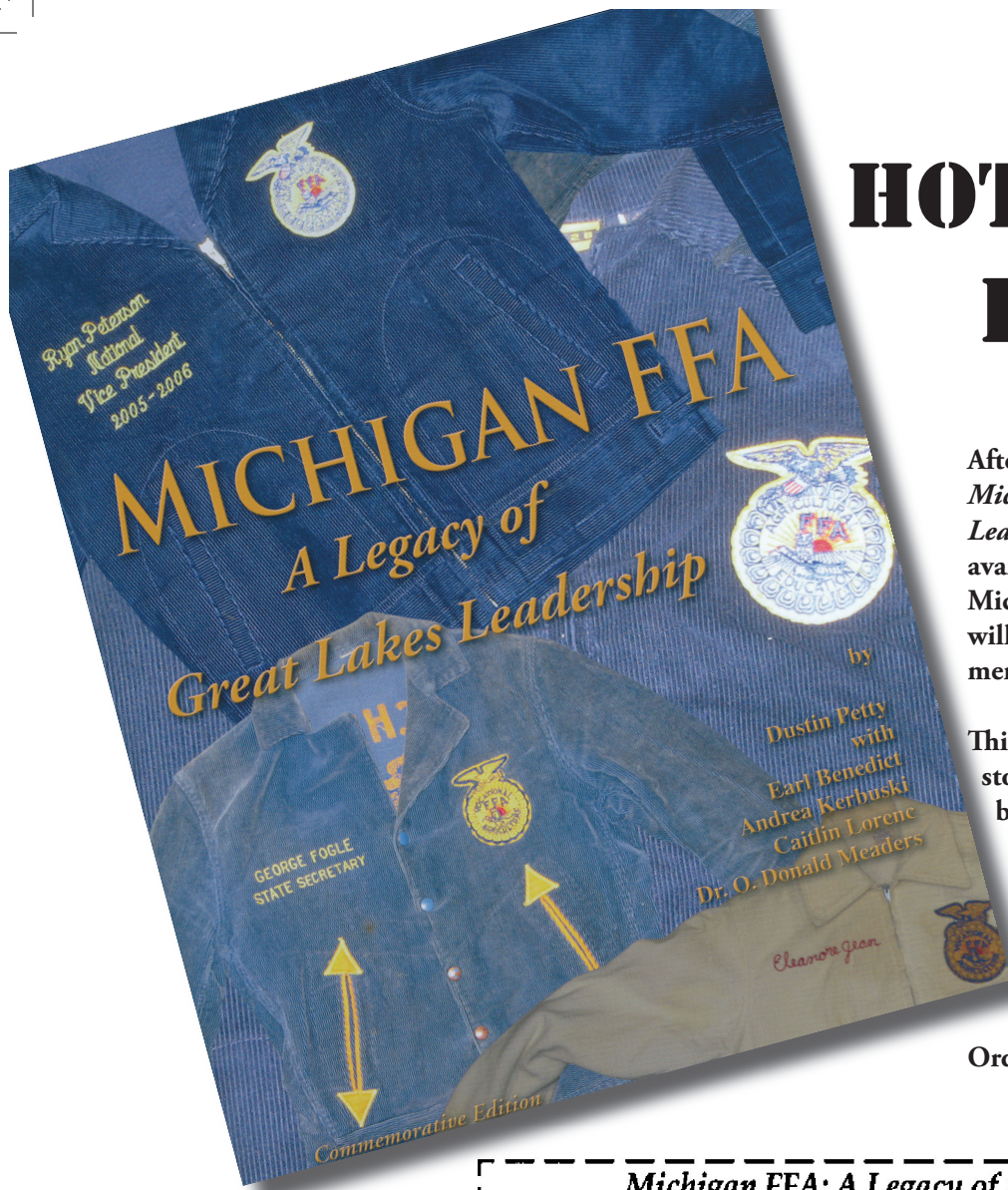
National Corn Growers CEO Rick Tolman presented information on the food vs. fuel debate. He countered the argument that there isn't enough corn to support both outlets with the fact that corn yields are increasing at a steeper rate each year. In 2007, American producers grew 13.1 billion bushels of corn averaging 151 bushels per acre. Monsanto and Pioneer both claim that by 2030, farmers will be yielding 300 bushels per acre. In short, we

are producing more corn, on fewer acres, with fewer nutrients. Mr. Tolman affirmed that new technology to increase yields will allow corn to serve consumers as both food and fuel.

Dana Kirk from Wilcox, Inc. presented another form of alternative fuel: methane. Twenty-one percent of the methane (a greenhouse gas 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide) produced by human processes is contributed by cattle digestion. Harnessing this gas allows the conversion of methane into liquefied natural gas, methanol and hydrogen (in gas or liquid forms). These substances can then be used to produce electricity. In other words, we can use the gas wasted from cattle to produce electricity! This form of alternative fuel requires a lot of capital cost (anywhere from \$800-\$1200 a head) and has been slow to take hold in the U.S.

But the alternative fuel that has got everyone talking is cellulosic ethanol. Instead of using corn as a biomass cellulosic optimizes other feedstocks such as switch grass, woodchips, corn stover (the corn plant above the ground), and even sugar cane or beets. It reduces each form of biomass into its sugars which can then be broken down using a thermo-chemical process into energy. This form of fuel has been a favorite of corn ethanol skeptics because it utilizes materials that are byproducts of food production. Instead of consuming feedstocks which could be used for food, cellulosic ethanol would be using materials that would otherwise go unexploited. However, technology in this area is new and capital cost to start a production facility is extremely high.

So which fuel is best? Time, technology and money will tell. Robert Zubrin really said it best, "Control of the world's fuel is control of the world's future." As a country and state build on a foundation of agriculture, we have the potential to have control over of the world's fuel. As FFA members, we surely have control of the world's future.



HOT OFF THE PRESS!

After three years, the history collection *Michigan FFA: A Legacy of Great Lakes Leadership* has been printed and is available for purchase NOW from the Michigan FFA Association. All proceeds will go to help support the activities and members in the blue corduroy.

This hardcover, 120-page book tells the story of the Michigan FFA from the very beginning. Complete with never-before-seen pictures and interviews from the men and women that created what we know today as the world's premier leadership organization.

Order your copy TODAY!

Michigan FFA: A Legacy of Great Lakes Leadership

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YOUR JOURNEY STARTS AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY!



Get where you're going with one of the two new majors from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources CARRS (Community, Agriculture, Recreation and Resource Studies) Department!

In the Fall of 2008, two new majors will be revealed within the CARRS Department: Environmental Studies and Agriscience & Park Recreation and Tourism Resources.

In the Environmental Studies and Agriscience major, options will include: Communication, Community Engagement and Education, Science and Policy, as well as Agriscience and Natural Resources Teacher Education.

In the Park Recreation and Tourism Resources major, options will include: Community Engagement and Education, Commercial Recreation and Tourism, Community Recreation and Zoo and Aquarium Sciences.

For more information please contact: Dr. Randy Showerman (showerma@msu.edu), Dr. David Krueger (kruege20@msu.edu) or Dr. Jenó Rivera (jeno@msu.edu).



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The 2007 FFA Tractors are now on sale.

This year's FFA tractor is a 1/16 scale Farmall 806. The first Farmall in the series! It is available at Tractor Supply Company (TSC) stores statewide. All proceeds benefit the Michigan FFA Foundation.



Now only \$56.98!

For more information about how you can support the FFA, contact the Michigan FFA Foundation at (517) 432-2482 or online at www.michiganffa.com



Alumni in Action

Congratulations Scholarship Winners!

As part of its continuing effort to support the members in blue corduroy, the Michigan FFA Alumni gave the following scholarships to students attending the Fall Leadership Conferences.

Full Scholarships

Ashley Bujalski, Sand Creek
Jordan Henry, Alma
Torri Nighbert, Olivet
Cody Wehner, Stephenson

Partial Scholarships

Amy Gusz, Harbor Beach
Katie Smith, Laker
Susan Stepp, Homer
Amanda Thomas, Sand Creek

Congratulations to all winners! For more information on to get financial support from the Michigan FFA Alumni, please visit www.michiganffa.com/alumni.

You're Invited!

The Michigan FFA Alumni will be hosting its Annual Meeting at Caledonia High School on February 21, 2009. Registration begins at 6:00 p.m. with the banquet starting at 6:30 p.m. Tickets can be purchased in advance for \$20 and at the door for \$25.

Those attending can meet alumni members from all over the state, sharing ideas about fundraising, affiliate member retention and methods of supporting local chapters and FFA members.

Also happening at the meeting will be the election of officers for the State FFA Alumni Council, a silent auction and a live auction.

For more information, please contact State FFA Alumni Council Region V Vice President Sherry Kiel at sherry.kiel@charter.net.

We look forward to seeing you there!



Find your fit in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources!

You're already part of it!

From the food you eat to the home you live in; from the water you drink to the recreational activities you enjoy, professionals educated in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources make your life better every day.

The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University offers Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degrees, certificate programs, and graduate programs leading to the master's degree and Ph.D.

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