



Engaging Farmers and Best Management Plan (BMP) Adoption in Western Lake Erie Basin

Andrea Stay, MDARD

Overview

- MAEAP Introduction
- Michigan's Domestic Action Plan
- Outreach to Farmers
- Impact





To develop and implement a proactive environmental assurance program that targets all size Michigan farms and all commodities, ensuring that farmers are engaging in cost effective pollution prevention practices and working to comply with state and federal environmental regulations.

What does that mean??



MAEAP is a voluntary program.

We recognize and reward top stewards of the land.

This is a statewide program delivered by conservation districts.

MAEAP is open to any Michigan farmer.

MAEAP is free* and is a good fit for both large and small farms.

*paid for through fees on pesticide and fertilizer

How Does MAEAP Work?



Learn

Attend a workshop or schedule a private meeting to learn if MAEAP is right for you.



Farm Visit

Invite us to tour your farm. A local technician will come out to visit. We will recommend practical steps you can take to reduce erosion and runoff into public waters.



Implement

Do the work at your own pace. We can help you work toward your goals and guide you to cost share.



Recognition

When the work is done, we will give you a sign to place on your farm and send you a certificate signed by the director of MDARD.



The Systems of MAEAP



Farmstead



Cropping



Livestock



Forest,
Wetland and
Habitat
(FWH)

What is a Best Management Practice?



Implement



What's the Problem?



- Smallest, Shallowest, warmest and most biologically productive
- Point sources reduced in the 70's and 80's
- Total P declining, DRP increasing leading to Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB's)
- Toledo



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- GLWQA and Annex 4
- Pledge to reduce Phosphorus by 40% Impairment
- Domestic Action Plan (QOL 12 tasks)



MDARD Role in Domestic Action Plan



- *Support/invest in research to understand HABS, invasive mussels and DRP
- Conservation District Technical assistance
- Increase MAEAP participation/verifications
- Understand and demonstrate BMPs
- Outreach to public and farmers

* Multi-agency Task



MAEAP efforts in the WLEB FY14-18



- 7 local conservation district technicians
- Conservation Tillage-~77,000 Acres
- NMP's - Almost 150,000 acres with
- Cover Crops- ~19,000 Acres
- Total P reduced-377,736 lbs
- Total Sediment reduced-222,362 Tons
- Total Nitrogen - 855,500 lbs
- Over \$2M cost share through Regional Conservation Partnership Program

How Engage Farmers



- Surveys
- Focus Groups
- Review of materials
- Farmer Led Workgroup
- STRAND Project





"We are participating in MAEAP because we recognize the benefit to the environment, our community and our farming operation."

Doug Darling, Darling Farms



Bruce and Jennifer Lewis, Pleasant View Dairy

A white sign with a green and blue design. The top part says "This Farm is Environmentally Verified" in blue. Below that is a graphic of a green field with a blue stream and a green tree. To the right of the graphic is the text "Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program" and the MAEAP logo. Below the graphic is the text "PROUD MEMBER HILLSDALE COUNTY FARM BUREAU" with the Farm Bureau logo. At the bottom, it says "Cropping System" in blue.

This Farm is Environmentally Verified

Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program

MAEAP

PROUD MEMBER HILLSDALE COUNTY FARM BUREAU

Cropping System

“The fourth generation is now learning and preparing for their future as we all try to leave our farmstead better than we found it.”



Luke Thorne, Thorne Farms



“MAEAP show[s] the public that we as a family business do things that are environmentally friendly...and we also get compliments on our nice sign in front of the farm...”

What's Next?



Andrea Stay

Michigan Agriculture Environmental
Assurance Program

517-285-7482

Staya@michigan.gov

