

Berrien Conservation District - January Newsletter

Upcoming Produce Safety Training

It is officially 2019 and the Berrien Conservation District had a busy three months developing the Produce Safety Technician position for our local fruit and vegetable growers! The current Produce Safety Technician was able to gain a multitude of knowledge from various trainings and networking conferences. One of the trainings was held in Rochester, New York and certified Victoria Toney to be able to teach Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training across the state. These trainings satisfy the requirement for fruit and vegetable growers under the new Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule. The courses are taught by Michigan State University educators, MDARD officials, and Produce Safety Technicians. It is important to have all these people in the same room in case technical questions arise throughout the modules or during final discussion.

These are scheduled for February 5, 2019 at the Berrien County Extension 1737 Hillandale Road Benton Harbor, MI from 9am-4pm and February 8, 2019 at KVCC Food Innovation Center 224 E. Crosstown Kalamazoo, MI from 9am-4pm as well. This course is offered free of charge and will satisfy the requirement as outlined in 112.22(c) of the Rule. Upon completion of the course, participants will receive a certificate from the Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) to be able to present upon inspection if requested. This course is only required once – so if you have previously completed the training and received a certificate this training does not pertain to you. However, if you would like to send someone else from the farm to receive the training that is more than welcomed. Pre-registration is required and can be completed via web at <https://events.anr.msu.edu/2019WinterPSA/> or can be made by emailing the Produce Safety Technician at Victoria.Toney@macd.org.

YOU'RE INVITED!

Save The Date

2019 ANNUAL MEETING

The Berrien Conservation District will be holding their Annual Meeting on February 21,

2019 at the Southwest Michigan Research and Extension. The address is 1791 Hillendale Road Benton Harbor, MI 49022. The doors will open at 5:30pm for Silent Auction and Elections with the program to start at 6:00pm.

There will be a guest speaker, dinner and silent auction this year! Tickets are \$10. More detail to come later!



The **Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP)** is offering some financial cost-share incentives for environmental improvements on the farm in 2019. The Berrien Conservation District will have cost-share money available for various practices to be installed. Here are some examples of what you could receive payment/cost-share for:

Up to **\$250** for:

Abandoned Well Closures

Backflow Preventers (for pesticide mix/load, fertigation, or livestock waterers)

Secondary Containment (Oil, Fertilizer, Pesticide)

Double-Walled Fuel Tanks for Irrigation

Concrete Fuel Pads

Also available:

Water Testing

Soil Testing

Pesticide Sign & Spill Kits

Drain Covers/Seals

Fire Extinguishers, and more!

Completion of an on-farm risk assessment (Farm*A*Syst, Crop*A*Syst, Livestock*A*Syst, etc.) is required and installation of practices would need to take place before **September 15, 2019** for cost-

share incentives. Funds are available on a first-come first-served basis.

Please contact Suzanne Forraht at 269-421-3054 or send an email to suzanne.forraht@mi.nacdn.net for a MAEAP cost-share application.



Now's the time to check!

DOUBLE CHECK UNDER HEMLOCK BRANCHES FOR HWA THIS WINTER

CHECK OUT SAVEMICHEMLOCKS.ORG FOR REPORTING AND ID INFORMATION!