

# AGRITOURISM SUMMIT 2026

AGENDA  
MAY 14, 2026

## WELCOME

09:30 • 09:55

Ben LaCross, President, *Michigan Farm Bureau*

## THE PATH TO SCALE: RETAIL GROWTH IN AGRITOURISM

10:00 • 10:50

Presenters will share their unique routes and strategies toward developing a successful agritourism operation, including the opportunities and pitfalls of “going retail” at scale.

John Dindia, *Lakeview Hills*  
Jimmy Spencer, *Pond Hill*  
Greg Shooks, *Cellar 1914*  
Amber Parsons, *Harwood Gold*

## MORNING BREAKOUTS

11:00 • 12:00

### BREAKOUT 01

#### AGRITOURISM MARKETING ESSENTIALS: STRATEGIES TO REACH A WIDER AUDIENCE

Expand your agritourism operation's reach and audience through marketing and promotional techniques.

*with Erika Tebbens, Taste the Local Difference*

### BREAKOUT 02

#### MAKING FARM STAYS WORK: GUIDANCE FOR COMMUNITIES AND OPERATORS

Explore best practices for incorporating farm stays, a novel agricultural experience that may increase revenue, in local plans and ordinances.

*with Steve Patmore, Suttons Bay Township*

### BREAKOUT 03

#### RIGHT TO FARM ACT BASICS (101)

Learn the fundamentals of the Michigan Right to Farm Act and how the Act relates to Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices (GAAMPs) and zoning preemption.

*with Ryan Coffey Hogue, MSU Extension*

## LUNCH

12:15 • 01:20

### KEYNOTE

12:15 • 01:05

Tim Boring, Ph.D., Director, *Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development*

## THE WORK BEFORE THE WELCOME: EIGHT TRAITS OF ENDURING AGRITOURISM VENTURES

01:05 • 01:20

A reflection on how successful agritourism ventures grow from intentional relationships, shared values, and patient capability-building. *Richard Anderson, Co-Founder, Iron Fish Distillery*

## AFTERNOON BREAKOUTS

01:30 • 02:20

### BREAKOUT 01

### BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

#### RIGHT TO FARM ACT (201): AGRITOURISM SCENARIOS

Participants will consider several fictitious agritourism scenarios and work with peers to weigh in on how the Right to Farm Act/GAAMPs may apply.

*moderated by Ryan Coffey Hogue, MSU Extension*

### BREAKOUT 02

#### TOOLS TO START OR GROW AN AGRITOURISM BUSINESS

Agritourism operations are unique in scale and focus. Participants will learn resources and financial tools to grow an agritourism business.

*with Colleen Duffo, Northern Initiatives*

## CULTIVATING CAPITAL: INNOVATIVE FUNDING FROM IDLE FIELDS

02:30 • 03:20

Small farms and rural landowners can unlock new capital through incremental, place-based development that preserves agricultural identity and generates new revenue. Learn how to remain agriculturally and financially productive through stewardship and innovation.

Brad Lonberger, *Brixton Development Group*  
Brian Bourdages, *American Farmland Trust*  
Chris Bardenhagen, *MSU Extension*  
Claire Karner, *East Bay Charter Township*

## WE DID IT! WORKING WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS TO GET IT DONE

03:30 • 04:20

Agritourism operators and zoning staff will discuss different strategies that have helped facilitate ordinance amendments and compliance with local regulations.

Abby Jacobson, *Westview Orchards & Winery*  
Cody Stricker, *Long Lake Township*  
Doug Mansfield, *Mansfield and Associates*  
Matthew Jerome, *Long Lake Township*  
Phil Halstead, *Red Truck Vinegar & Halstead Homestead Cherries*

## CLOSING COMMENTS

04:20 • 04:30

Don Coe, *Black Star Farms Managing Partner & Former Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Commissioner*