Southwest Michigan Irrigation Network Taking Customers for Scheduling
Efficient water use is important for several reasons. Under irrigation leads to decreased yields, but over irrigation may lead to nutrient run-off or leaching - an economic loss to the producer and potential environmental threat to water sources. Sign up for irrigation scheduling services.
Ron Goldy, at 269-944-1477 ext. 207, or e-mail at goldy@anr.msu.edu.

All fertilizers are not created equal
Price per unit of plant nutrients, availability, ease of storage and application, potential for nutrient losses and site specific factors are most important considerations when deciding on a fertilizer type.

Rhubarb weed control in Michigan
Several herbicides have been registered for rhubarb in recent years. These new registrations give rhubarb growers additional choices and should result in a better level of weed control.

MSU Institute of Agricultural Technology certificate program fall enrollment is open
Applications for Michigan State University Institute of Agricultural Technology certificate programs, including those with off-campus community college partners such as Southwestern Michigan College in Dowagiac, are being accepted for the fall 2016.

Reducing soybean production costs in 2016
Recommendations for soybean producers on reacting to low commodity prices by reducing production costs without affecting yields.

When is the best time to plant corn in Michigan?
Planting date research shows the optimum corn planting period for much of Michigan is beginning to middle of May. There are no agronomic or economic advantages to planting corn before April 20.

Ask the right questions before choosing a water testing lab for food safety
When choosing a water testing lab to determine surface water quality to comply with food safety laws, consider asking the lab these key questions before choosing.

Don’t wait, be ready! New livestock antibiotic rules for 2017
Livestock farmers need to be aware of changes coming to medicated feeds.

Beginning Farmer Webinar Series 2016
Live webinar presentations will begin at 7 p.m. EST and run not later than 9 p.m. EST. $10/webinar. April topics include cut flower production, irrigation in small farms, accepting food assistance benefits at your market, and selection small tractors.

Blueberry Pre-bloom meetings, April 21 or 28
The Van Buren County is scheduled from 5:30 to 8 PM, Thursday April 21, 2016 at Haven Harvesters, 165 Veterans Drive, South Haven, MI 49090. This meeting is sponsored by Haven Harvesters LLC and New Age/Landmark Laboratories, who are providing a light supper at the beginning of the meeting. There will be talks on early season insect, disease and weed control, frost control and irrigation by Michigan State University Extension Fruit Specialists and Fruit Educators. The Ottawa County meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 28, from 5:30 to 8 PM at the Ottawa County Fillmore Complex, 12220 Fillmore Street, West Olive, MI 49460. The agenda of the two meetings is similar. RUP credits; no fee or registration.

USDA Value Added Producer Grant Session May 3
USDA Rural Development and Michigan State University (MSU) Extension and MSU Product Center will hold an informational session on the USDA Value Added Producer Grant Tuesday, 9 a.m. to 12 noon, May 3 at the Van Buren
The grant program is designed to assist agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of bio-based, value-added products. (Grant applications are due July 1, 2016.) There is no fee or registration process for the session.

**Weekly fruit IPM meetings in progress**
Fruit integrated pest management (IPM) meetings are held for fruit growers in southwest Michigan nearly every Monday at 5pm at the Bjorge’s Fruit Acres Farm in Coloma, April through the end of June.

St. Joseph County Field Crop IPM Breakfast Series
The meetings will be held at the 595 E Main St, Centreville, MI 49032 at 7:00 AM every Tuesday morning from April 19 through June 28, 2016 focusing on field crops. RUP Credits. For more information contact Eric Anderson at eander32@msu.edu, or 269-467-5511.

**Pesticide Applicator Review and Exam Sessions**
Berrien County MSU Extension is hosting pesticide applicator testing and review sessions again this winter. Exam sessions will be May 18, 2016. Sign up for the exam sessions and view schedules at Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. Cost of the exam is $50 for private applicators and $75 for commercial applicators.

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