

Proposal for Market Research for Corn Marketing Program of Michigan

from

**Kirk Heinze
Murari Suvedi
ANRECS Center for Evaluative Studies
Michigan State University**

This proposal is a response to the April 26, 2000 “Request for Proposal for Corn Marketing Program of Michigan” sent to Kirk Heinze/Murari Suvedi by Beth Ann Stuever.

Introduction

The Corn Marketing Program of Michigan (CMPM) is requesting proposals for market research in order to set a baseline of current activities and facilitate strategic planning sessions that will take place in December 2000. The CMPM is the state checkoff program that funds education, promotion, research, market development and industry communications.

This proposal is to conduct a survey of Michigan Corn Growers Association members as well as growers who are not members. There are nearly 16,000 corn growers in Michigan. Of the nearly 16,000 corn growers in Michigan, less than 500 are association members.

The purpose of this survey is to solicit the perceptions and opinions of Michigan corn growers regarding their educational and informational needs. Specifically, this survey will:

- Assess the reasons people choose to become member of Michigan Corn Growers Association. (The flip side, of course, is to assess why others have not joined the association.)
- Determine the best method(s) of communicating association news and checkoff-related project information to the farmer audience.
- Determine members and non-members perceptions of the most important issues facing the industry.
- Assess growers’ feelings about the checkoff and how it impacts their farm.

Proposed Approach

Our methodology to develop survey instrument will combine literature review and a focus group interview process. Survey questions will be designed after a careful review of related literature. In addition, a focus group interview will be conducted. The purpose of the focus group would be to gather and explore perceptions, thoughts, opinions and feelings about the CMPM. With the help of CMPM staff, we will invite selected members of the present and past Michigan Corn Growers Association and related industry personnel participate in the focus group. These participants are involved in and knowledgeable about CMPM, and will represent a balance of farmers, researchers, extensionists, and industry representatives. The purpose of the focus group will be to seek the group’s input into the CMPM programs and activities. The findings of the literature review and the inputs from the focus group interview will be synthesized to develop the survey questionnaire.