

'2019 Soybean Harvest Equipment Field Day' scheduled for Sept. 24

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Reducing harvest losses is always a simple and effective way to increase soybean yield and profitability every year. However, reducing harvest losses in 2019 becomes even more important and challenging, given the significant planting delays this past planting season.

The plants may be shorter than normal increasing gathering losses. Reducing harvest losses by just one bushel per acre will produce more than \$8.25 per acre of additional income in 2019.

Michigan State University Extension is cooperating with Ed Groholski Farms, AWS Airbar Systems, Burnips Equipment Company, Crary Industries, GreenMark Equipment, Spartan Crop Insurance, Stine Seeds, Wells Equipment, Williams Farm Machinery, and the Michigan Soybean Checkoff to conduct a Soybean Harvest Equipment Field Day.

The event will be held in Calhoun County at 1350 12 Mile Road, Burlington,

MI 49029 on Tuesday, Sept. 24, from 10:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and includes a complimentary barbeque lunch. (The field is on the east side of the road, about three-quarters of a mile south of M-60. Follow the signs for parking.)

The field day will begin with a presentation from Michigan Farm Bureau Ag Labor/Safety Services specialist, Craig Anderson, on what soybean producers need to know to be in compliance with farm truck regulations and safety at 10:45 a.m.

Equipment company representatives will also be on-hand to discuss specific recommendations for fine-tuning their combines. Participants will learn how harvest losses occur and how to measure and reduce them.

Additionally, other topics and equipment will be demonstrated, including draper heads, auger heads, air-assisted reels, harvest loss measurements, and how ground speed and reel settings affect harvest losses.

There is no charge for the field day. However, pre-registration is requested



Shorter-than-normal soybeans due to delayed planting statewide, could increase harvest losses this year. Reducing harvest losses by just one bushel per acre will produce more than \$8.25 per acre of additional income in 2019. | Courtesy photo

by calling (269) 673-0370 ext. 2562 before noon Friday, Sept. 13, as a complimentary lunch and educational

materials will be provided. Call the same number and extension for cancellation or rescheduling updates.



As a cattle farmer, John Cox knows it's important to care for the land for the sake of his animals. He raises grass-fed beef cattle on a 160-acre farm just south of Baseline Lake after moving to Michigan from Iowa in November 2016. | Courtesy photo

MAEAP recognition shows commitment to caring for the land

MAEAP

As a cattle farmer, John Cox knows it's important to care for the land for the sake of his animals. He raises grass-fed beef cattle on a 160-acre farm just south of Baseline Lake after moving to Michigan from Iowa in November 2016.

He's leasing land from a pair of landowners who want to place most of the property under a conservation easement and manage the rest as farmland. Cox shares their interest in protecting the land. That's why he is taking steps to improve the soil and plant part of the property with native prairie grasses.

His commitment to the land made participating in the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) an easy decision to make. A voluntary program, MAEAP helps Michigan farmers adopt cost-effective practices that reduce

erosion and runoff into ponds, streams, and rivers.

Cox first heard about MAEAP while applying for an EQIP grant through his local Natural Resources Conservation Service office. It didn't take him much convincing to get started with the verification process.

"After speaking with my local MAEAP tech, I realized that it wouldn't be difficult for my farm to go through the process," Cox said. "We were already going down that road and didn't need to change too much. Plus, I got extra points for the EQIP application and for pursuing a conservation easement."

Cox earned MAEAP recognition in 2018 in three categories: Livestock, Cropping, and Farmstead. The MAEAP tech pointed out a few things he needed to address before getting verified, like plugging up a

couple of abandoned wells. Overall, the process was smooth sailing and Cox was pleased to learn he was doing many things right from the get-go.

"One of my goals is to move the farm in a more organic direction," he said. "Going through the MAEAP process validated what I was already doing. On top of that, it helped me identify additional things I could do to improve my farming practices. The tech even walked me through the steps for properly burying an animal on my farm."

Cox knows a few neighboring farmers who are MAEAP-verified. Most are small-scale farmers. However, he encourages all farms to go through the MAEAP process.

"I would tell anyone to definitely go for it," Cox added. "Earning and displaying

your MAEAP sign gives people confidence that you are doing what you can to protect the environment. Another benefit is the peace of mind it gives you in case there is an environmental release on your farm.

"Being verified can help shield you from an unfounded lawsuit."

For farmers who are interested in MAEAP, Cox offers the following advice:

"Keep your records together in a binder, including a field map of numbered fields and a log of all your chemical spray applications," he said. "That's one of the big things that MAEAP will ask for. Really, it all comes down to good farming practices."

To learn more about the MAEAP program, visit www.maeap.org, write mdaesd-maeap@michigan.gov, or call (517) 284-5609.

Learn more at www.MAEAP.org