

2008 Innovations Awards Program
APPLICATION

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ID # (assigned by CSG): 08-M-04MI

Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:

State: MICHIGAN

Program Category: Natural Resources (Agriculture)

1. Program Name: Be Aware, Be Prepared
2. Agency: Michigan Department of Agriculture
3. Contact: Brad Deacon, Emergency Management Coordinator
4. Address: 525 West Allegan, P.O. Box 30017, Lansing, MI 48909
5. Telephone: 517-241-4085
6. Fax: 517-335-1423
7. Email: deaconb9@michigan.gov
8. Website: http://www.michigan.gov/mda/0,1607,7-125-1566_22384-140425--,00.html

9. Two Sentence Description: The Be Aware, Be Prepared (BABP) program is a collaborative effort among the Michigan Departments of Agriculture and Community Health, Michigan State University Extension, and the agriculture industry to increase emergency awareness and preparedness among the farm community. This coordinating group has produced a number of documents, programs and events that tie into the State's larger emergency preparedness efforts.

10. How long operational? While emergency preparedness activities have been in place for a long time, the Be Aware, Be Prepared program began around July, 2005.

11. Why was the program created? Efforts to protect public health and the food supply begin on the farm. Environmental and economic impacts of contamination, either intentional or unintentional, can also be significant. This collaboration brought together multiple stakeholders to evaluate security and preparedness needs and gaps in the agriculture sector, and to leverage the creativity and resources of all the partners to develop useful tools and programs.

12. Describe the specific activities of the program:

- Winter, 2005: Michigan Food & Agriculture Protection Working Group identifies the need for a subcommittee to address some security and awareness issues on farms.
- Spring, 2005: Subcommittee members meet; identify need to create template for dairy farms.
- July, 2005: Be Aware, Be Prepared designated as the program that will encompass these activities. With a focus on the dairy industry, orange weather resistant plastic placards are developed containing the BABP logo, tips in bullet point form, emergency contact numbers, and blank space for local numbers. Placards printed in Spanish were also created.
- Fall, 2005/Winter, 2006: BABP placards delivered during routine dairy inspections to every dairy farm in Michigan and were made available through livestock industry associations.
- Fall, 2005/Winter, 2006: Development of a six part series (December-April) of news articles about prevention, protection, response, and recovery using an all hazards approach to emergency management. The articles ran in the Michigan Farm News, the largest circulation agriculture press in the state.
- April, 2006: Governor Granholm declares April as Agriculture Security Month
- Summer/Fall 2006: Based on interest and demand for the placards, the BABP working group modifies the design to cover all agriculture; adding an emphasis on plants and crop production. Additional placards ordered
- Fall 2006/Winter 2007: Revision of existing and creation of new MSU-Extension bulletins incorporating the BABP awareness principles for a variety of sectors of production agriculture.
- Summer/Fall 2007: Primary focus is on two projects: a “Stop – Biosecurity Area” sign and package, and development of a livestock animal handling in emergencies course for first responders.
- April, 2008: (*planned*) first livestock animal handling course for emergency responders.

13. Why is the program new and creative? The Be Aware, Be Prepared effort is a collaborative approach to recognizing not only where there are problems and concerns with agriculture security, but also how to most effectively address them through education on an incremental and user-friendly approach. With relatively little cost, the partners have been able to leverage a vast array of time, talent, and expertise to create some tools and programs to help protect the agriculture industry.

14. What were the program's start-up costs? The cost to start this program initially was the staff time of individuals who were already working in the broader areas of food protection/defense, on-farm biosecurity, and emergency management. Costs have been project-based. The creation of the orange BABP placards cost \$10,000 each for the two versions. The second version produced 6,700 placards, most of which have been distributed to farmers. Writing of the articles, creation of the logo, and planning meetings have been accomplished within existing resources.
15. What are the program's annual operational costs? Operational costs depend on the size and scope of the project or tool being created, which has consisted primarily of printing and distribution of materials. The key resource has been the time and talent of many experts who have multiple other obligations but have devoted time and energy to this ongoing effort.
16. How is the program funded? The orange placards were funded primarily through a collaborative grant with the Michigan Department of Community Health and the Centers for Disease Control as part of emergency preparedness efforts. Michigan State University Extension and the Michigan Farm Bureau also contributed resources. The printing space of the series of articles in the Michigan Farm Bureau News was contributed by the publication. Participants are funded through their own organizations.
17. Did the program require legislation, executive order, or regulation? No.
18. What equipment, technology, and software are used to operate/administer the program? No specialized equipment or software had to be created for this program.
19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? While agriculture preparedness activities are occurring in every state, this kind of collaborative approach and the phrase "Be Aware, Be Prepared" to apply to agriculture production was an effort started in Michigan. Early key collaborators include:
- Dr. John Tilden, Michigan Dept. of Agriculture: 517-241-2178, tildenj@michigan.gov
 - Sue Esser, Michigan Dept. of Agriculture, 517-373-1060, essers@michigan.gov
 - Kevin Kirk, Michigan Department of Agriculture, 517-241-4339, kirkk@michigan.gov
 - Dr. Melinda Wilkins, Michigan Dept. of Community Health, 517-335-8165, wilkinsm@michigan.gov

- Dr. Mark Hansen, Michigan State University Extension (retired), 517-432-7696, hansenm@msu.edu
- Dr. Dan Grooms, Michigan State University Extension, 517-432-1494, groomsd@cvm.msu.edu
- Dr. Ted Ferris, Michigan State University Extension, 517-355-8442, ferris@msu.edu
- Dean Ross, Michigan State University Extension, 517-546-3150, rossdea@msu.edu
- Ernie Birchmeier, Michigan Farm Bureau, 517-323-7000, ebirchm@michfb.com
- Gary Trimner, Michigan Milk Producers, 248-474-6672, trimner@mimilk.com

20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? Again, all states have been engaging in agriculture security efforts, but Michigan's ability to build and leverage partnerships among agriculture, health, university, and the private sector has been extraordinary.

21. Has the program been fully implemented? Yes, though new activities are ongoing.

22. Evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness, including examples. This program has been extremely successful. With no start up costs, grants to pay for production of materials, and a positive response from the state's agricultural organizations and individual farmers, this collaboration has represented the building of a diverse partnership committed to protecting Michigan's food and agriculture sector. In addition to better understanding and working relationships among the partners, the results (articles, placards, bulletins, and the pending training course) have been tangible and well received.

23. How has the program grown or changed since its inception? The initial program was focused on livestock agriculture, and was broadened to include plant agriculture production.

24. What limitations or obstacles might other states encounter if they attempt to adopt this program? The two biggest hurdles to a program like this are whether state agencies, university extension, and production agriculture have a good working relationship; and whether individuals from those entities will have the time, funding, and support of their superiors to collaborate on these kinds of projects.