Michigan Apple Committee
Research Priorities for 2016/17

Following are the priorities of the Michigan Apple Committee.

Increase demand
➢ To conduct consumer related research that will aid in the sale and profitability of Michigan Apples.
   a. Market research
      i. Variety specific demographics
      ii. Economic drivers related to markets, varieties and consumer preferences
   b. Packaging/New Product Development
      i. Lengthen shelf life
      ii. Reduce bruising
      iii. Overall consumer appeal

Improve quality and consistency
➢ To demonstrate how to improve Michigan Apples in terms such as variety, size, taste and appearance.
   a. Apple variety evaluation specific to:
      i. Soils
      ii. Weather
      iii. Storability
      iv. Rootstocks
   b. Technology
      i. Post harvest storage improvements
      ii. Packing line improvements
   c. Growth regulators/thinners

Improve Production Efficiency
➢ To help increase grower profitability by improving production efficiency.
   a. Training systems - providing uniformity and consistency
      i. High yield/quality
      ii. Solid set use
   b. Technology
      i. Drone use (crop, weather, insect/disease monitoring)
ii. Mechanization – reduce labor needs

c. Precision apple production

d. Crop Load Management
   i. Pruning, thinning

e. Soil – rootstock matches to soil types, manipulation and management of soil issues

f. Minimizing pesticide / increasing biologic controls

g. Economic drivers – production vs cost

**Food Safety**

➢ To enhance produce safety systems for all phases of production, harvest, packing, storage, transportation, receiving and point-of-sale environments.

a. Production/Harvest Practices

b. Food Handling Practices

c. Pathogen/Microbial Risk

d. DPA/Fungicide Methods

e. FMSA & GAP