

MICHIGAN CHRISTMAS TREE ASSOCIATION

WINTER MEETING 2019

February 28 – March 1, 2019 | Great Wolf Lodge, Traverse City

Keys to Sustainability — Sound Soil and Nutrient Practices

Are you achieving your highest possible growth and tree quality? Soil nutrition and health are critical factors to maintain Christmas tree productivity through the rotation. Often soil management can be a challenge due to complex mixture of soils, with most farm fields having several soil types within a relatively small field. The winter program will focus on management tools and techniques critical for long-term success.

February 28 • THURSDAY

11:00 MCTA PAST PRESIDENT'S LUNCHEON

The MCTA Board would like to invite all past MCTA presidents to join them for lunch. Please RSVP to info@mcta.com or 517.545.9971 if you plan on attending.

11:30 REGISTRATION AND EXHIBITORS

1:00 – 1:45 "IT'S ALIVE!" – IMPORTANCE OF SOIL BIOLOGY IN SOIL HEALTH – Lisa Tiemann, MSU

Learn how all the organisms found within soil carry out a wide range of processes that are important for soil health and fertility. Dr. Tiemann will examine the benefits and what management practices you can use to improve the soil biology in your soil.

1:30 – 2:30 WREATH MAKING BASICS – Jerry and Anne Peterson

1:45 – 2:30 INFLUENCE OF SOIL CHEMISTRY ON NUTRIENT AVAILABILITY – Bert Cregg, MSU

Dr. Cregg will discuss soil nutrients that are essential for tree growth and the processes involved in nutrient uptake such as cation exchange capacity (CEC), base saturation and pH as they relate to making essential nutrients available.

2:30 – 3:00 BREAK WITH EXHIBITORS

3:00 – 3:45 CHANGES IN SOIL CONDITIONS OVER MULTIPLE CHRISTMAS TREE CROPPING CYCLES

– Chal Landgren, OSU

Growers often comment that compared to Christmas trees in first rotations, late rotations seem to have a lower grade, growing slowly, or growing at an uneven rate across the field. Chal will share results of a study in the PNW that looked at how soil physical and chemical properties, potential herbicide buildup, presence of mycorrhizae and soil pests affected long-term soil health and tree quality.

3:45 – 4:30 A NEW TOOL - SOIL HEALTH REPORTS – Paul Gross, MSUE

A soil health report is a tool that can help identify priorities, opportunities for improvement and help you monitor your soil management program. Paul will review various test options and which indicators are useful in helping you develop a plan.

4:30 – 6:30 EXHIBITORS RECEPTION

6:30 DINNER ON YOUR OWN

March 1 • FRIDAY

7:00 – 9:00 **BREAKFAST WITH EXHIBITORS**

9:00 – 9:45 **WHICH ORGANISMS BENEFIT FROM BIOCHAR: MICROBES, WEEDS, OR CONIFER SEEDLINGS?** – *Jessica Miesel and Greg Bonito, MSU*

Biochars are charcoal-like byproducts of bioenergy systems that can be used as a soil amendment, increasing soil moisture, nutrient content, and crop performance while also helping to increase soil carbon. Researchers at MSU are investigating the potential for biochars to help lessen the financial impact of drought years for tree growers by decreasing the need for irrigation and replanting. This presentation will summarize preliminary results about biochar's effects on soil nutrients, microbes, weeds, and Christmas tree seedlings, using contrasting types and amendment levels of biochars from the Great Lakes region.

9:45 – 10:30 **ASK THE EXPERTS - SOIL AND FERTILIZER MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS** – *Speaker Panel*
The panel will answer those “burning” questions you may have on soil health or soil nutrition. Please bring your soil/foliar test reports.

10:30 – 11:15 **BREAK WITH EXHIBITORS**

11:15 – 11:45 **PROMOTION BOARD UPDATE** – *Marsha Gray, CTPB*

11:45 – 12:15 **MCTA ANNUAL MEETING**

12:15 – 1:00 **LUNCH**

1:00 – 2:30 **PROGRAM**

- Choose and Cut Session
- Networking – 30 ideas in 30 minutes
- Wholesale Growers

