



MIFFS

Michigan Food & Farming Systems

Supporting the Many Faces of Farming

AUGUST 2025

WELCOME TO OUR

Monthly Newsletter



Greetings Subscriber!

We are at the height of the 2025 growing season and we know that this summer has been very difficult for growers for so many reasons, from extremely unpredictable weather patterns and extensive storm damage, to the massive negative changes in the funding landscape for small-scale, diversified growers across the nation.

At MIFFS we remain committed to bringing you the best educational, financial and community resources that we can, through our monthly newsletter, social media channels, website and many networks.

We remain focused on the one thing that binds us all, food, and the best ways to promote the growing of healthy food in our local communities for the health and well being of all people.

For access to our database of other resources please visit our [website](#) and follow our social media pages on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

In Solidarity,
the MIFFS Team

Highlight This Month!

NORTHERN MICHIGAN SMALL FARMS CONFERENCE
AUGUST 18 -19, 2025

This year's conference will feature four sessions covering ways farms can collaborate with schools.

These sessions will cover connecting students to local agriculture, key insights from food service directors (with a panel of Michigan food service directors), and the next steps for engaging in farm-to-school work. In collaboration with [Michigan State University Extension](#) and [Groundwork Center](#), these sessions are sure to leave you prepared to work with your local school district. [Learn more here.](#)





Educational Opportunities

WEBINARS, TRAININGS & CONFERENCES

EDUCATION



Funding Opportunities

**GRANTS, LOANS &
RESOURCES**

FUNDING



Employment Opportunities

**JOBs, INTERNSHIPS &
FELLOWSHIPS**

EMPLOYMENT



The Weight of Water in Every Melon

July 14, 2025/in Agriculture, Blog, Crops, Soil

By Darron Gaus, NCAT Agriculture Specialist

A Taste of July

When I was farming in San Antonio, Texas, one of my favorite crops to grow was watermelon. I would often stop during harvest to sit on the sun-warmed soil, cut open a 10-pound source of potassium-rich hydration, and chat with the crew while juice flowed down our chins. I even carried a shaker of pink Himalayan sea salt in my back pocket, ready for the quick draw when that moment came. (And if you've never salted your watermelon, give it a try. Just trust me on this.) Those were special moments that helped us all endure the arduous work of farming.

Over the course of nearly 20 seasons, I grew watermelons in almost every way imaginable and learned a lot about this unique cucurbit. I often pondered if the "water" in "watermelon" comes from the contents or its water-seeking abilities. Watermelon can congregate its fibrous root system to function like a central tap root. It does this in sandy soils with astounding efficiency, even potentially reaching down into the water table itself. I grew watermelons in modeling clay, the blackest of gumbos. After the first few seasons, I learned that I needed to play to the watermelon's strengths. If I wanted the soil's water to convert into hydration to enjoy during my future break times, I had to adapt my growing methods.

Read the full blog post [here](#).

Support Our Mission

Connecting beginning and historically underserved farmers to each other and resource opportunities; ensuring social justice, environmental stewardship, and profitability.

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