



**MICHIGAN SOYBEAN
PROMOTION COMMITTEE**

a new release



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**Contact: Gail Frahm
Executive Director
Phone: 877.769.6424**

Ned Birkey Receives Excellence in Extension Award

Ned Birkey, of Michigan State University Extension, was awarded the Excellence in Extension Award at Michigan Soybean Association's 36th Annual Meeting of Members and the 2009 Soybean Yield Contest Awards Luncheon held in Marshall on Wednesday, December 9. The Excellence in Extension Award was presented by the Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee (MSPC).

"This award is not an annual award," said Keith Reinholt, Field Operations Director for the MSPC. "It is given when an individual working in Michigan State University Extension has rich history of excellence in working with soybean producers to assist in conducting activities 'above and beyond' the general descriptions of the position responsibilities." Nominees are selected by the soybean checkoff with an internal review responsible for selecting a recipient.

Birkey is an Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources Educator with Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) in Monroe County. Since 1989, Birkey has served the farmers in Michigan, conducting research and generally helping the industry make forward strides based on education and sound science.

"Ned has been a dedicated MSU Extension Representative of MSPC for many years," said Andy Welden, MSPC president. "He has been instrumental in many research demonstration plots and establishing the Michigan Soybean Yield Contest. It is a privilege to award him with this distinction."

Birkey received many awards during his career. A few include the 2001 Distinguished Service Award at the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) Annual Meeting and Professional Improvement Conference as well as a 2003 national award for the Communications, Team Newsletter Category, with the NACAA.

Birkey was selected to meet President Ronald Reagan in 1986 as part of the hay-lift effort to drought-stricken Southeast United States. He also served five years in the U.S. Army, ending as a Finance Branch Officer.

Birkey was raised on a 178-acre livestock and dairy farm in north-central Illinois. He studied at Western Illinois University earning a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Economics in 1973. Birkey continued to farm up to 600 acres until 1980 when he took a job offer with the University of Illinois Extension Service as an Extension Advisor. By 1988, he received a Master of Science in Agricultural Education with an emphasis in Agriculture Economics at the University of Illinois.

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Photo available upon request to: soyinfo@michigansoybean.org or call the MSPC at 877.769.6424