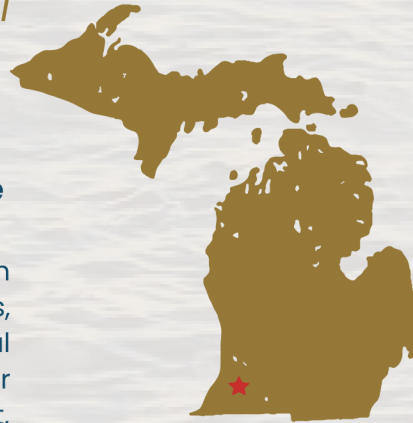


MICHIGAN GROWN



Sherman Reed

EAU CLAIRE, MI



Why do you farm?

I wanted to follow in my late-grandparents' s farming footsteps when I was 6 years old. My grandfather was my great example: transitioning from sharecropping to purchasing to 76 acres in 1947. During my yearly visits to my grandparents' farm, upon arrival, I would visit the animals (cows and hogs) and sit on the farm equipment, thinking they were mine, before I would speak to anyone. You might say farming is in my blood - farming is my passion!

What do you farm and how are you managing your acres?

I farm organic & non-gmo grain (corn, soybeans, dry edible beans, and plan to incorporate a cereal grain). I chose to farm organically for three reasons: higher value product, environmental friendliness, and the ability to produce and provide a more nutrient dense product for animal and human consumption. With being organic, the war on weeds is a never ending battle. I plan to win the weed war on my organic fields by going back to the basics: timely tillage, accurate amounts of macro and micro nutrients (create soil energy), multiple species of cover crops, and introducing a grain and/or perennial crop.

How is the way you farm protecting Michigan's natural resources?

I help protect my farm's natural resources (soil, water, plants, air and animal) by rotating my crops, using winter rye as a cover crop, sampling the soil and pests, and by performing nutrient record keeping. Of course, I need to continue making improvements!

FARM SNAPSHOT

48

Acres farmed

7

Years farming

4

Years of conservation

What would help Michigan farmers achieve their production and conservation goals?

Having a great mentor(s), knowledge of straight-forward methods (soil & plant health basics), technical and financial assistance, and matching grant sources would help farmers, especially the underserved farmers.

