

# **Executive Director**

## **Michigan Seed Potato Association**

### ***Position Summary***

The Executive Director is responsible for the management and organization of all operational aspects of the Michigan Seed Potato Association (MSPA). The MSPA is designated by the Director of The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) as the certification agency for seed potatoes in Michigan. Major functions include directing field inspection and all certification processes; promoting MI certified seed, and ensuring that the MI certification program maintains state, national, and international standards of quality. The Executive Director organizes and manages full-time and temporary staff activity associated with all inspection, certification, and promotional components of the seed potato program. The Director is responsible for creating a long-range vision for the seed potato program and development of business opportunities that provide necessary services for producers while generating revenue for the MSPA. The Executive Director works closely with MDARD and Michigan State University on the technical aspects of seed potato certification in accordance with regulation 628.

### ***Location***

The seed production areas are located in the northern lower peninsula and central/western upper peninsula. The MSPA office is currently located in the Gaylord area however, a location in the seed growing area of the upper peninsula is possible.

### ***Essential Duties and Responsibilities***

1. Effectively plan, organize, manage, and participate in field, harvest, warehouse, shipping point, greenhouse inspections, and certification activities including coordinating post-harvest testing and laboratory testing programs.
2. Evaluate program and staff activity; recommending adjustments to meet needs of producers involved in production and/or trade of certified seed potatoes.
3. Monitor industry trends leading to development and implementation of programs designed to facilitate movement of MI grown seed both interstate and intrastate within state and federal guidelines for potato health factors.
4. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff, growers, associations, groups, and state and federal officials.
5. Review, recommend changes and ensure compliance to potato laws, rules, and regulations regarding seed quality and certification issues.
6. Manage the collection, approval and review of all application, inspection and testing results of certification and grade programs, including maintenance of historical data.

7. Participate internally, and with vendors/consultants in development of promotional and educational programs relating to certified seed production issues.
8. Serve as the organization liaison for other certification representatives/experts. Attend potato development and certification meetings and stay up to date on current issues that affect the seed potato industry.
9. Represent the MSPA at public meetings and functions at state, national, and international levels relating to potato seed certification issues.
10. Make recommendations to the Board of Directors on budget development, monitor program expenditure and revenue trends on monthly and biennial bases.

Note: The duties listed are not intended to be all-inclusive. Duties assigned may be subject to change at any time at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

### ***Knowledge, Skills and Abilities***

1. Ability to effectively communicate and build meaningful and professional relationships with customers, staff, and ag industry in all areas of potato seed certification, marketing, and promotion.
2. Strong leadership skills that enhance relationship building and industry networking
3. Ability to organize and manage day-to-day operations including ongoing evaluation of staff and programs.
4. Problem solving and teamworking skills contributing to development, improvement, and enhancement of new and existing programs within the MSPA.
5. Must be adept at problem-solving, including being able to identify and resolve employee and industry conflict, and communicate all concerns to the board in a timely and efficient manner.
6. Ability to represent the MSPA in local, state, national, and international venues on technical and policy issues in a credible and professional manner.
7. Technical competence in field and laboratory related plant pathology from the perspective of agency, inter-agency and international movement and trade of certified seed products.
8. Technical writing, presentation, and public relations skills commensurate with demands of position.

9. Decision-making and organizational skills required to manage multiple tasks in a team environment.
10. Ability to lift up to 50 pounds, intermittently bend, squat, twist, and reach above shoulder level; walk and stand for long periods in uneven terrain; work in the outdoors and in all weather conditions.
11. Travel is required to fulfill the duties of the position. Executive Director should expect to travel 6-8 weeks throughout the year, primarily for meetings, inspections, and post-harvest tests.
12. Must be able to prioritize and plan work activities as to use time efficiently.
13. Must be organized, accurate, thorough, and able to monitor all work for quality.

***Minimum Qualifications***

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience in agricultural, plant sciences or closely related field.
- Ability to demonstrate strong leadership skills that will enhance relationship building and industry networking.
- Must have valid driver's license.
- Proficiency in problem-solving and conflict resolution.
- Must possess strong interpersonal skills and be able to communicate clearly, both written and orally, as to efficiently collaborate with employees, growers, and the board of directors in meetings, in person, and through email.
- Must not be colorblind.