



No-Cost Mediation for On-Farm Conflict

Conflict is a part of life, including farm life. Whether you are a grower, supplier, lender, or neighbor or represent a USDA Agency, the Michigan Agricultural Mediation Program (MAMP) can assist you in resolving disputes quickly and privately by saving time, money, stress, and avoiding court rooms.

“Mediation empowers people to find their own solutions, instead of a judge deciding for them,” explains Kate Pigott, MAMP Intake Coordinator. “Mediation might seem formal and intimidating. But essentially, it is just a conversation. A mediator helps people remain focused, productive, and calm. If the parties reach an acceptable solution, they have a written and signed agreement. If they do not get a mediated agreement, they can still pursue other resolution and appeal options.”

In recent years, 77 percent of MAMP cases have reached agreement. In addition to disputes between farmers and USDA Agencies, the program now covers lease issues, farm transitions, organic certification, farm neighbors, and more.

Participation is completely free. A non-profit organization, the MAMP traces its roots to the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987 which was in response to the farm loan crisis. Programs established by this legislation operate in Michigan and 41 other states. Because the MAMP receives grant funds, its mediation services are offered without cost to either party in a dispute.

During COVID-19, the MAMP remains fully operational while adhering to federal, state, and local safety recommendations. If in-person mediation sessions are not possible, remote sessions can be held via online video or phone conference.

All inquiries are free and confidential. For more information, please email Kate at inquire@agmediation.org or call her at 1-800-616-7863. Kate will listen to your description of the conflict and explain how mediation works. She can also suggest other resources that may be helpful. If you request mediation, Kate will reach out to the other party. If they agree to mediate, she will then schedule a meeting with the mediator.

You may also visit www.agmediation.org to learn more about how no-cost mediation can help you resolve on-farm conflict.

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