

# EDUCATION AND OUTREACH ON WOODY BIOMASS

MSU Extension (MSUE) is working with other universities, industries and government agencies on research and analysis programs on woody biomass. MSUE also is developing a range of outreach tools to increase awareness and understanding of the wood energy potential in Michigan and is tailoring research-based information into a variety of formats. MSUE also provides networking services to connect partners and to share information with groups interested in wood-based energy:

- MSU departments and offices
- existing forest product industries
- emerging wood energy industries
- public and private utilities
- municipal, county and state governments
- school districts
- forestry technical service providers
- foresters, loggers and truckers
- forest land owners
- colleges and universities
- decision and policy makers
- media outlets
- trade associations and civic groups

Through the new woody biomass energy extension program, MSUE will identify knowledge gaps in the state and then design activities and educational materials to fill the gaps, including:

- facilitated workshops and meetings
- focus groups

- programs explaining decision analysis tools
- educational materials/bulletins
- outreach for Michigan woody biomass harvesting guidelines
- K-12 education assessment and programs

## Engaging Communities and Partners

MSUE works directly with local communities considering alternative energy opportunities. MSUE educators are members of a number of steering committees, including the Biomass Utilization and Restoration Network in the Upper Peninsula, helping to provide the most up-to-date information for their efforts.

MSUE's educational efforts span a variety of audiences. Its educators provide information to forest owner groups, such as the Michigan Forest Association and Michigan Tree Farm Program, who are interested in woody biomass for energy and carbon sequestration sales. They will help loggers, landowners and technical service providers understand the latest Department of Natural Resources-authored woody biomass guidelines. Educational efforts also include youth: MSUE educators work with the Michigan Science Teachers Association and local school districts to support alternative energy concepts in classrooms.

MSUE educators have been helping rural communities such as Kalkaska, Iron River, Manistique, St. Ignace, Newberry, and Escanaba make economic development decisions. New and existing businesses based on woody biomass turn to MSUE for information on feedstock supplies, business planning, financing and other aspects of building or expanding a business venture.