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PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Doing What is Right for our Environment

CTC Agriscience Program Gains State Certification for Environmental Best Practices

Traverse City, MI --- In Michigan, our lakes and waterways are one of our most precious natural resources. Ms. Ann Blight, Agriscience and Natural Resources instructor, is pleased to announce that the Traverse Bay Area Career-Tech Center Agriscience and Natural Resources program has received verification with the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP), a comprehensive pro-active and voluntary agricultural pollution prevention program.

Like other agricultural enterprises, floriculture involves a number of processes that can potentially affect Michigan's surface and ground water. As an example, by not meeting safety standards with the proper use and disposal of pesticides and not making sure that the necessary equipment is in place to prevent spills, it would be easy for these contaminants to get into drains and out into our water supply.

This MAEAP certification is designed to reduce facility/farmer legal and environmental risks through a three-phase process: 1) education; 2) facility/farm-specific risk assessment; and 3) on-site verification to ensure the facility/farmer has implemented environmentally sound practices.

MAEAP benefits Michigan by:

- Protecting natural resources using environmentally sound practices.
- Having emergency plans ready to deal with the unexpected.
- Using proven scientific standards to protect our air, water and soil.
- Maximizing natural fertilizer use and reducing use of fertilizers made from fossil fuels.
- Making good neighbors.
- Helping protect the Great Lakes.
- Ensuring safe storage of fuel, fertilizer and chemicals.
- Balancing efficient production and sound environmental practices.
- Taking care of the land while making a living from the land.

Teaching awareness and advocating for a healthy environment helps to develop valuable stewards of an agricultural society. As an instructor in the MAEAP verified greenhouse, Ms. Blight makes it a priority to teach students about the importance of environmental issues, and she is pleased to see her students take pride in knowing that they are helping to protect our water.

The Career-Tech Center has taken critical steps to provide a state-of-the-art learning environment for the Agriscience and Natural Resource Program and takes pride in modeling best

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practices in environmental safety. Dan Busby of the Grand Traverse Conservation District has provided valuable assistance in the greenhouse certification process and students have gained valuable knowledge from the partnership that has developed with that organization.

To discover more about career and technical experience programs offered to eleventh and twelfth grade students from within the five-county region, go to: www.tbactc.org

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Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District serves Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Leelanau counties. We are LEADING LIFETIME LEARNING to make the Traverse Bay Area THE BEST PLACE to live and learn for ALL students. For more information about TBAISD visit www.tbaisd.k12.mi.us.