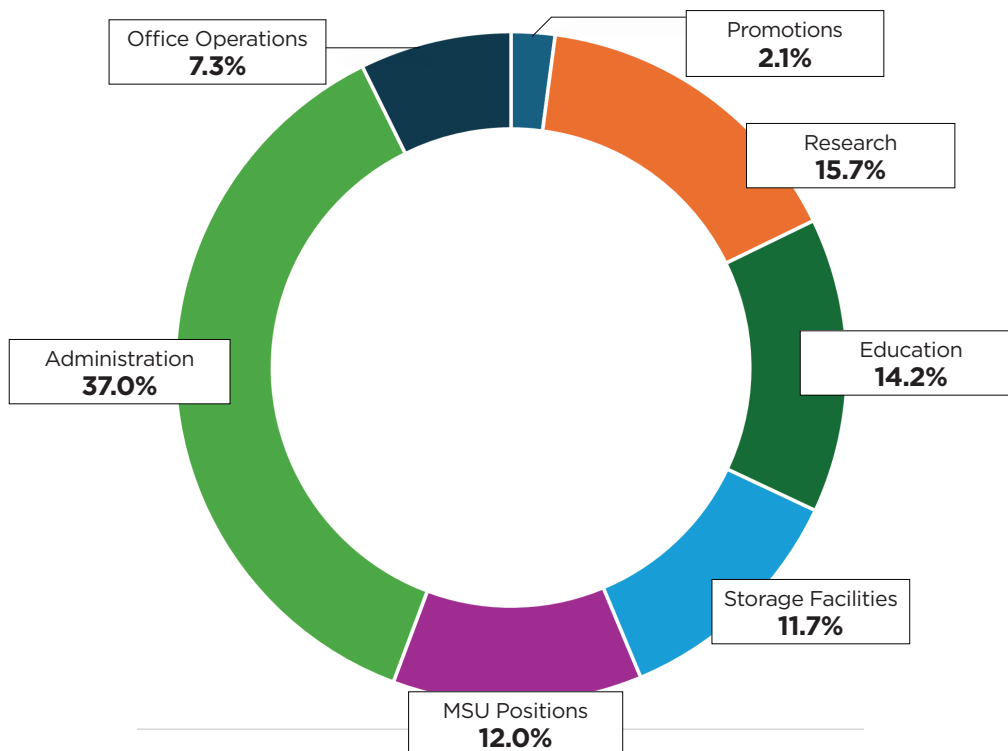


BUDGET ALLOCATIONS



Research & Outreach

11

Research projects funded for
2025 crop year totaling
\$212,398

**43 Trials at
29 Operations**

9 Community Events
8,000+ People Reached

Grant Funding

In recent years, MPIC has worked diligently to secure \$339,079 in USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant dollars to help fund new research and marketing activities. These grants are vital to growing the Michigan potato industry.

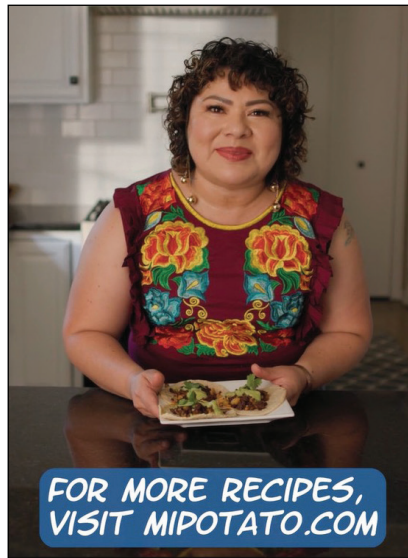
2025 • \$60,000 — Promoting Michigan Potatoes to Foreign-Born Populations

2025 • \$85,640 — Nitrogen Dynamics of Various N Sources and N-15 Isotope Fate

2024 • \$99,644 — Increase Ag Water Sustainability with Aquifer Performance

2023 • \$93,795 — Educating Food Insecure and Non-English-Speaking Audiences on Michigan Potatoes as a Healthy and Affordable Option

Education & Communications



Block grant scores with foreign-born residents

Approximately 724,000 of Michigan's 9.8 million residents — or 7.2% — were born outside the United States. That includes significant populations from Mexico and the Middle East.

So, when MPIC was notified there were \$60,000 in unused Specialty Crop Block Grant funds, we put together a proposal that would connect with those communities via food influencers through a targeted social media campaign. MPIC got the official go-ahead June 20, 2025 for the campaign, which had to be wrapped up by August 31 to qualify for the funds.

MPIC partnered with Lake FX Media in Ludington for what was to be a fast and furious campaign to stress the availability and nutrition of Michigan potatoes.

We extensively researched demographics to create highly targeted and specific geographic areas to maximize its reach to foreign-born populations, including areas of Wayne, Kent, Ottawa, and Oakland counties. We boosted our ad campaigns in these areas with grant marketing

dollars, which resulted in extremely high impression rates.

Our partnerships with three food influencers resulted in five new recipes for mipotato.com that feature potatoes in creative ways in cuisines native to areas of Mexico, the Middle East, and Mediterranean. The partnerships also provided cross-marketing opportunities to the food influencers' audiences, many of whom are interested in the styles of cuisine we featured.

In our original application, we set a goal of reaching 500,000 adults with our campaign. In the end, impressions in digital/social media marketing surpassed 5.9 million impressions. This included 5.38 million on social media and another 519,000 via Google Ads.

Maivis (Jimenez) Johnson, an Oaxaca, Mexico native who lives in West Michigan, created two of the recipes and was featured in the videos.

"I had a lot of people mention to me that they saw the videos," said Johnson (pictured above, right). "I think there was a real appreciation of being made a priority by Michigan Potatoes."

March Madness: Potato chip flavor style

In March, MPIC conducted a fun and engaging social media campaign to coincide with the popular NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament. Since Michigan leads the country in producing chip potatoes, we thought a bracket to decide the champion of chip flavors was in order to help remind everyone of the fact that Michigan is the potato chip king of the U.S.

We started with eight

of the bestselling chip flavors and had them face off until one remained. Our social media followers voted to decide each winner.

In the end, Cheddar & Sour Cream topped Barbecue to win the title, at least that's how more than 500 people on Facebook and Instagram voted.

Reach and interaction rates were well above average throughout the month of March.

Highlighting resistant starch

MPIC has made putting a spotlight on resistant starch a regular practice in recent months.

Resistant starch passes through the small intestine, which minimizes glucose spikes. This makes starch more like dietary fiber in the digestive system by also supporting a healthy gut.

Potatoes, like many

foods, have naturally occurring resistant starch. However, to maximize the resistant starch, potatoes must be cooked and then cooled, preferably overnight, before being consumed. Maximizing resistant starch counteracts the most prominent criticism of potatoes, which is that they're not good for weight loss or diabetics.

Resistant Starch

What is it? When starches are digested they typically break down into glucose. Because resistant starch is **not** digested in the small intestine, it doesn't raise glucose. Gut health is improved as fermentation in a large intestine makes more good bacteria and less bad bacteria in the gut. Healthy gut bacteria can improve glycemic control.

Adding Resistant Starch to Your Diet:

- Try cooking **rice, potatoes, beans,** and pasta a day in advance, then cool them in the refrigerator overnight. It's ok to reheat them before eating.
- Reheating doesn't decrease the amount of resistant starch.

Source: The Johns Hopkins Patient Guide to Diabetes



Other Notes

■ **Industry Communications:** MPIC has sent 69 industry-focused e-newsletters and other email blasts during the 2025-26 FY. The open rate is 49%.

■ **Consumer E-newsletter:** Our monthly consumer e-newsletter has more than 28,000 subscribers, with an open rate of 19%, well above industry average.

■ **Social Media:** Michigan Potatoes accounts currently have more than 21,000 followers.