



Michigan Agri-Business Association

1501 North Shore Drive, Suite A
East Lansing, Michigan 48823

www.miagbiz.org

Telephone (517) 336-0223
Fax (517) 336-0227

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Chuck Lippstreu
clippstreu@byrumfisk.com
517-242-5124

Donald Slachta, longtime agribusiness leader, receives Michigan Agri-Business Association “Leaders and Legends” award

The **Michigan Agri-Business Association (MABA)** presented Donald Slachta with the “Leaders and Legends” award for his lifetime of leadership in agriculture at the Association’s recent 2014 Outlook Conference on Mackinac Island.

Slachta started his 32-year career in the elevator business in 1959 at Economy Mills in Elwell, Michigan, where he went into business with his father-in-law. Originally trained as a pharmacist, Slachta maintained his pharmacy license in Michigan until 2011. He is also a veteran of the United States Army.

“Don Slachta has a tremendous record of service to Michigan’s agriculture industry, not to mention his country and his community, and we’re proud to honor his work,” said **Jim Byrum**, president of **MABA**. “Many of us in the industry have learned from Don during his long career in agriculture, and we consider him a close friend and a great leader.”

Slachta was also presented with a Congressional tribute from U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow, who currently serves as Chairwoman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry.

After starting at Economy Mills in 1959, he eventually became manager of the Elwell plant following a merger. In 1978, Slachta went into business with three other partners, starting Ag Ventures, LLC. The company eventually included 16 elevators in seven counties and a lumber yard in Ionia County, as well as the Minor Walton Bean Company and the Grant Kuhn bean elevator chain headquartered in Twin Falls, Idaho. After leaving the company in 1991, he continued with agricultural consulting and participation in agriculture organizations.



A short YouTube video highlighting Slachta’s service to agriculture is available [here](#).

Slachta has served in numerous leadership posts and participated for decades in organizations serving Michigan agriculture. These include:

- Chairman of the Michigan Agri-Business Association in 1989.
- Chairman of the Michigan Bean Shippers Association in 1972, 1979 and 1981, including during their 100th year.
- Chairman of the National Grain and Feed Association from 1994 – 1996, including during their 100th year.
- Appointment by Governor Milliken to the Michigan Bean Commission from 1974 – 1978.
- Appointment to the Board of Trustees of Delta College in 1983.
- Member of the Pharmaceutical Association for 50 years.
- Member of the Michigan Grain Dealers Association, including a term on the Board of Directors.
- Member of the Michigan Bean Shippers Association, including a term on the Board of Directors.
- Member of the National Grain and Feed Association, including a term on the Board of Directors.

MABA presented its first [Leaders and Legends Award](#) in January 2013. The program honors individuals who have led the growth of Michigan's agricultural industry and acted as spark plugs for innovation and creativity.

###