



**Michigan
Agri-Business
Association**

www.miagbiz.org

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

Telephone (517) 336-0223

Fax (517) 336-0227

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

Cliff Vennix, longtime agribusiness leader, receives MABA “Leaders and Legends” award

LANSING – The **Michigan Agri-Business Association (MABA)** recently presented **Clifford “Cliff” Vennix** of Auburn with the “Leaders and Legends” award for his commitment to growing Michigan’s agriculture industry. **MABA** president **Jim Byrum** presented the award at the Association’s 2015 Winter Conference in Lansing.

“Anyone who has been a part of the elevator business knows Cliff as a leader who has helped our industry grow and expand,” said **Byrum**. “Cliff has been a friend and mentor to many in Michigan agriculture, and this award is a way to recognize him not just for his success in the business, but also for going the extra mile to strengthen Michigan’s agriculture sector.”

Vennix started his 62-year career at age 16 at the Kraft Cheese Creamery in Pinconning. In 1955, he began his career in the grain elevator business working for his brother at the Bay Elevator Company in Linwood. In 1959, Vennix married his wife of 55 years, Janet, and soon was offered a management position at Frutchey Bean Company.

In 1970 he purchased his first grain elevator in Auburn and in 1971 purchased Auburn Elevator, followed soon thereafter by Wolverine Bean Company in Bay City in 1972. In 1979 Vennix, along with three other partners, formed the Millington Elevator. Vennix purchased the assets of Frutchey Bean in 1981.

Last fall, after more than 40 years in business, Vennix sold **Auburn Bean and Grain** to **The Andersons, Inc.**

Vennix has been widely recognized throughout his career – including by the Michigan Legislature and City of Auburn. A short YouTube video highlighting Vennix’s service to agriculture is available [here](#).

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

- Auburn Williams Fire District Board
- Auburn Area Chamber of Commerce
- State Advisory Committee on Agricultural Education
- Michigan Agriculture Commission
- National Grain and Feed Association Board
- Michigan Agri-Business Association Board (including serving as Chair)
- Michigan Bean Shippers Board (including serving as Chair)
- Michigan Millers Association

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.



Above: Cliff Vennix

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