

NE LAPEER COUNTY BARN TOUR OCTOBER 9 2026

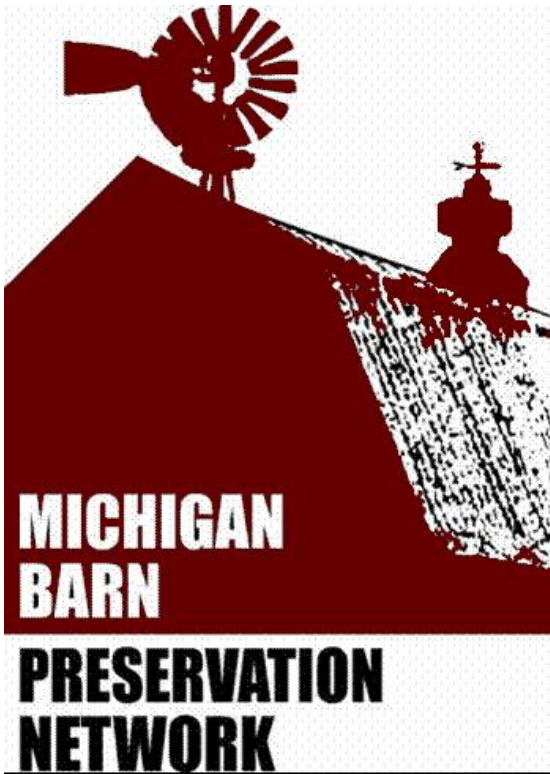


WWW.MIBARN.NET



Farming in Lapeer County, Michigan, is dominated by field crops like soybeans (52,197 acres) and corn (36,032 acres), along with alfalfa, hay, and cattle production. The area is known for strong agricultural diversity, including small, organic farms, local roadside stands, and greenhouses. Support is provided by the local MSU Extension and MAEAP, which ensures environmental stewardship.



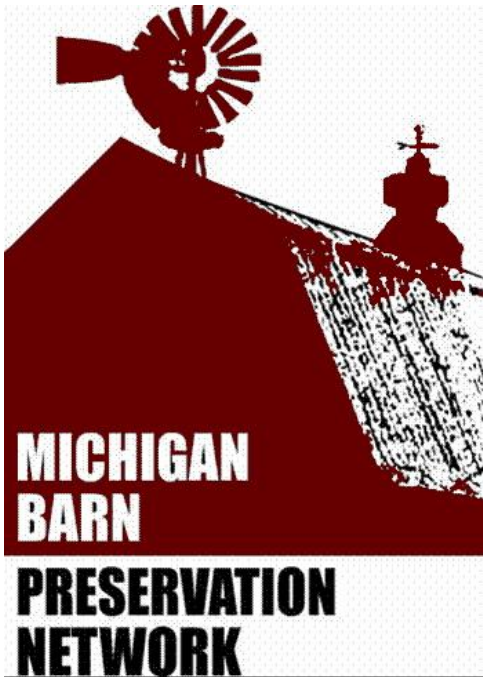


Who We Are:

Established in 1995, the Michigan Barn Preservation Network (MBPN) is an active, statewide 501©3 nonprofit organization of barn owners and enthusiasts. We believe barns are important economic and cultural resources in our communities and are symbols of our nation's rich agricultural heritage.

What we believe:

Barns symbolize positive qualities of American character: strength, honesty, endurance, security, and family stability. They remind us of our heritage and help tell the story of rural life. They serve as landmarks while fulfilling the purpose for which they were originally designed, housing agricultural products and animals. With maintenance and some adaptations, they can serve us well for many years to come.



What we do:

- Annual conference
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Email blasts
- Annual barn tour
- Barn of the Year awards
- Founders awards
- Website
- Facebook page
- Barn calendar
- Workshops
- Teamwork and Timbers
- Exhibits
- Volunteer opportunities
- Membership
- Membership
- Ask one of our MBPN board members for more information



Who Built My Barn ?

There were no specific, widely documented "professional barn-building companies" in 1800s Lapeer County. Barns from this era were primarily constructed by **farmers, local carpenters, and neighbors** through community "barn raisings," or by hiring skilled local tradesmen who were not exclusively identified as barn builders.

Who Built the Barns?

Farmer-Craftsmen: Most 19th-century barns were built by the farm families themselves, often using timber harvested directly from their own woodlots.

Local Carpenters/Joiners: If a farmer had the budget, they would hire a local carpenter or "barn boss"—someone with expertise in timber framing and joinery—to oversee the construction, frame the structure, and ensure the beams were properly fitted.

Community Labor: For larger, complex structures, neighbors would gather for a "barn raising." This social and labor-intensive event was the standard for raising heavy timber frames into place.

Itinerant Tradesmen: Occasionally, skilled builders or timber framers moved between farms or jobs as needed, but historical records rarely identify them as formal "barn building firms."

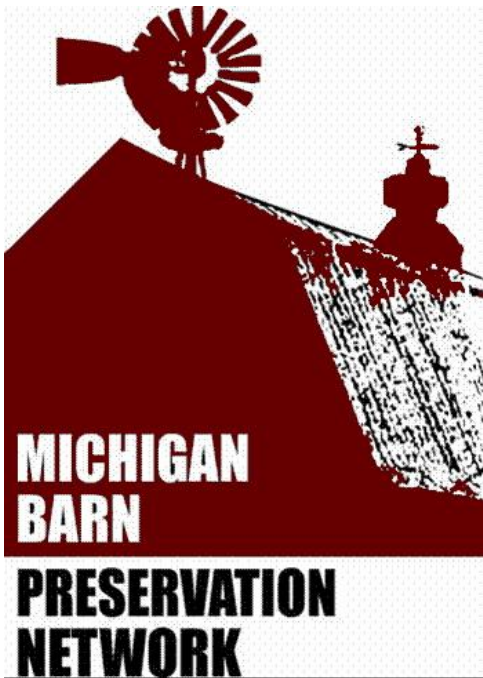


How They Were Constructed

- **Timber Framing:** Most barns in the 1800s were built using heavy timber frames. You may find barns with hand-hewn beams (shaped by hand with an adze or broadaxe) in the early to mid-1800s, while later barns (late 1800s) often used sawn lumber from local water-powered or steam-powered sawmills.

- **Materials:** Construction materials were highly localized. Builders used whatever was abundant on the land—typically white pine, oak, or maple. Local sawmills in Lapeer County (like those established as early as 1831 on Farmers Creek) provided the finished lumber.

Balloon Framing: Toward the very end of the 1800s, some barns began utilizing "balloon framing"—a lighter, faster method using standardized 2-inch lumber rather than massive, hand-hewn timbers.



What You Can Do:

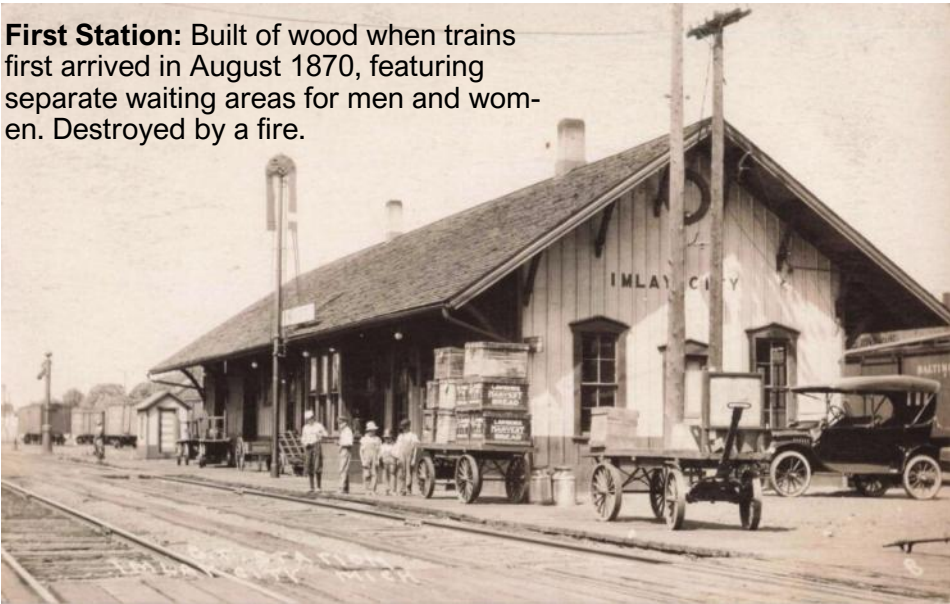
- Attend the annual conference
- Join the MBPN and get:
 - o Quarterly Newsletter
 - o Email blasts
 - o Receive MBPN barn calendar
- Attend the annual barn tour
- Submit an application to the Barn of the Year (BOY) awards
- Visit our Website
- Visit our Facebook page
- Join a workshop
- Volunteer opportunities
 - o Teamwork & Timbers program
 - o Lots of other opportunities;
 - **Ask us!**

MBPN 2026 Lapeer County Barn tour headquarters at Imlay City Historical Museum



Current Brick Depot: Constructed in 1927 by the Ellington Miller Company of Chicago, with a baggage addition built in 1930.

First Station: Built of wood when trains first arrived in August 1870, featuring separate waiting areas for men and women. Destroyed by a fire.

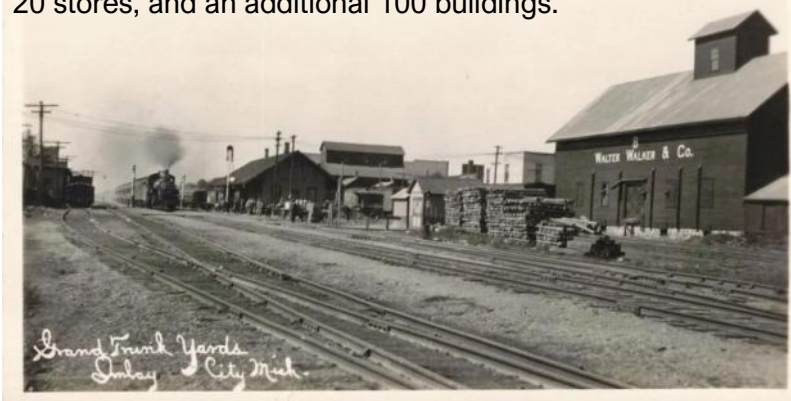




Sanborn Map of Imlay city

Imlay City

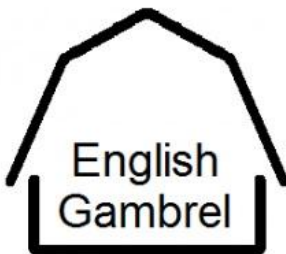
Connecticut capitalist William H. Imlay began buying Michigan pinelands in 1836. In 1850 newly organized Imlay Township was named for him. The Port Huron & Lake Michigan Railroad cut through Imlay's forests and arrived in July 1870. The railroad's chief engineer, Charles Palmer, purchased 240 acres of land, which he platted as Imlay City less than a week later. Within eighteen months the town had 500 residents, a schoolhouse, two hotels, nearly 20 stores, and an additional 100 buildings.





Dhooghe Barn. Concrete block wall at lower level. Plank frame gambrel roof framing. Metal roof.





A plank-built gambrel barn features a dual-slope "barn-style" roof and an economical framing method utilizing lighter dimensional planks instead of heavy, traditional hand-hewn timbers. This historic building technique reduced lumber and labor costs significantly while maximizing open loft headroom.



ANKLEY FAMILY FARMS

Built on Family
Shaped by Seasons

Our story

Ankley Farms is a three-generation family farm located just north of Imlay City, Michigan. Long before flower fields, seasonal events, or photography sessions became part of the farm, this land was home to crops, cattle, and the steady rhythms of farm life that continue to shape it today. What began as a simple roadside sweet corn stand slowly grew into something more.

In 2020, the family expanded with a greenhouse and began sharing more of the farm directly with the community. Over time, flowers were planted, sunflower fields began to bloom, and visitors started making the drive out to experience the beauty of the land for themselves. Today, Ankley Farms continues to grow flowers, produce, pumpkins, and seasonal offerings while remaining grounded in what matters most: caring for the land well and creating a place people look forward to returning to year after year.



Lunch on the Farm

You're invited to a memorable lunch at the farm, featuring a thoughtfully prepared, home-cooked meal. These dinners are hosted by Virginia of Kate's Kitchen- our farm's matriarch- who brings her made-from-scratch cooking to the table with ingredients grown and raised right here on the farm.

COMMON MIDWESTERN BARN TYPES

Indiana Barn Types



SIDE DRIVE GROUND BARN OR
"YANKEE" BARN



END DRIVE GROUND BARN OR
"TRANSVERSE" BARN



RAISED OR "BANK" BARN



FORE BAY BANK BARN
PENNSYLVANIA BARN



FORE BAY BANK BARN
SWEITZER BARN



FORE BAY BANK BARN
DOUBLE OVERHANG

Indiana Barn "Shed" Types



TRANSVERSE BARN WITH
SIDE SHED



YANKEE BARN WITH GABLE
END SHED



TRANSVERSE BARN WITH
"FLANKING" SHEDS



YANKEE BARN WITH "T" OR
STRAW SHED



FORE BAY BANK BARN
WITH "OUTSHOT" SHEDS



"RAISED" OR BANK BARN
WITH "T" STRAW SHED

COMMON MIDWESTERN GROUND PLANS & ROOF TYPES



"L"



ROUND



GABLE



HALF MONITOR



MONITOR



SHED



POLYGON



SQUARE



GAMBREL



HIP



OGE



RECTANGLE



"T"



GOTHIC



MANSARD



ROUND

TYPICAL FOUNDATION CONFIGURATIONS



BANK



BRIDGED



ON GRADE



PIERS



RAISED/RAMPED

TYPICAL AMERICAN BARN ROOF STYLES



LOW GABLE



MEDIUM GABLE



HIGH GABLE



CENTRE GABLE



CROSS GABLE



HIPPED GABLE



HIPPED, CROSS GABLE



BELLCAST HIPPED GABLE



BELLCAST HIPPED GABLE



LOW HIP



MEDIUM HIP



HIGH HIP



TRUNCATED HIP



HIP WITH CENTRE GABLE



BELLCAST HIP



GABLE HIP OR GABLET



GAMBREL



HIPPED GAMBREL



BELLCAST GAMBREL



BELLCAST HIPPED GAMBREL



MANSARD



GABLED MANSARD



BELLCAST MANSARD



HALIFAX



SHED



SALTBOX



BOOMTOWN



FLAT



SAWTOOTH



MONITOR



DOME



PYRAMINDAL



CONICAL



VAULT



ROUND



POLYGONAL

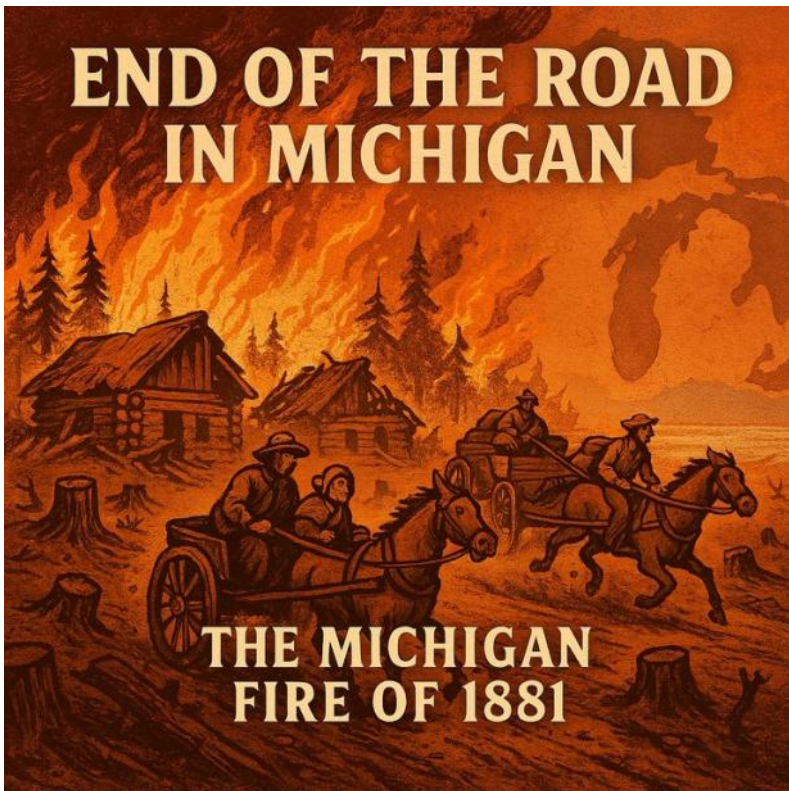
Hay carriers and tracks

Forks, slings, and mechanical hay carriers that moved along a track mounted inside the roof. They began to be developed in the mid-1800s and evolved over time.

Hay press

In the mid-1800s, mule/horse-powered mechanical means of pressing hay into large bales began to be built into barns. These barns are hay press barns. By the later 1800s portable hay presses were manufactured and many hay presses were removed from barns.





“The summer of 1881 was excessively dry, and the drought had done its work nowhere more effectively than in the wide, blunt, tongue of land which lies between Saginaw bay and Lake Huron. At the northern end of this tongue is Huron County. South of Huron is the counties of Tuscola and Sanilac, the latter bordering on the lake. Lapeer County lies south partly of Tuscola and partly of Sanilac. These are the counties that suffered from the great fires.”

How many people died in the 1881 Michigan Fire? The stated death toll for the 1881 fire is stated as 282.

However, the real total will never be known as there were many lumbermen and transient laborers in the region.

How many acres were destroyed in the 1881 Michigan Fire? Over two days over a million acres were

burned. It left 3,400 buildings destroyed, and almost 15,000 residents homeless.



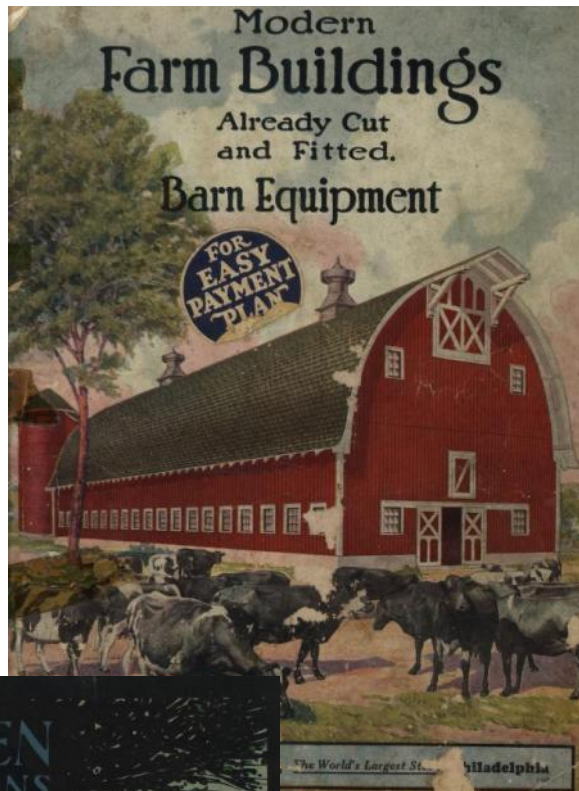
American Red Cross

In 1881 Clara Barton founded the American Red Cross. The organization's first meeting had taken place in Washington DC at the home of Sen. Omar D. Conger of Michigan. Their first official disaster relief operation was the response to the Thumb Fire, and the Red Cross provided money, clothes, and household items to victims of the fire.



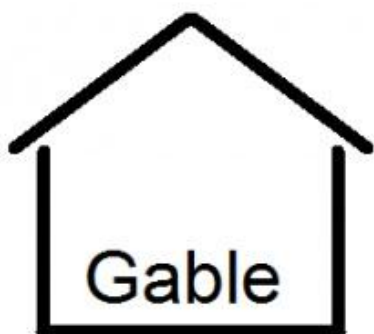
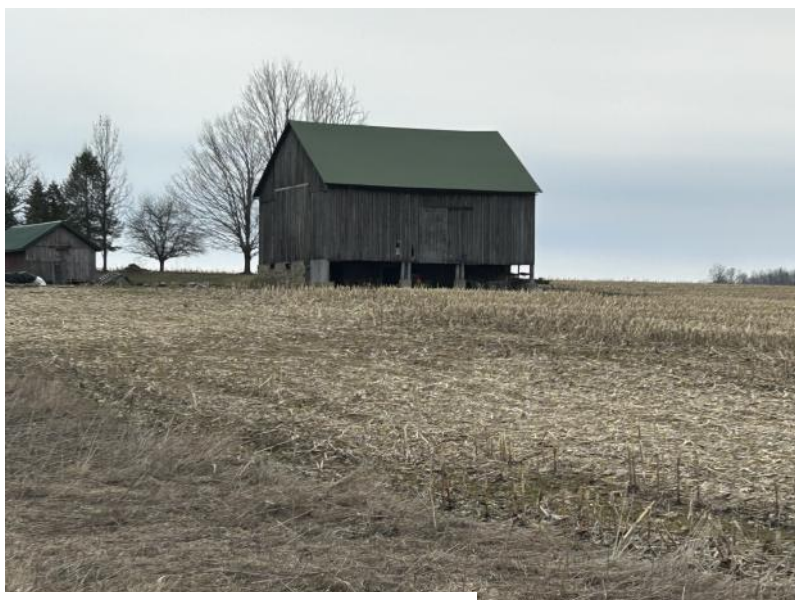
Raised ramp, arched roof barn with stone foundation.





Examples of online catalogs.

<https://archive.org/details/buildingtechnology-heritagelibrary>



Bank barn, with gable roof,
stone foundation, timber
frame construction.

Ken's Barn







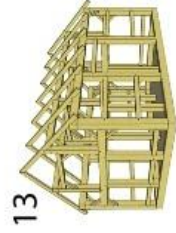
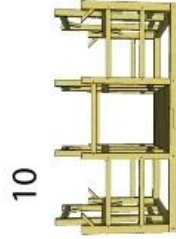
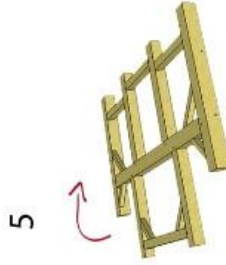
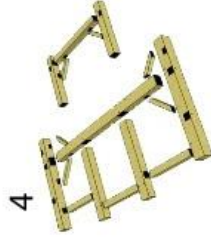
Gambrel roof barn, with
stone foundation, plank
framing.

Martus Barn





Beautiful stone repair by MBPN contractor member; Schmitt & Sons Stonework.



BENT

the combination of posts, tie beam, rafters and other members that establishes the shape of the building.

BAY

the area between the bents, spaced as needed or engineered. Often placed 8' to 20' on center.

HAMMER BEAM TRUSS

a more ornate truss that can have either curved or straight timber members.

HAND HEWN

cut using a combination of a broad axe and adze.

HAY MOW

a space inside a barn to hold hay

HOUSED JOINTS

timbers held in place by mortise and tenon and secured in a housing to prevent rotation.

KING POST

a vertical post that supports the center of a roof.

KING POST TRUSS

often used when a clear span is desired. The timber member that connects at the peak of the building is the King Post. The other members of the truss are joined into the King Post.

KNEE BRACE

typically set into the frame at an angle to the posts and plates to strengthen it and hold it from racking.

LOFT JOIST

structural members that support loft flooring and are commonly joined to the frame at the loft level.

MORTISE

the recessed cut in the timber that receives the tenon to connect the joints. A trunnel is then used to secure the joint.

PLANED TIMBER

each side is smooth and even.

POST

vertical timber that forms a wall or an interior structural member.

PRINCIPLE RAFTER

the primary roof structure that forms the roof pitch and supports the lesser structural roof members, such as purlins.

PURLIN

also called a sub-rafter; a lesser member connected to and supported by the principle rafters. The roof sheathing is commonly attached to the purlins.

QUEEN POST

a vertical post, placed off-center to support the roof structure.

QUEEN POST TRUSS

the combination of posts, tie beam, rafters and other members that provides a clear span area such as a drive through area of a barn.

SILL

the structural member that sits on the foundation and supports the floor framing.

SCISSOR TRUSS

allows various clear spans through diagonal bracing crossing the rafter members, attaching to the top of the rafters.

STRUT

roof member that sits on the tie beam and gives additional support to the principle rafter, canied purlin, principle purlin or other roof bearing member.

TENON

the protrusion on the timber, made for insertion into the mortise.

TRUNNEL

aka. tree nail, the peg that secures the tenon into a mortise.

TIE BEAM

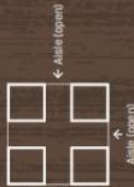
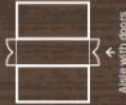
a horizontal timber that spans the width of a structure and ties the two opposing walls together.

WIND BRACE

similar to a knee brace although typically placed in the roof frame to resist racking and movement due to wind pressure on the building.

<https://www.barnsonline.com/barn-framing-101/>

BARN EVOLUTION

**SINGLE CRIB****DOUBLE CRIB****TRIPLE CRIB****FOUR CRIB****ENGLISH BARN**

Two or more bays separated by a cross-aisle opening at one end only.

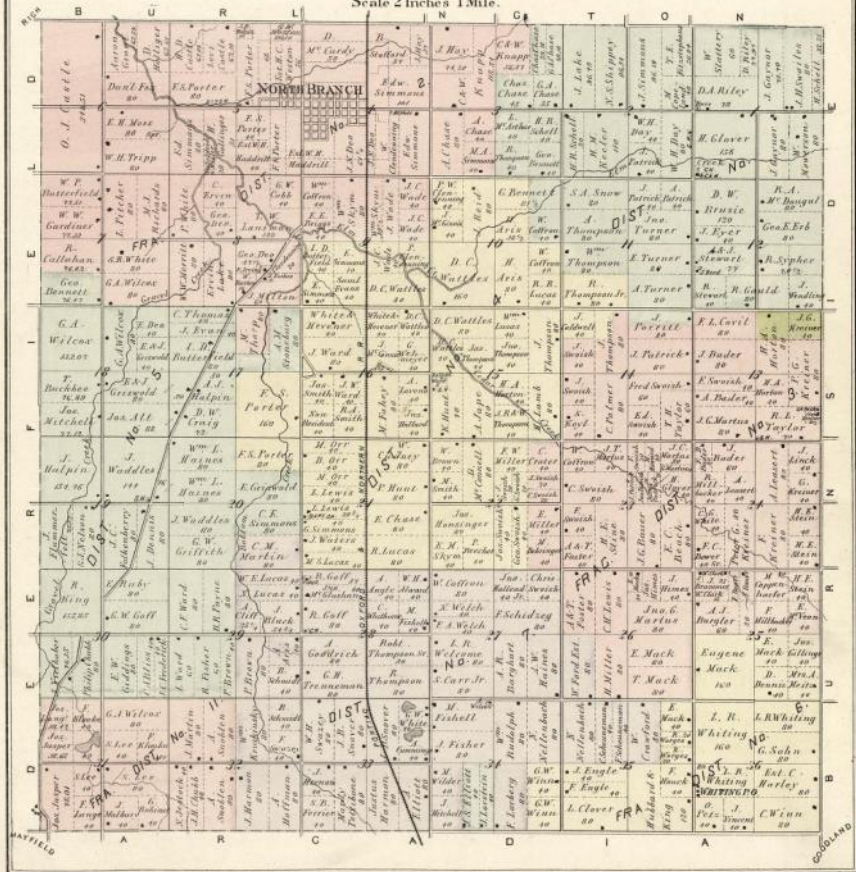
**TRANSVERSE FRAME**

Three or more areas joined on either side of a central aisle opening on the gable ends.

NORTH BRANCH

Township IX North Range XI East.

Scale 2 Inches 1 Mile.



Event Barn



Top 20 Things to Consider If You Want to Host

Weddings in Your Barn

- Does your barn meet state building codes and local zoning ordinances?
- Are you adequately insured for public use?
- Is your barn handicapped-accessible? Is there elevator access to any upper or lower levels?
- Is your barn heated? Air-conditioned? Ventilated? Pest protected?
- Does your barn have clearly marked fire exits? Fire extinguishers? Fire-suppression system? Smoke alarms? Sprinklers? Lightning protection?
- Will you be preparing food on-site? Will you need a health permit?
- Will you have one caterer or a list of preferred caterers? What criteria are used to select them?
- Will you have tables and chairs available or will they need to be rented? If you own them, where will you store them?
- Will you allow alcohol to be served? What licensing and insurance are required to do so?
- Do you have enough staff to work weekends and late hours?
- Do you have enough parking and is it handicapped-accessible?
- Do you have enough restrooms and are they handicapped-accessible?
- Do you have enough garbage receptacles and dumpsters?
- What will be your hours of operation? How late can events go?
- Will you allow music and how loud can the music go?
- Will they be allowed to decorate the barn? If so, what is allowed?
- Do you have security? If not, who will you call should there be an emergency?
- How much will you charge? How much do other venues around you charge? How much do you need to charge to cover all your costs?
- How will you market your site?
- Are you a barn that hosts weddings or a wedding venue that is a barn?



Michigan Agriculture

An overview of the state's food, farming and agribusiness sectors



Michigan ranks first in the nation for the production of:

Asparagus
Black beans
Navy beans
Cucumbers
Small red beans
Squash
Tart cherries

44,000

Total number of farms

9.4M

Total number of farm acres

214

Average farm size in acres



Michigan ranks **No. 3** in the nation for both floriculture sales and number of floriculture operations.

Michigan also ranks among the top states in the nation for the production of:

Apples (**No. 3**)
Cranberry beans (**No. 2**)
Light red kidney beans (**No. 2**)
Navy beans (**No. 2**)
Alfalfa haylage (**No. 3**)
Blueberries (**No. 4**)
Sugarbeets (**No. 4**)
Sweet cherries (**No. 4**)
Bell peppers (**No. 5**)
Maple syrup (**No. 5**)
Pumpkins (**No. 5**)
Snap beans (**No. 5**)
Cabbage (**No. 6**)
Milk (**No. 6**)
Peaches (**No. 7**)
Potatoes (**No. 7**)

Michigan produces more than 300 agricultural products.

56.5

Average age of a Michigan farmer



200K

Michigan produced 200,000 gallons of maple syrup in 2024



Michigan leads the nation for production of several floriculture crops, including **begonias, Easter lilies, geraniums, hardy chrysanthemums, impatiens, marigolds, pansies, petunias and spring flowering bulbs.**

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Thanks:

- To the barn owners on this tour
- Breakfast snacks Imlay City Historical Museum
- Indiana Barn Foundation (info inserts)
- Lunch provided by Ankley Farmstand Events
- Detroit Public Library Burton Collection
- Library of Congress Digital Collection
- Thumbwind.com
- Brochure Design by Tammis Donaldson
- Printing by ARC Documents Clawson MI

Courtesy rules:

- Please no smoking
- Please leave no trash behind
- Photography approved

Lapeer County Barn Tour Committee:

- Laurie Sisco
- Tammis Donaldson
- Melissa Jaskiewicz



<https://mibarn.net>

<https://www.facebook.com/mibarn>

<https://www.instagram.com/mibarnpreservation/>

The Questions We're Most Often Asked...

Q. Is there any funding for barn restoration?

The Michigan Barn Preservation Network keeps tabs on funding opportunities in the form of grants, tax credits and low-interest loans. Currently there are no governmental grants in Michigan to help private owners of barns with restoration or repair of their personal property. Work on barns which are owned by municipalities, nonprofit organizations or other public entities may be eligible for consideration for grants and awards through governmental and foundation programs. Listing on the National or State Register of Historic Places is a requirement for most grants.



Maintenance is one of the first steps to preserve your barn



Q. How can I find someone to fix my barn?

There are people all across Michigan who do repair work on old barns. Some do historically accurate timber frame work. Some do structural reinforcement by using cables. Some specialize in installing steel roofing and siding. Many will repair anything from foundation to cupola.

Our website provides a Contractor's List as a place for barn owners to start looking for help.

Q. Why are barns red?

MBPN Board Member Keith Anderson offers several practical and cost-effective reasons why red became the dominant color of early barns. Article on our website.

Q. Have questions about rehabilitating or repairing your barn?

MBPN has a committee of experts to answer your inquiries.



Mission:
Promoting Appreciation, Preservation and Re-
habilitation of Michigan Barns, Farmsteads
and Rural Communities since 1995.