

## **Midwest Specialty Crop Growers' Views on Climate Change Impacts**

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While there has been extensive research on the possible impacts from climate change on Midwest row crops, there has been little comparable research of the impacts for Midwest specialty crops. This research is an investigation of concerns that Midwest specialty crop farmers have regarding the impacts that climate and weather have on their operations. Researchers and specialty crop industry leaders from Michigan and Ohio gathered in Toledo, Ohio, in October 2014 and participated in a concept mapping activity that produced data on the group's concerns for how climate change will impact the specialty crop industry. Attendees also recruited other growers in their networks to participate in the concept mapping activity after the meeting. Responses from 19 growers were compiled to determine which topics were of greatest concern. Using the aggregated data from participants, a nine-cluster concept map was generated. The clusters that participants rated as of highest importance were Pest and Disease, Farm Economic Sustainability, and Farming as a Livelihood. Findings will be used to focus future research and inform individuals developing a region-wide plan of work for the Midwest Climate Hub.