



For immediate release
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Endeavor Ag & Energy Partners to Expand Michigan's Critter Barn

Local farmer-owned company invests in popular educational attraction – to better serve the next generation of ag and animal enthusiasts

Zeeland, MI – When you want to invest in the future, you invest in young people... that's the driving philosophy behind Endeavor Ag & Energy's recent commitment to dedicate \$10,000 to West Michigan's best known working educational venue: the Critter Barn. "Endeavor is excited to be a local supporting partner in the community," said Endeavor Agronomy Sales Manager **Andrew Black**. "We are thrilled to make this investment and eager to see its positive impact on the youth."

"My family and many others have long enjoyed visiting the Critter Barn. As an Endeavor team member, I am excited to partner with this great organization," added **Brian Sisco**, Manager of the Endeavor Holland Feed Mill.

The donation by Endeavor Ag & Energy is made possible through the charitable giving initiatives of the two partner businesses who share in managing Endeavor, as well as a matching grant program funded by Land O Lakes. The funds are being presented to the Critter Barn in the spring of 2022, just in time to kick off a refreshed Capital Campaign Call to Action across West Michigan.

The founders of the Critter Barn were truly pioneers in showcasing rural life and livelihoods in the community... bringing an innovative vision into action long before agritourism was "a thing." Since 1984, the Critter Barn has evolved into a thriving campus where thousands of visitors experience hands-on learning and inspiration each year. With a guiding mandate to inspire learning, volunteerism, inclusion and shared values, the employees, guest workers and visitors of Critter Barn take special care to engage children and young people in discovering the miracles of nature found at the farm. Staff members recall some of the most rewarding moments... of exhausted young volunteers or Critter camp attendees literally *forced* to leave the chores for another day... agreeing only after announcing, "This has been the best day of my life." All members of the public are encouraged to explore <https://www.critterbarn.org/> to plan a visit. The location is closed Sundays and Mondays.

The Investment from Endeavor

With the \$10,000 investment, Endeavor Ag & Energy will help the organization move closer to meeting several objectives. The goal of the Building Campaign is to raise funds to enable Critter Barn to expand to a new “purpose built” farm located at 2950 80th Avenue in Zeeland. At that more expansive location, the plan is to:

- Build an authentic teaching farm showcasing modern ag
- Provide hands-on education and real farm experiences
- Serve everyone through Universal Design and Adaptive Equipment
- Inspire people of all ages and all abilities

The new site will host a clubhouse barn, a mill, modern barns for laying hens, dairy cows, turkeys, sheep, hogs and more. Acres of land will be used for demonstration ag production and learning. A Welcome Center and meeting place will include an all-purpose room for community use. The entire facility will be barrier-free and meet standards for universal design and adaptation to include guests of all ages and abilities. Progress can be followed by visiting the Critter Barn website to view the on-going photo collage. A list of other donors and partners is also found on the website. “We’re extremely grateful for the partnership support of local businesses like Endeavor Ag & Energy,” notes Executive Director **Mary Rottschafer**. Learn more from Mary about the project at <https://vimeo.com/601987928/6bf5e283b4>

Since the 1920s, local families and farms have trusted the products and services of the predecessor businesses of Endeavor Ag & Energy. In fact, many of our employees are proud to have had the opportunity to serve three generations of local Michigan families. Established in 2020 as Endeavor Ag & Energy, the organization is backed by two established partner co-ops: Ceres Solutions Cooperative and Co-Alliance Cooperative. Our team provides seed, agronomic services, consultation, animal health and nutrition products and propane gas for residential and commercial uses. We serve from locations in Hamilton, Holland, Wayland and Traverse City. You do not have to be a farmer or a co-op member to do business at any Endeavor location. All customers are welcome. For more about Endeavor Ag & Energy, visit <https://www.endeavorllp.com/home> or our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/EndeavorAgEnergy/>.

JOIN US: Want to join Endeavor Ag & Energy in blessing this worthy local organization? Make your donation... <https://critterbarn.networkforgood.com/projects/99098-main-giving-page> And thank you!

Who is Endeavor?

Endeavor Ag & Energy LLP is the new locally operated business serving you. We’re committed to your success; backed by two successful, competitive cooperatives already established in Michigan. Your familiar teams at Hamilton, Holland, Traverse City and Wayland appreciate your continued trust in serving your agronomy, propane, grain marketing and feed needs. We will work hard every day to earn it.

Seek more information?

Please contact **Laurel Mann**, Endeavor Brand/Marketing Lead
lmann@ceres.coop (765) 362-6700 office / www.endeavorllp.com