

***VIA EMAIL ONLY***

Governor Tony Evers  
Office of the Governor

March 20, 2020

**RE: Request Agriculture and Food Production Exemption from Wisconsin COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place Order**

Dear Governor Evers:

On behalf of each of the undersigned Wisconsin agricultural organizations, I write to respectfully request that any forthcoming “shelter-in-place” order for the State of Wisconsin exempt Wisconsin production agriculture, food processing, food manufacturing, farm supply retail, farm workers, agribusiness and veterinary medicine, as described below. The continued production, processing and distribution of food has been designated as an essential critical infrastructure industry sector by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) of the Department of Homeland Security and we strive to maintain a consistent and healthy food supply during this public health emergency.

Accordingly, we ask that any “shelter in place” order issued for the State of Wisconsin include the following critical agricultural exemptions:

- Farmers, farm employees and all farm support service employees including those who field crops;
- Food manufacturers and food processors, including food manufacturing employees and their supplier employees, those employed in food processing facilities (packers, meat processing, cheese plants, milk plants, produce, etc.) and the production of food packaging;
- Livestock, poultry, seafood and all animal production operations and employees, all slaughter and packing plants and all associated regulatory and government workforce;
- Pet and animal feed processing facilities;
- Farm supply retailers, farm channel retail and others critical to managing the supply of agricultural inputs;
- Commodity and food safety inspections;
- Fuel ethanol facilities;
- Storage facilities for food, farm products and all related agribusiness inputs;
- Employees and firms supporting food, feed, and beverage distribution, including warehouse workers, vendor managed inventory controllers and blockchain managers;
- Employees of companies engaged in the production of chemicals, medicines, vaccines, and other substances used by the food and agriculture industry, including pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, minerals, enrichments, and other agricultural production aids;
- Animal agriculture workers including those employed in veterinary health;
- Manufacturing and distribution of animal medical materials, animal vaccines, animal drugs, feed ingredients, feed, and bedding, etc.;

- Transportation of all farm commodities, farm inputs, live animals, animal medical materials, and deceased animals for disposal;
- Employees engaged in the manufacture and maintenance of equipment and other infrastructure necessary to agricultural production and distribution
- Childcare providers and their employees providing child-care to people employed in any of the above-mentioned exemptions.

This exemption for agriculture shall be broadly construed to include all other activities, supplies and services required to maintain agricultural supply chain operations without disruption.

We respectfully request that any Wisconsin COVID-19 shelter-in-place order allow the continued necessary work of our Wisconsin farmers, agribusinesses, food processors, food distributors, veterinary medicine professionals, as we all work to address the COVID-19 public health emergency.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this request, please contact Karen Gefvert, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation at (608) 828-5713, Aaron Stauffacher, Dairy Business Association at (608) 482-2438 or Jordan Lamb, DeWitt LLP, at (608) 252-9358.

Sincerely,

Dairy Business Association

Cooperative Network

Midwest Food Products Association

Wisconsin Agri-Business Association

Wisconsin Association of Professional Agricultural Consultants

Wisconsin BioFuels Association

Wisconsin Biomass Energy Coalition

Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association

Wisconsin Cranberry Growers Association

Wisconsin Corn Growers Association

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

Wisconsin Hemp Alliance

Wisconsin Nursery and Landscape Association

Wisconsin Pork Association

Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association

Wisconsin Soybean Association

Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association

cc. Interim Secretary, Randy Romanski, DATCP (*via email only*)  
 Assistant Deputy Secretary, Angela James, DATCP (*via email only*)  
 Senator Scott Fitzgerald, Majority Leader (*via email only*)  
 Representative Robin Vos, Speaker (*via email only*)  
 Senator Howard Marklein (*via email only*)  
 Representative Gary Tauchen (*via email only*)  
 Senator Jeff Smith (*via email only*)

Representative Dave Considine (*via email only*)  
Barbara Worcester, Office of Governor Evers (*via email only*)  
Maggie Gau, Office of Governor Evers (*via email only*)  
Jenni Dye, Office of Governor Evers (*via email only*)  
Noah Roberts, Office of Governor Evers (*via email only*)