



April 15, 2020

Governor Tony Evers  
Room 115 East  
One State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Governor Evers:

We are urgently writing you in response to Emergency Order #25 relating to migrant labor camps, which was issued yesterday afternoon. While several changes were incorporated to the Emergency Order to make it functional for growers and food processors in their efforts to safely house and provide safe working conditions for migrant workers, the transportation language of Section 2.b. of the Order imposes undue hardship on the industry.

Requiring six feet of social distancing space during transportation provided by employers to migrant workers in every instance is simply unworkable. Most migrant housing provided by employers is not on site with the field or processing work, so vans are utilized by employers for moving many migrant workers to and from their place of work. For planting and harvest, pickup trucks are commonly used.

Treating migrant workers differently for transportation reasons from what is allowed for non-migrant agricultural and food processing workers is inequitable.

Providing employers the opportunity to furnish migrant workers with appropriate personal protective equipment such as masks, face shields, or gloves, requiring extensive ventilation during use, and frequently sanitizing vehicles are much more obtainable standards than simply decreeing that our industry cannot transport the vast majority of workers in the manner they always have been.

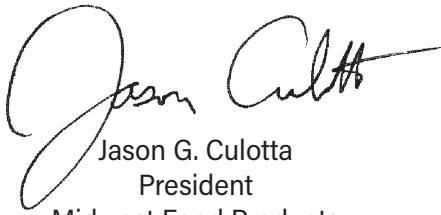
Migrant workers are approved to travel to Wisconsin by a journey traversing five or more states yet getting them to work from their employer-provided housing will now be the principal obstacle to growers and processors desperate to provide the food our country needs in the present crisis.

A second matter of concern is the 60-day length of Emergency Order #25. This will squarely impact the pea harvest which occurs in June and is a transportation-intensive activity. Tying the expiration of this Order with the imposition of the "Safer at Home" Order would set a more reasonable and uniform standard, even if the latter Order is extended.

The agricultural and food processing industries strongly rely on the use of migrant workers and do their best to provide a safe work and living environment for these workers - many of whom travel to work with the same employers in Wisconsin year after year. Our interest in safely providing transportation for these workers is no different.

Please revise Emergency Order #25 to allow employers to reasonably provide safe transportation to migrant workers as outlined above. The labor shortage at the point of production that this Order will impose by curtailing the transportation of migrant workers will be harmful in growing our food supply this season.

Sincerely,



Jason G. Culotta  
President  
Midwest Food Products  
Association



Joe Bragger  
President  
Wisconsin Farm Bureau  
Federation



Tamas Houlihan  
Executive Director  
Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable  
Growers Association

cc: DWD Secretary Caleb Frostman