



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Michigan’s food and agriculture workers encouraged to register to receive COVID-19 vaccine

LANSING, Mich. – Michigan’s food processing and agricultural workers are encouraged to register to receive a COVID-19 vaccination appointment as eligibility expands to Michiganders working in the food and agriculture sector.

“Throughout the pandemic, Michigan’s food and agriculture workers have been the backbone of our food supply chain and our rural economy,” said Gary McDowell, director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. “I am pleased Michigan food and agricultural workers are now eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine because getting the vaccine is essential for their health and safety, the safety of their communities, and the stability of our food supply chain in Michigan.”

Those frontline essential workers who are eligible to receive the safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine as of March 1 includes food processing workers such as employees at meat processing and meatpacking facilities; workers who process fruit and vegetables; dairy processing; animal feed manufacturing; food and animal feed ingredient manufacturing; beverage production; and the production of food packaging.

“As a fruit processor in rural Michigan, and an employer of over 800 essential associates, Peterson Farms is appreciative of the announcement that food/ag workers will now be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccination,” said Grant Boring, Marketing and Communications Manager for Peterson Farms. “In preparation for this phase, Peterson Farms, in collaboration with MDARD and the District 10 Health Department, has been diligent in sharing resources and information with our associates to educate and inform them of the importance of getting the vaccine.”

Eligibility also includes farm workers, including migrant and seasonal workers, involved in raising, cultivating, harvesting, packing, storing, and distributing agricultural commodities, and those that work in close proximity to others.

“We want to make sure the dedicated Michiganders employed in our state’s food production facilities around the state have the tools and information they need to receive the vaccine,” said Mike Johnston, VP Government Affairs, of Michigan Manufacturers Association. “We will work with these facilities in their efforts to educate employees about the vaccine and eradicate the spread of the virus.”

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Eligible food and agriculture workers can register in the following ways:

- **Check the website** of your [local health department](#) or hospital for sign-ups or registration forms.
 - **Check the appropriate essential food/agricultural worker option.**
- **Call the COVID-19 Hotline at 888-535-6136** Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or **call 2-1-1**. Multiple languages are available.
- **Check additional vaccination sites**, such as local pharmacies like [Meijer](#), [Rite Aid](#) and Cardinal Health (U.P. residents).

"The availability of a COVID-19 vaccine for many food and agricultural employees in Michigan is a very positive step in the process to vaccinate Michiganders, and we encourage everyone in the agriculture sector to register for the vaccine so they can receive it as soon as possible," said Chuck Lippstreu, president of the Michigan Agri-Business Association and Protect Michigan Commission Rural Workgroup chair. "The Michigan Agri-Business Association appreciates our state leaders for taking decisive action to get Michiganders vaccinated. We will continue to do all we can to encourage agricultural workers and people in rural communities to get a COVID-19 vaccine."

More than two million Michiganders have received the approved COVID-19 vaccine since December 2020. [Vaccine prioritization guidance](#) can be found on Michigan's COVID-19 website. More information can be found at Michigan.gov/COVIDVaccine.

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The [Protect Michigan Commission](#), comprised of a diverse group of leaders from across the state, works to ensure that every Michigan resident has the most up-to-date information on the COVID-19 vaccine. Established by [Executive Order 2020-193](#), the Commission will serve as an advisory group to Governor Whitmer and the Department of Health and Human Services.