

Dear Friends,

Michigan farmers play a key role in our state – providing an array of agricultural products that contribute more than \$101 billion annually to Michigan’s economy. The food and agriculture industry is one of the strongest pillars in our economy and will continue to be a critical component to our state’s success.

My colleagues and I are proud to support our hard-working farmers, whose contributions create jobs and provide an endless variety of healthy eating options for all families across our great state! Thank you for your year-round hard work to make Michigan a better place for all.

Included in this newsletter are legislative updates, as well as other information regarding this timeless way of life in our state. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact my office.

Sincerely,



AARON MILLER

State Representative, House District 59

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REDUCING UNNECESSARY AND OUTDATED REGULATIONS

My colleagues and I have made it a priority to repeal outdated rules and regulations to create more and better opportunities throughout our state for farmers to thrive. Within the past year, the House has passed a series of reforms to make the agriculture industry in Michigan stronger and more efficient. These changes repeal outdated registration fees and licenses, remove duplicative language, and modify outdated laws and provisions relating to Michigan’s agriculture industry (House Bills 5050-56 and House Bills 5059-60).

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AARON MILLER

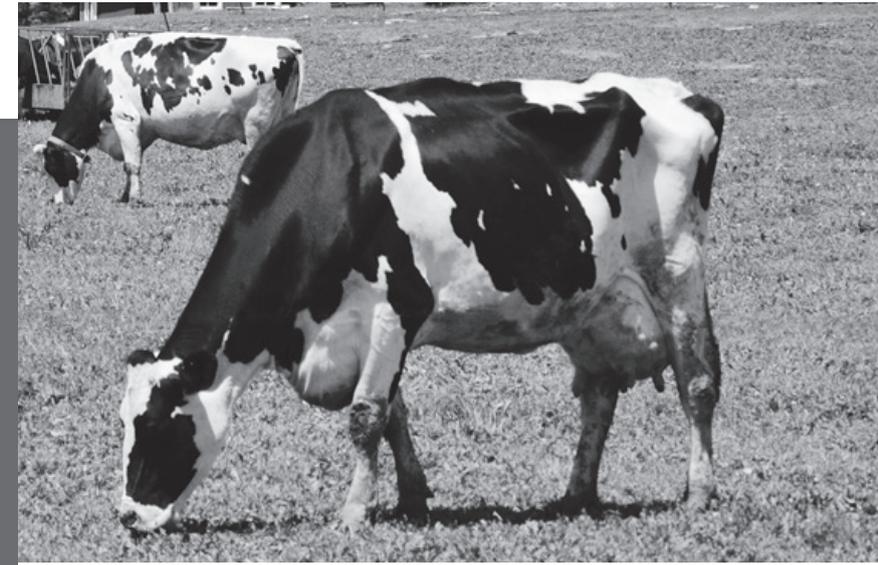
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STAY UP-TO-DATE, OBTAIN YOUR LICENSE!

Is your Department of Agriculture and Rural Development license up-to-date? If you need help figuring out which license you need or to fill out an application, visit www.michigan.gov/mdard.

2016 AGRICULTURAL UPDATE



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
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MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE FACTS

98%

of Michigan farms
are family owned

More than

300

agricultural
commodities produced

Agriculture related
businesses employ

22%

of the state's workforce

Agriculture contributes

**\$101
BILLION**

to the state's economy



CREATING A STRONGER AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

The Michigan Legislature recently updated and provided a stable funding source for the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP), a program to balance efficient production and implement sound practices to protect our state's prized natural resources (Public Act 118 of 2015).

We have also modernized the Commercial Feed Law for the first time since 1975 (Public Act 83 of 2015). These updates make Michigan law more consistent with recommendations from the Association of American Feed Control Officials Publication.

ELIMINATING BURDENSOME PERMITS

House Republicans have worked hard to provide tax exemptions for farmers who not only provide consumers with food and clothing, but substantially contribute to our state's economy each year. Legislation (Public Act 2 of 2016) eliminates the need for farmers to obtain local permits for minor projects, including the following:

- Construction, maintenance or removal of fences or fence lines
- Removal of tree or shrub stumps or roots
- Installation of drainage tile, irrigation or electrical lines



FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM UPDATES

Through the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act, farmers who have voluntarily agreed to keep their land in agricultural production have been able to receive certain income tax benefits. In recent years, income tax refunds have not always been issued in a timely manner, causing a delay in routine renewals and applications by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

I supported House Bills 5189-91, which will ensure accurate and timely payments of tax refunds under the Michigan Farmland and Open Space Preservation Law.

For more information or to apply for the program, visit www.michigan.gov/mdard.

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