

## Farm Workers' Safety

Farms have both animals and machinery that can pose hazards to the worker. Precautions and knowing what to do in case of emergency can prevent accidents and injuries. This pamphlet contains information on the major safety concerns on Farms that should be discussed between farm operators and farm workers.



### If you are Exposed...

- ▲ Tell the doctor you were exposed.
- ▲ Common symptoms: Skin rashes or skin burns, eye irritation, blurred vision, headaches, weakness, nausea, vomiting, sleeplessness, difficulty breathing, numbness or tingling in your limbs.
- ▲ Shower, shampoo, and change into clean clothes

### Your Employer Must...

- ▲ Post information about preventing exposure and what to do if an exposure occurs.
- ▲ Transport workers exposed to pesticides to the nearest medical care facility.
- ▲ Tell workers which fields have been treated by pesticides.
- ▲ Provide information about pesticides applied in the last 30 days.
- ▲ Provide water, soap, and towels for routine washing and emergency decontamination.
- ▲ Verify that all workers have received pesticide training in their language.  
Store pesticides in a locked building.
- ▲ Ensure that migrant housing is located at least 50 feet from the pesticide-treated fields



For more information contact:  
Farmworker Legal Services at 1-800-968-4046

# Farm Workers' Rights & Safety



## Farmworker Legal Services

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### General Safety

- ▣ All farm workers should have a basic knowledge of first aid & should know where first aid kits are located on the farms.
- ▣ All workers should know how to dial 9-1-1 in the case of an emergency
- ▣ Protective clothing should be provided and worn by workers

### Water and Toilets in the Field

- ▣ Employer must provide drinking water, toilets and hand-washing facilities near where you work.
- ▣ Failure to provide drinking water and hand-washing facilities near your work is a violation of federal law for which you may recover \$500 per violation from your employer.

### Pesticide Safety

- ▣ Follow directions and signs to "Keep Out" of pesticide-treated areas.
- ▣ Wash with soap and water *before* eating, drinking, smoking, or using the toilet.
- ▣ Wear clothes that cover your skin.
- ▣ Wash or shower with soap and water, shampoo hair, and put on clean clothes *after* work.
- ▣ Wash work clothes separately from other clothes before wearing them again.
- ▣ Get trained in pesticide safety.
- ▣ Keep children away from pesticide storage areas, equipment and mixing areas.
- ▣ Do not re-use pesticide containers.

## Frequently Asked Questions...

### What is the minimum wage?

The current minimum wage is for Michigan is \$9.65. The federal minimum wage is \$7.25.

### Do all Farm Workers have a right to receive minimum wage?

For the most part yes, however, if the farm you are working on is very small the farmer may be able to pay you less than minimum wage.

### Should I write down and keep a record of the hours I have worked?

Yes, you should always write down your hours in order to compare with your check and to make sure they haven't paid you for less than the minimum wage.

### Do I have to be paid for the time that I have to wait before starting work?

Yes, if it is the boss that has asked you to wait.

### Can Farm workers get overtime?

Dairy workers are usually exempt from the overtime pay provisions unless they are involved in handling or selling products taken in from other farmers or suppliers.

### Does my boss have a legal obligation to maintain records of my hours and pay?

Yes, an employer has a legal obligation to maintain records of hours worked and wages paid to each employee and retain the records for three years.

### Is there a limit on the number of hours I can be scheduled to work in a week?

For the most part no, however, if you are a minor there are hour restrictions. If you are an adult, then the employer has the right to schedule however they feel they need you. There is no minimum or maximum number of hours.



### Can my employer make overtime mandatory?

Yes, your employer can ask or schedule you to work overtime at any time.

### Must my employer provide every member of my family with his\her own wages or wage statement?

Yes, every person should ask for their own check. Your employer cannot write one check covering all members of a family.

### Is my employer required to give me breaks and lunches?

Usually no, neither federal nor Michigan law requires employers to give their adult employees breaks. However, employees must be allowed the reasonable use of toilet and hand-washing facilities. Employees under 18 years of age may not work more than 5 continuous hours without a break.

### Should I receive a pay stub each time they pay me?

Yes, you should receive a pay stub with the following information:

- ▣ Your full name and social security number
- ▣ Address including zip code
- ▣ Birth date, if younger than 19
- ▣ Time and day of week when the employee's work week begins
- ▣ Hours worked each day
- ▣ Total hours worked each work week
- ▣ Basis on which hours are paid (i.e hourly rate or piece rate)
- ▣ Regular hourly pay
- ▣ All additions to or deductions from the employee's wages
- ▣ Total daily or weekly straight time earnings
- ▣ Total wages paid each period
- ▣ Date of payment and the pay period covered by the payment