

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT



GARY McDOWELL, DIRECTOR

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www.michigan.gov/mdard

The Department of Agriculture was established under Public Act 13 of 1921 and was reorganized under Public Act 380 of 1965. In January 2011, “rural development” was added to the department’s name. A 5-member Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development, appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, provides policy development for the department. Commission members are appointed for terms of four years.

COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Term expires

PATRICIA BERGDAHL, Skandia	Dec. 31, 2022
TIM BORING, Stockbridge	Dec. 31, 2023
ANDREW W. CHAE, Detroit	Dec. 31, 2024
CHARLIE MEINTZ, Stephenson	Dec. 31, 2022
DRU MONTRI, Bath	Dec. 31, 2021

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) promotes agricultural interests of the state and develops safeguards to protect the public from disease and unsanitary conditions in connection with food production and food handling, product labeling, dairy products, animals, and plants. The department also protects consumers by enforcing laws relating to food safety, standard weights and measures, farm produce storage, and dairy products; inspection and enforcement of animal health; control of plant pests and diseases; and perishable fruits and vegetables.

The department is composed of the Executive Office and six divisions: Agriculture Development, Animal Industry, Environmental Stewardship, Food and Dairy, Laboratory, and Pesticide and Plant Pest Management.

The **Executive Office** houses the Office of the Director, who is responsible for policy development, department strategic planning, daily operations, and more. The following department functions also fall under the Executive Office: budget, emergency management, communications, legislative liaison, and support for the Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The **Agriculture Development Division** delivers expertise and leadership to support economic prosperity in Michigan’s food and agriculture sector through industry-focused economic development, export assistance, and grant management. The division also administers the Grain Dealers Act and the Farm Produce Insurance Act.

The **Animal Industry Division** is responsible for programs to control and eradicate reportable contagious, infectious, and communicable diseases of livestock, poultry, and equine and companion animals; controlling contamination from toxic substances; enforcing the humane treatment of animals; and promoting Michigan animal industries.

The **Environmental Stewardship Division** provides assistance and support to soil conservation districts, drainage boards, and land users, enabling them to carry out programs maintaining Michigan’s food and fiber productivity and environmental sustainability, control erosion, protect water quality, and protect groundwater.

The **Food and Dairy Division** administers programs that enforce laws and regulations governing the safety and wholesomeness of food and food products; regulates the commercial handling of farm produce; administers food sanitation programs; and assures a safe, high-quality supply of dairy products.

The **Laboratory Division** provides analytical, diagnostic, and technical support to the regulatory divisions of the department and to other state and federal agencies. The division also prevents economic fraud and deception in the area of weights and measures, labeling, and advertising. It also regulates the sale and quality of motor fuel.

The **Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division** administers programs to enforce laws and regulations to prevent the introduction and dissemination of serious plant and bee pests; to prevent the adulteration of animal food, unsanitary grain storage facilities, and misuse of pesticides; and to provide assurance that animal feeds and remedies, fertilizers, seeds, and pesticides are accurately labeled. It also provides for grading, inspection, and certification of fruits and vegetables.

