



## Michigan Agri-Business Association

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# MABA: Executive Order Weakens MI Agriculture, Legislature Must Overturn It

*Legislature must step in to protect jobs, rare growth area in economy*

EAST LANSING – The **Michigan Agri-Business Association** today called on the Legislature to overturn an executive order that weakens Michigan agriculture and removes critical public oversight and accountability measures from the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

“Michigan agriculture is one of the few bright spots in our state’s struggling economy and this dangerous executive order will put agriculture and our economy at risk,” **MABA President Jim Byrum** said. “Michigan agriculture is creating jobs and supporting local economies across the state. The Department of Agriculture is actually doing things right. A system that works well and is creating new jobs and opportunities for Michigan agriculture is now at risk, and it is critical for Michigan’s legislators to overturn this executive order and stand up for Michigan jobs.”

Gov. Jennifer Granholm today signed an executive order that guts the role of the Michigan Agriculture Commission, down-scaling it from a public body with oversight and accountability functions, to one with a toothless advisory role. For years, the commission has worked in close partnership with agriculture and other sectors, including the Department of Agriculture, to build strong policies supportive of forward-looking agriculture practices and opportunities. This function helped strengthen ties between the agriculture sector and government, leading to successful commonsense policies, new jobs and opportunities, consistent growth in recent years. Without this function, the public loses a critical accountability measure that keeps track of many areas within agriculture, from keeping programs that work and weeding out those that don’t to funding issues and more.

With steady annual growth, Michigan agriculture is the second-most diverse in the nation, after California. It generates more than \$73 billion a year and employs more than a million Michigan citizens in a wide range of areas, from producing to processing.

“Michigan agriculture deserves support now more than ever, not getting our legs taken out from under us,” **Byrum** said. “Michigan agriculture is critical to our economy. We need to keep it on track and our elected leaders cannot allow this order to put Michigan jobs and our economy at risk. This executive order does absolutely nothing to save a single taxpayer dollar and it does nothing to improve efficiency. All it has done is put one of the few positive areas of our economy at risk, and that’s simply unacceptable.”

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