

MICHIGAN

FOOD INPUTS & SERVICES

The food inputs and services pathway encompasses occupations that support services or resources used as inputs in the food system. This includes administrative support roles as well as veterinary care. Farmworkers also appear in the food inputs industry, as they can span the production and input industry classifications (though they represent a smaller proportion of the input industry compared to food production). In this category, a worker classified to the farmworker occupational group may perform support activities such as field preparation or pesticide spraying as a contractor to a farm or production operation. This contrasts to a farmworker employed directly by a farm who may perform other farming roles (in addition to “support activities”). Most jobs in Michigan in this subsector are in veterinary services. It should be noted, however, that not all jobs in veterinary services are tied to the food system.

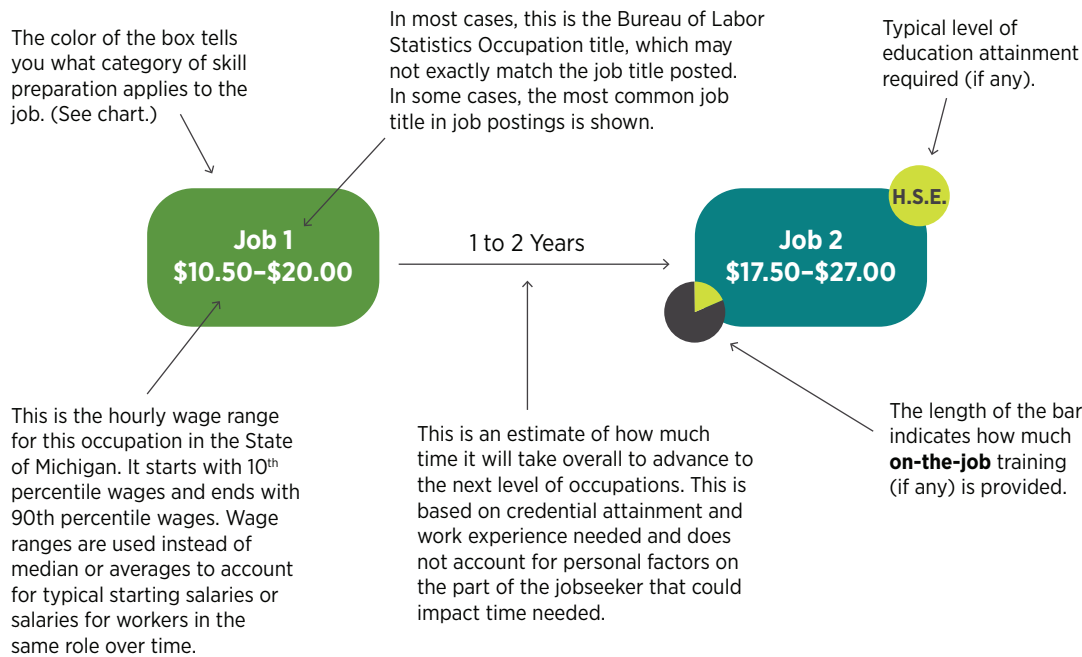
The jobs and titles, pathways, pay, and work are different across employers in the Food Inputs and Services subsector. However, many workers in this field find themselves working for one of these types of organizations or with these products:

- Agricultural equipment
- Animal feed producer or supplier
- Beekeeper supplier
- Compost producer or supplier
- Custom cropping
- Feed store
- Fertilizer supplier
- Land access / conservation
- Livestock breeder
- Maple sugaring supplies and equipment
- Nursery / greenhouse and season extension
- Pest and disease control
- Regulatory authority
- Seed producer or supplier
- Soil / mulch producer or supplier

What are the career pathways for Food Inputs & Services?

The maps below indicate the most common occupations in this field as well as wages, opportunities for advancement, typical time to advance, education required and on-the-job training.

Figure 6
Michigan's Food System Career Pathway Map Key



Skill Levels

Color	Preparation Level	Definition
	Entry-Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High School Diploma or No High School Diploma
	Middle-Skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic Postsecondary Certificate Advanced Postsecondary Certificate Associate Degree High School Diploma with Experience
	High-Skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor's Degree Associate Degree with 5 Years Experience Advanced Postsecondary Degree with 5 Years or More Experience

Education Levels

Initials	Credential
H.S.E.	High School Diploma or Equivalency
P.A.	Postsecondary Nondegree Award
A.S. or A.A.	Associate Degree
B.S.	Bachelor's Degree
B.A.	Bachelor of Arts
B.B.A	Bachelor of Business Administration

On-the-Job Training



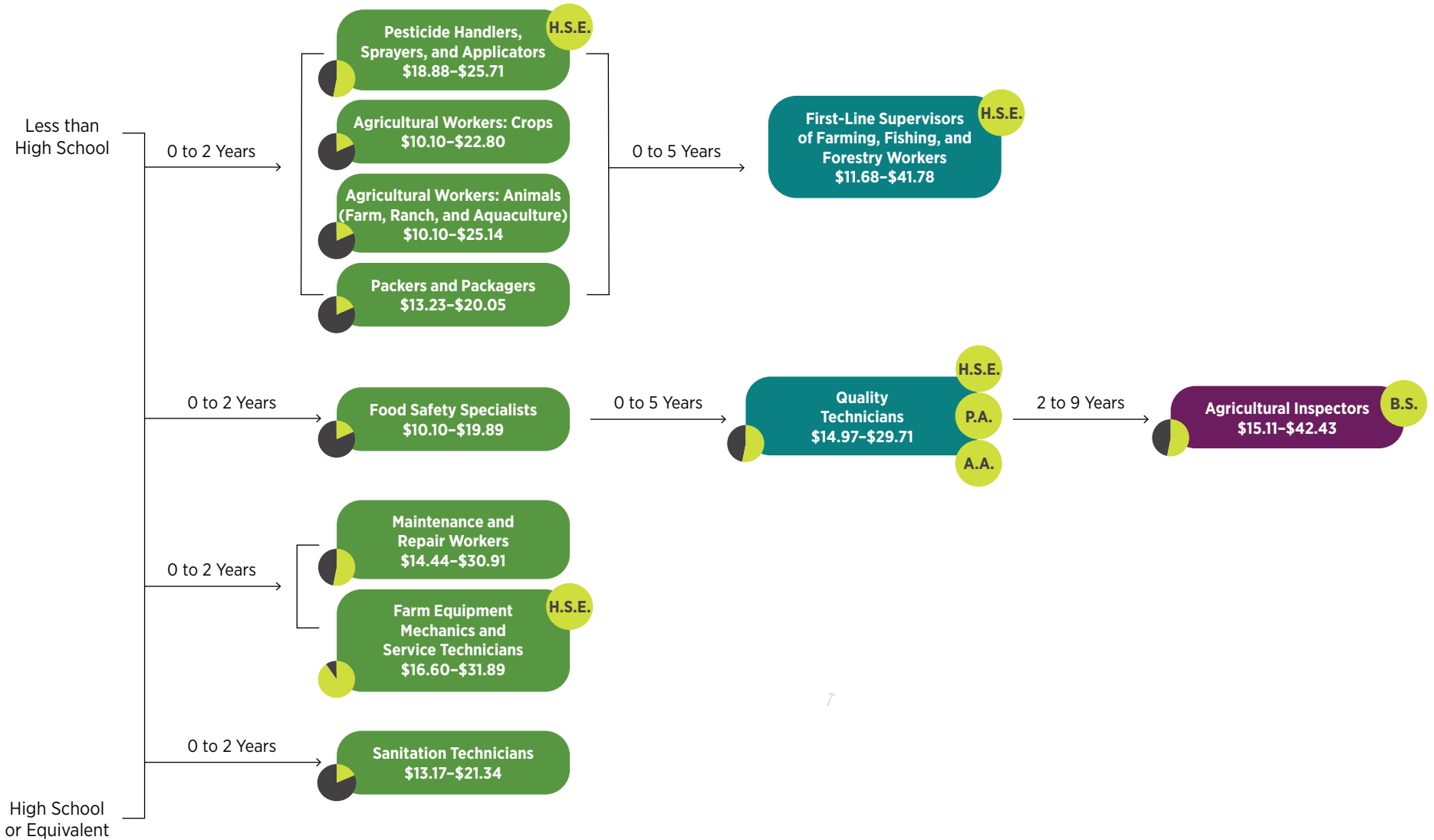
Notes:

This map is grounded in data collected on the State of Michigan. Other cities or regions may pay different wages or require different skills, credentials, or work experience depending on their local employers.

This map was derived using Lightcast™, a labor market information data source, in October 2024. This information includes the *typical* wages and requirements for jobs and might not exactly match the positions identified by jobseekers. The data included in these maps are constantly updated.

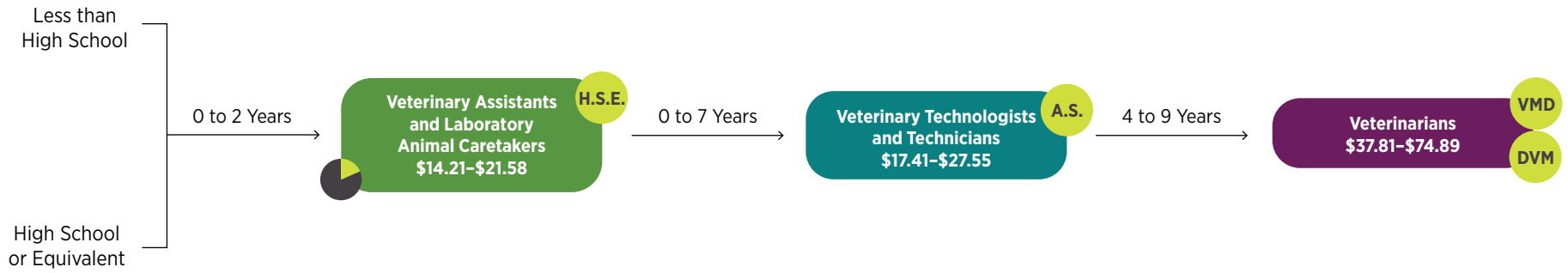
Food Inputs and Services

Crop and Animal Production Supports Pathway



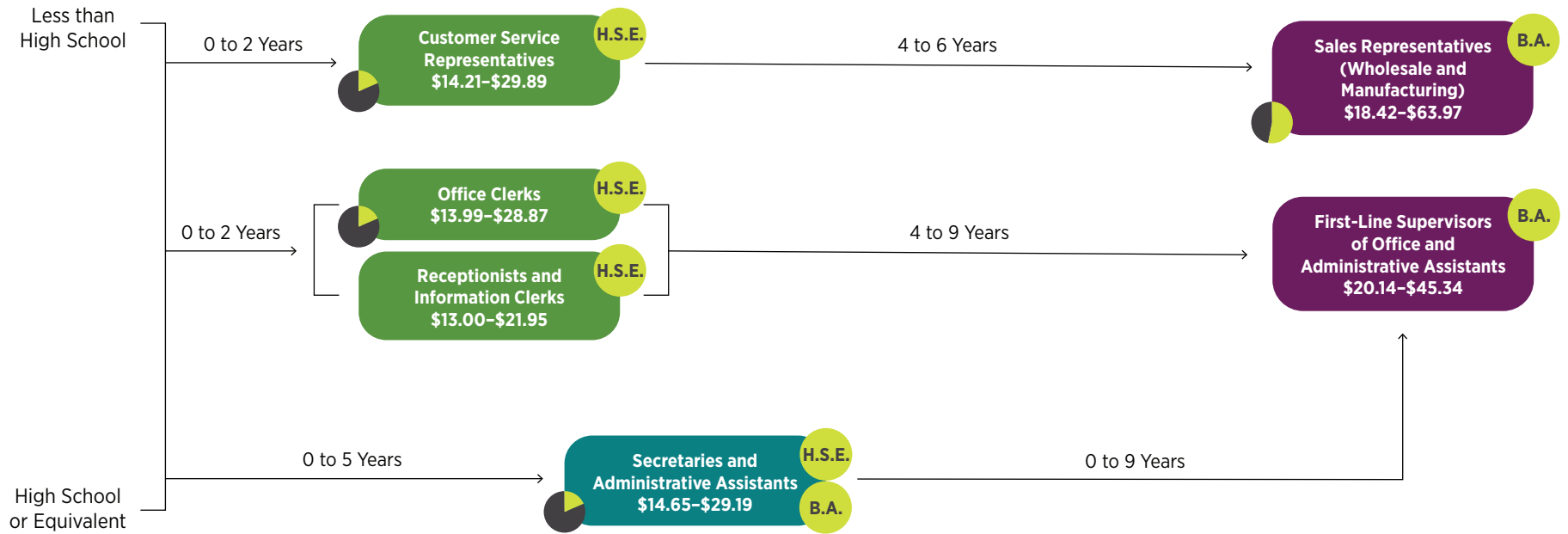
Food Inputs and Services

Veterinary Services Pathway



Food Inputs and Services

Administrative and Sales Pathway Map



OCCUPATIONS AND DEMAND IN THE FOOD INPUTS AND SERVICES SUBSECTOR

Below are the top occupations in the food inputs and services subsector, their common job titles, the work involved, skills required, how much demand there is currently, and how much demand is expected in the future. Farming, fishing, and forestry job postings are under-represented as often these jobs are filled by word of mouth. Because of this, job postings data were pulled for the nation rather than only Michigan for certain farming, fishing, and forestry occupations, and in some cases data for the entire agriculture sector was used not only food inputs and services data.

Crop and Animal Production Supports Pathway Employment Data

Occupation and common titles in Michigan job postings	O*NET Description	Top skills requested in Michigan job postings	Michigan employment in food production		Michigan projected 5-year growth in food production
			2023	2024	
Fast Food and Counter Workers	Manually plant, cultivate, and harvest vegetables, fruits, nuts, horticultural specialties, and field crops. Use hand tools, such as shovels, trowels, hoes, tampers, pruning hooks, shears, and knives. Duties may include tilling soil and applying fertilizers; transplanting, weeding, thinning, or pruning crops; applying pesticides; or cleaning, grading, sorting, packing, and loading harvested products. May construct trellises, repair fences and farm buildings, or participate in irrigation activities.	Repair, fertilizers, machinery, hand tools, cleaning	3,250	3,403	12%
Packers and Packagers, Hand: Warehousing Shipping Clerk Inventory/Pick Pack Produce Packer	Pack or package by hand a wide variety of products and materials.	Lifting ability, forklift operation, machinery, food safety, packaging	372	391	13%

Occupation and common titles in Michigan job postings	O*NET Description	Top skills requested in Michigan job postings	Michigan employment in food production		Michigan projected 5-year growth in food production
			2023	2024	
Food Safety Specialists (Graders and Sorters, Agricultural Products)	Grade, sort, or classify unprocessed food and other agricultural products by size, weight, color, or condition.	Food safety, food safety and quality, project management, quality assurance and control, chemistry	150	154	2%
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals	Attend to live farm, ranch, open range or aquacultural animals that may include cattle, sheep, swine, goats, horses and other equines, poultry, rabbits, finfish, shellfish, and bees. Attend to animals produced for animal products, such as meat, fur, skins, feathers, eggs, milk, and honey. Duties may include feeding, watering, herding, grazing, milking, castrating, branding, de-beaking, weighing, catching, and loading animals. May maintain records on animals; examine animals to detect diseases and injuries; assist in birth deliveries; and administer medications, vaccinations, or insecticides as appropriate. May clean and maintain animal housing areas. Includes workers who shear wool from sheep and collect eggs in hatcheries.	Cleaning, biosecurity, farm equipment, repair, animal husbandry	227	235	7%

Occupation and common titles in Michigan job postings	O*NET Description	Top skills requested in Michigan job postings	Michigan employment in food production		Michigan projected 5-year growth in food production
			2023	2024	
Sanitation Technicians (Janitors and Cleaners)	Keep buildings in clean and orderly condition. Perform heavy cleaning duties, such as cleaning floors, shampooing rugs, washing walls and glass, and removing rubbish. Duties may include tending furnace and boiler, performing routine maintenance activities, notifying management of need for repairs, and cleaning snow or debris from sidewalk.	Cleaning, food safety, forklift operation, repair, machinery	156	163	11%
Maintenance and Repair Workers: Maintenance Technician Service Technician Breeder Service Technician	Perform work involving the skills of two or more maintenance or craft occupations to keep machines, mechanical equipment, or the structure of a building in repair. Duties may involve pipe fitting; HVAC maintenance; insulating; welding; machining; carpentry; repairing electrical or mechanical equipment; installing, aligning, and balancing new equipment; and repairing buildings, floors, or stairs.	Repair, plumbing, HVAC, preventative maintenance, welding	140	146	11%
Quality Technicians (Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers)	Inspect, test, sort, sample, or weigh nonagricultural raw materials or processed, machined, fabricated, or assembled parts or products for defects, wear, and deviations from specifications. May use precision measuring instruments and complex test equipment.	Quality assurance and control, food safety, packaging, lifting, forklift operation, Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point	113	118	11%

Occupation and common titles in Michigan job postings	O*NET Description	Top skills requested in Michigan job postings	Michigan employment in food production		Michigan projected 5-year growth in food production
			2023	2024	
Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians	Diagnose, adjust, repair, or overhaul farm machinery and vehicles, such as tractors, harvesters, dairy equipment, and irrigation systems.	Repair, Farm Equipment, Welding, Power Tools, Machinery	94	100	11%
Pesticide Handlers, Sprayers, and Applicators	Mix or apply pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, or insecticides through sprays, dusts, vapors, soil incorporation, or chemical application on trees, shrubs, lawns, or crops. Usually requires specific training and state or federal certification.	Fertilizers, Crop Production, Product Delivery And Sales, Herbicides, Calibration	46	48	10%
First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers: Head Grower Master Grower	Directly supervise and coordinate the activities of agricultural, forestry, aquacultural, and related workers.	Scheduling, Fertilizers, Repair, Food Safety, Botany	238	251	13%
Agricultural Inspectors: Agriculture Commodity Grader Brand Inspector Consumer Compliance Examiner	Inspect agricultural commodities, processing equipment, and facilities, and fish and logging operations, to ensure compliance with regulations and laws governing health, quality, and safety.	Economics, Quality Assurance And Control, Performance Appraisals, Scheduling, Contract Preparation	16	16	6%

Veterinary Services Pathway Employment Data

Occupation and common titles in Michigan job postings	O*NET Description	Top skills requested in Michigan job postings	Michigan employment in food production		Michigan projected 5-year growth in food production
			2023	2024	
Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	Feed, water, and examine pets and other nonfarm animals for signs of illness, disease, or injury in laboratories and animal hospitals and clinics. Clean and disinfect cages and work areas, and sterilize laboratory and surgical equipment. May provide routine postoperative care, administer medication orally or topically, or prepare samples for laboratory examination under the supervision of veterinary or laboratory animal technologists or technicians, veterinarians, or scientists.	Preventative care, natural resources, biotechnology, veterinary medicine, patient bathing	3,430	3,549	9%
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians: Wildlife Technician Animal Technician Animal Research Technician	Perform medical tests in a laboratory environment for use in the treatment and diagnosis of diseases in animals. Prepare vaccines and serums for prevention of diseases. Prepare tissue samples, take blood samples, and execute laboratory tests, such as urinalysis and blood counts. Clean and sterilize instruments and materials and maintain equipment and machines. May assist a veterinarian during surgery.	Customer service, health care industry knowledge, patient flow, medical records maintenance, medical coding	2,770	2,878	11%
Veterinarians: Livestock Inspection Beef Cattle Veterinarian	Diagnose, treat, or research diseases and injuries of animals. Includes veterinarians who conduct research and development, inspect livestock, or care for pets and companion animals.	Veterinary medicine, medical records maintenance, preventative care, patient care, medical coding	2,073	2,148	10%

Administrative and Sales Pathway Employment Data

Occupation and common titles in Michigan job postings	O*NET Description	Top skills requested in Michigan job postings	Michigan employment in food production		Michigan projected 5-year growth in food production
			2023	2024	
Office Clerks	Perform duties too varied and diverse to be classified in any specific office clerical occupation, requiring knowledge of office systems and procedures. Clerical duties may be assigned in accordance with the office procedures of individual establishments and may include a combination of answering telephones, bookkeeping, typing or word processing, office machine operation, and filing.	Scheduling, administrative support, customer service, general office duties, data entry	423	435	7%
Receptionists and Information Clerks	Answer inquiries and provide information to the general public, customers, visitors, and other interested parties regarding activities conducted at establishment and location of departments, offices, and employees within the organization.	Administrative support, customer service, scheduling, appointment setting, data entry	1,666	1,704	5%
Customer Service Representatives: Tasting Room Associate Customer Support	Interact with customers to provide basic or scripted information in response to routine inquiries about products and services. May handle and resolve general complaints. Excludes individuals whose duties are primarily installation, sales, repair, and technical support.	Customer service, customer contact, order management, order entry, supply chain management	362	371	8%

Occupation and common titles in Michigan job postings	O*NET Description	Top skills requested in Michigan job postings	Michigan employment in food production		Michigan projected 5-year growth in food production
			2023	2024	
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	Perform routine administrative functions such as drafting correspondence, scheduling appointments, organizing and maintaining paper and electronic files, or providing information to callers.	Administrative support, scheduling, customer service, appointment setting, data entry	151	154	5%
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Assistants	Directly supervise and coordinate the activities of clerical and administrative support workers.	Staff management, conflict management, budgeting, scheduling, order entry	281	290	6%
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing: Agronomy Sales Account Manager Wholesale Fertilizer Sales	Sell goods for wholesalers or manufacturers where technical or scientific knowledge is required in such areas as biology, engineering, chemistry, and electronics, normally obtained from at least 2 years of postsecondary education.	Sales, customer service, agronomy, crop production, fertilizers	39	40	10%

ABOUT THIS WORK

In 2021, as a continuation of the 2019 Michigan Local and Regional Food System Workforce Assessment, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce (CSW) partnered with Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems to develop career pathway maps that provide jobseekers and workers with necessary information about career options and the potential for advancement within and across different subsectors of the Michigan food system. These were also developed in response to interest from Michigan workforce development agencies that will be able to use this information to help support relevant program development. Funding for this work was provided in part by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and MSU Extension.

In 2024, through the Michigan Agriculture and Food Systems Workforce Advancement Initiative, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, CSW updated these career pathway maps with current labor market information data (as of October 2024) and Spanish translations to ensure the maps remain useful and are accessible to more workers and learners.

Pathway maps were developed for the following food system subsectors that exist within local and regional food systems:

- **Food inputs and services**
- **Food processing and manufacturing**
- **Food production**
- **Food retail**
- **Food preparation and service**
- **Wholesale food distribution or storage**

Please access [the original Food System Career Pathways in Michigan report](#) for information about the development of the career pathway maps, including a detailed methodology, as well as a list of education programs in each of the subsectors.

These pathway maps were authored by Chris Webb and Megan Elyse Williams from Corporation for a Skilled Workforce (CSW). Charli Holloway of Charli ReNae Design and Taylor McDonald from CSW provided formatting support.