

MICHIGAN

WHOLESALE FOOD DISTRIBUTION OR STORAGE

The wholesale food distribution or storage pathway looks at roles involved in the large-scale sales of regional food, as well as the storage, transportation, and supply chain within the food system. Most jobs in Michigan in this subsector are in grocery merchant wholesalers.

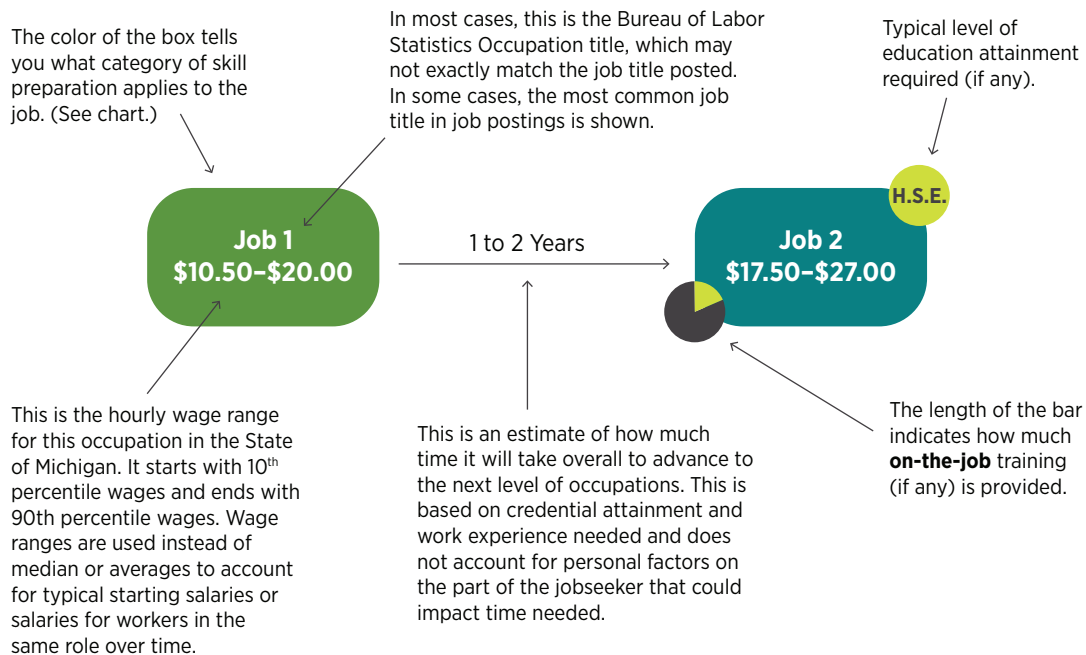
The jobs and titles, pathways, pay, and work will be different across employers in the Wholesale Food Distribution or Storage subsector. However, many workers in this field find themselves working for one of these types of organizations:

- Aggregation facility / food hub
- Broker / Sourcer
- Cold / Refrigerated storage facility
- Distributor
- Dry storage facility

What are the career pathways for Wholesale Food Distribution or Storage?

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



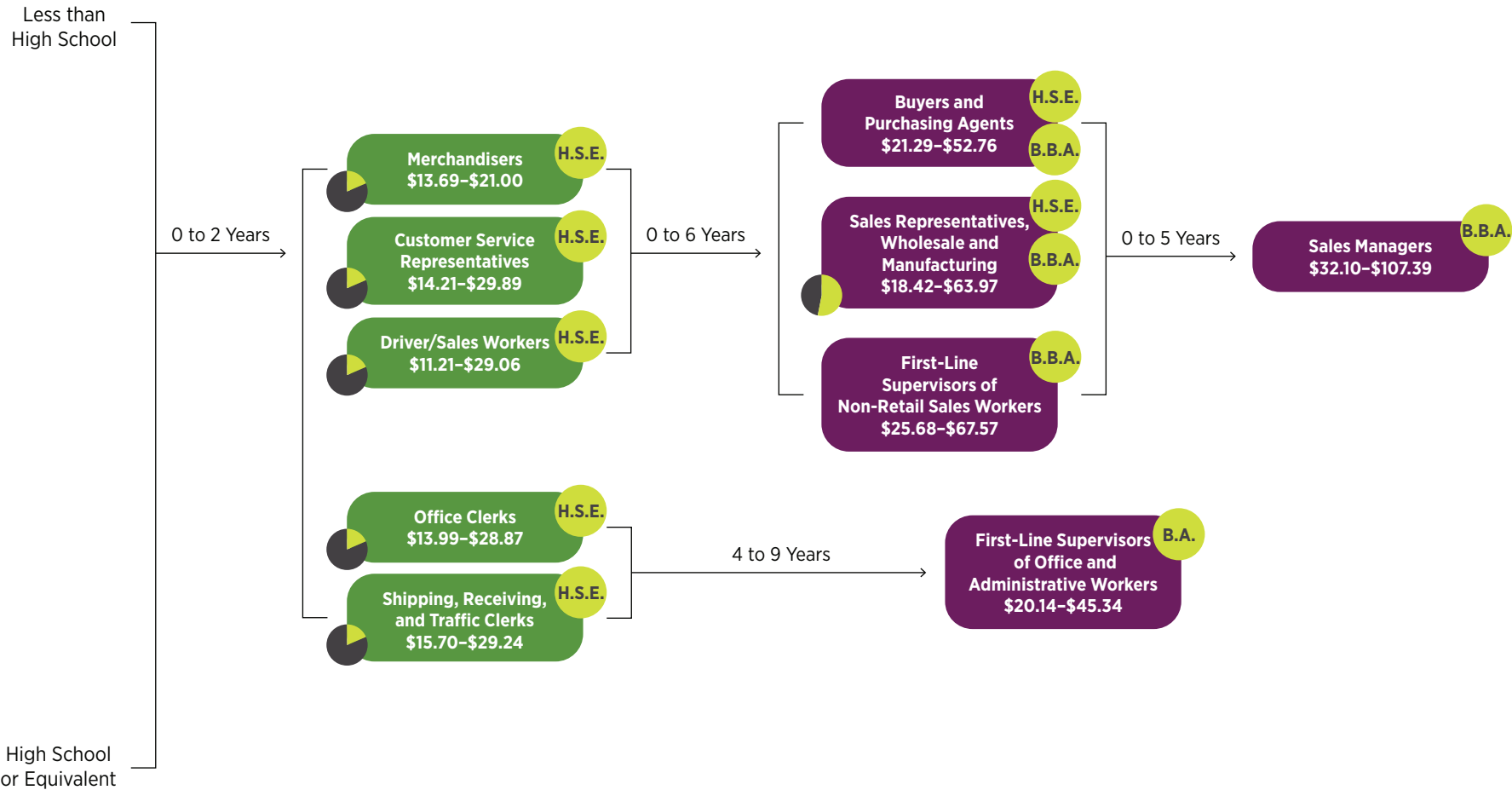
Notes:

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.

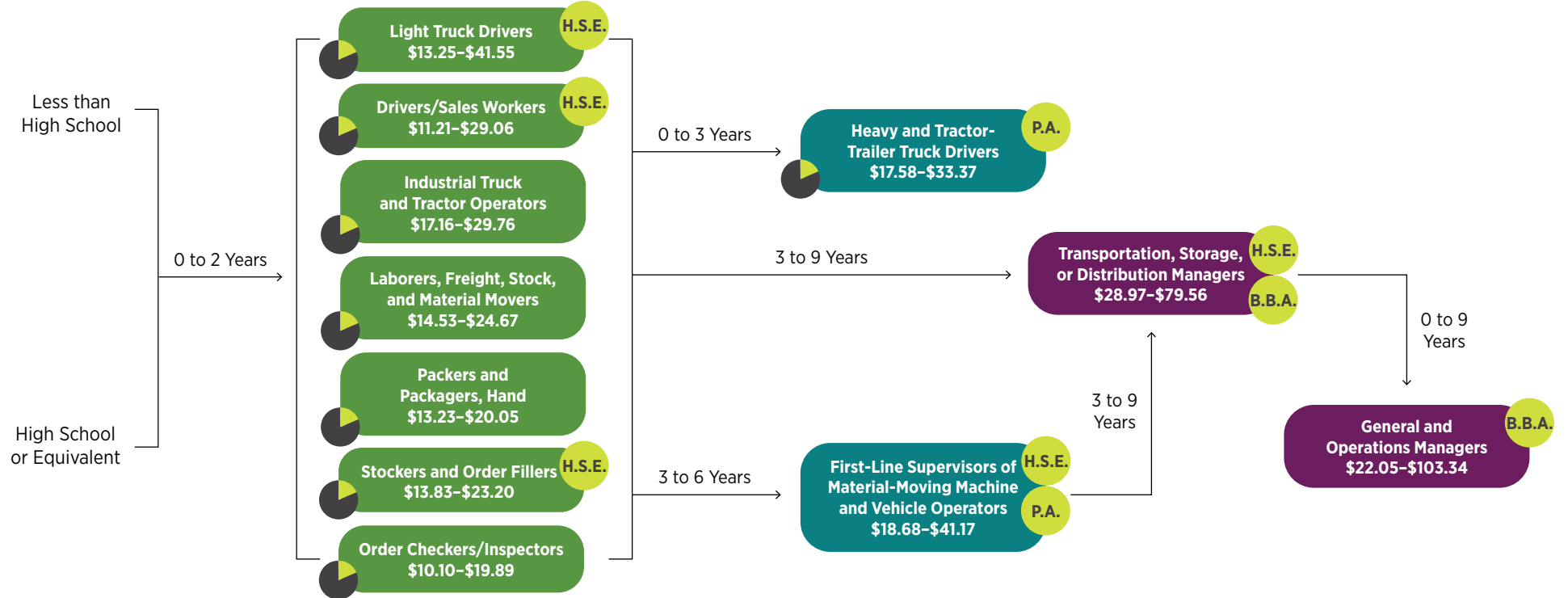
This map was derived using Lightcast™, a labor market information data source, in October 2024. This information includes the *typical* wages and requirements for jobs and might not exactly match the positions identified by jobseekers. The data included in these maps are constantly updated.

Wholesale Food Distribution or Storage

Sales, Purchasing, and Administration Pathway



Wholesale Food Distribution or Storage Operations Pathway



OCCUPATIONS AND DEMAND IN THE WHOLESALE FOOD DISTRIBUTION OR STORAGE SUBSECTOR

Below are the top occupations in this 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.

Sales, Purchasing, and Administration 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 | |
| Drivers/Sales Workers: Delivery Driver CDL Delivery Driver | Drive truck or other vehicle over established routes or within an established territory and sell or deliver goods, such as food products, including restaurant take-out items, or pick up or deliver items such as commercial laundry. May also take orders, collect payment, or stock merchandise at point of delivery. | Commercial driving, customer service, injury prevention, hand trucks, post trip inspections | 1,869 | 1,903 | 4% |
| 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. | Data entry, accounting software, accounting, invoice processing, customer service | 710 | 719 | 1% |

| 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 | |
| Merchandisers (Merchandise Displayers & Window Trimmers) | Plan and erect commercial displays, such as those in windows and interiors of retail stores and at trade exhibitions. | Merchandising, retail industry knowledge, scheduling, sales, store merchandising | 1,322 | 1,342 | 3% |
| Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks: Transportation Clerk Warehouse Receiver | Verify and maintain records on incoming and outgoing shipments involving inventory. Duties include verifying and recording incoming merchandise or material and arranging for the transportation of products. May prepare items for shipment. | Scheduling, shipping, forklift operation, receiving, data entry | 684 | 692 | 0% |
| Customer Service Representatives: Sales Service Representative | 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, invoicing, data entry, scheduling | 490 | 496 | 1% |
| Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing: Outside Sales Representative Direct Sales Representative Agricultural Sales Representative | Sell goods for wholesalers or manufacturers to businesses or groups of individuals. Work requires substantial knowledge of items sold. | Sales, customer service, sales planning, retail industry knowledge, merchandising | 4,286 | 4,366 | 4% |

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|--|---|--|--|------|---|
| | | | 2023 | 2024 | |
| First-Line Supervisors of Non-Retail Sales Workers: Location Manager Inside Sales Manager | Directly supervise and coordinate activities of sales workers other than retail sales workers. May perform duties such as budgeting, accounting, and personnel work, in addition to supervisory duties. | Sales, supervisory skills, customer service, budgeting, sales management | 250 | 256 | 5% |
| Buyers and Purchasing Agents: Category Planner Procurement Buyer | Buy merchandise or commodities for resale to consumers at the wholesale or retail level, including both durable and nondurable goods. Analyze past buying trends, sales records, price, and quality of merchandise to determine value and yield. Select, order, and authorize payment for merchandise according to contractual agreements. May conduct meetings with sales personnel and introduce new products. May negotiate contracts. | Retail industry knowledge, sales, succession planning, financial analysis, sales goals | 382 | 387 | 1% |
| Sales Managers: Territory Manager Business Development Manager | Plan, direct, or coordinate the actual distribution or movement of a product or service to the customer. Coordinate sales distribution by establishing sales territories, quotas, and goals and establish training programs for sales representatives. Analyze sales statistics gathered by staff to determine sales potential and inventory requirements and monitor the preferences of customers. | Sales, customer service, sales management, negotiation skills, prospective clients | 435 | 444 | 4% |

| 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 | |
| First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers: Regional Customer Service Manager Customer Service Supervisor Office Manager | Directly supervise and coordinate the activities of clerical and administrative support workers. | Customer service, scheduling, accounting, budgeting, staff management | 238 | 243 | 2% |

Operations 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 | |
| Drivers/Sales Workers: Delivery Driver CDL Delivery Driver | Drive truck or other vehicle over established routes or within an established territory and sell or deliver goods, such as food products, including restaurant take-out items, or pick up or deliver items such as commercial laundry. May also take orders, collect payment, or stock merchandise at point of delivery. | Commercial driving, customer service, injury prevention, hand trucks, post trip inspections | 1,869 | 1,903 | 4% |
| Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand: Warehouse Associate Warehouse Clerk | Manually move freight, stock, or other materials or perform other general labor. Includes all manual laborers not elsewhere classified. | Forklift operation, occupational health and safety, customer service, cleaning, sorting | 2,476 | 2,555 | 5% |
| Stockers and Order Fillers: Retail/Reset Merchandiser Warehouse Order Selector | Receive, store, and issue merchandise, materials, equipment, and other items from stockroom, warehouse, or storage yard to fill shelves, racks, tables, or customers' orders. May operate power equipment to fill orders. May mark prices on merchandise and set up sales displays. | Customer service, store management, sales strategy, merchandising, forklift operation | 3,040 | 3,097 | 2% |

| 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 | |
| Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators: Forklift Operator Warehouse Forklift Driver | Operate industrial trucks or tractors equipped to move materials around a warehouse, storage yard, factory, construction site, or similar location. | Forklift operation, sorting, occupational health and safety, lift trucks, inventory control | 1,309 | 1,339 | 4% |
| Light Truck Drivers: Delivery Truck Driver Driver Helper Yard Driver | Drive a light vehicle, such as a truck or van, with a capacity of less than 26,001 pounds Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW), primarily to pick up merchandise or packages from a distribution center and deliver. May load and unload vehicle. | Commercial driving, customer service, product sales, lifting ability, repair, product delivery | 963 | 983 | 4% |
| Packers and Packagers, Hand: Meat Packer Repacker Bakery Wrapper | Pack or package by hand a wide variety of products and materials. | Packaging, cleaning, customer service, equipment cleaning, merchandising | 464 | 476 | 5% |
| Order Checkers and Inspectors (Graders and Sorters, Agricultural Products) | Grade, sort, or classify unprocessed food and other agricultural products by size, weight, color, or condition. | Food safety, quality assurance and control, food preparation, lifting, food service experience | 23 | 23 | 6% |

| 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 | |
| Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck: CDL Delivery Truck Driver | Drive a tractor-trailer combination or a truck with a capacity of at least 26,000 pounds Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW). May be required to unload truck. Requires commercial drivers' license. | Commercial driving, product sales, customer service, hand trucks, basic math | 2,841 | 2,904 | 4% |
| First-Line Supervisors of Material-Moving Machine and Vehicle Operators: Night Warehouse Supervisor Warehouse Supervisor | Directly supervise and coordinate activities of transportation and material-moving machine and vehicle operators and helpers. | Scheduling, repair, occupational health and safety, spreadsheets, warehouse operations, record keeping | 722 | 742 | 5% |
| Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers: Warehouse Supervisor Warehouse Manager Food Hub Manager Outbound Warehouse Supervisor | Plan, direct, or coordinate transportation, storage, or distribution activities in accordance with organizational policies and applicable government laws or regulations. Includes logistics managers. | Scheduling, occupational health and safety, forklift operation, warehouse operations, inventory management | 318 | 326 | 5% |

| 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 | |
| <p>General and Operations Managers: Area Manager Business Manager Food Hub Manager</p> | <p>Plan, direct, or coordinate the operations of public or private sector organizations, overseeing multiple departments or locations. Duties and responsibilities include formulating policies, managing daily operations, and planning the use of materials and human resources, but are too diverse and general in nature to be classified in any one functional area of management or administration, such as personnel, purchasing, or administrative services. Usually manage through subordinate supervisors. Excludes First-Line Supervisors.</p> | <p>Budgeting, operations management, business planning, prospective clients, profit targets</p> | <p>800</p> | <p>821</p> | <p>6%</p> |

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.