



2019 Updates to GAAMP

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Every year the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (“MDARD”) proposes changes to the Generally Accepted Agriculture and Management Practices (GAAMP).

Compliance with the GAAMP is critical to benefiting from the protections of the Michigan Right to Farm Act (MCL 286.471 et seq.), which provides protection from liability for farming activities. The following is a non-exhaustive list of changes to the 2019 GAAMP:

- The most substantial revisions concern the Site Selection GAAMP, and primarily focus on zoning and land use considerations. Some major changes include:
 - Elimination of a provision discouraging Category 1 livestock facilities from being created or expended beyond local zoning districts that already “allow for agricultural use.” MDARD has not proposed replacing the provision in the 2019 Site Selection GAAMP.
 - Elimination of provisions requiring MDARD to consider local zoning district maps in making a site suitability determination. MDARD now has discretion, but not an obligation, to consult and consider local zoning district maps.
 - Incorporation of MDARD’s formal appeals procedure for Site Suitability Determinations, along with clarification of whom may appeal a determination.
- The Care of Farm Animals GAAMP now includes a “recommendation” for all owners/managers of cattle to receive training in “Beef Quality Assurance” to ensure cattle are properly cared for and a safe and nutritious product is presented to consumers. This training is mandatory for commercial trucks and owners/managers of cattle entering “some cattle processing facilities.”

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- MDARD advises farms using automated or robotic nursing machines for new-born calves to maintain stocking rates below 25 calves per nipple. MDARD also recommends that farmers start automated or robotic feeders for new-born calves between day 7 and day 14 after birth.
- The Manure Management and Utilization GAAMP revised the amount of precipitation in inches by County to be compliant with the 25-Year, 24-Hour Storm Standard. The new values are found at Table 6 in the 2019 MDARD GAAMP manual which can be viewed/downloaded in its entirety **here**.

If you have questions regarding recent GAAMP updates, contact Brandon Schumacher at 517.371.8255 or at bschumacher@fosterswift.com. Brandon is a member of the firm's Litigation practice group and is based in the Lansing office.