



## The Benefits of a Farm Endorsement

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*Farm endorsement: an endorsement on a farmer's driver's license allowing him to drive the commercial type vehicles used in farming without having to comply with all the federal safety regulations normally assigned to commercial truck drivers.*

Beginning in early spring and lasting until late fall, the roads in Michigan are dotted with farm tractors or other agriculture related vehicles as farmers move from field to field tending to their crops. The farmer driving a tractor or other farm machinery can travel confidently on the roads around his farm because of the F endorsement on his driver's license, which provides him with some relief from Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.

Implements of husbandry, for example, which include tractors or vehicles designed to be pulled by an animal or a tractor, can be driven on the roads around the farm without the need of a driver's license. Larger rigs that require a driver's license but that do not need a special Farm (F) endorsement must meet the following conditions:

1. Controlled and operated by a farmer, farmer's employee or family member
2. Used to transport agricultural products, farm supplies or farm machinery to or from a farm
3. Not used in a for-hire operation
4. Traveling within 150 air miles or 173 statutory miles of the farm
5. A single unit truck with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) under 26,000 pounds or
6. A combination vehicle with the GVWR under 26,000 pounds towing any size trailer.

When a farmer decides to use a vehicle that has a GVWR over 26,000 pounds towing any size trailer which meets conditions 1-4 above, he can get an F endorsement on his driver's license. If a farmer wants to transport hazardous material in that size vehicle or can't meet the requirements above, he must have a commercial driver's license (CDL).

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### **PRACTICE AREAS**

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The F endorsement exempts a farmer from some of the federal safety regulations required of commercial drivers such as:

- Employment applications
- Investigations and inquiries of prospective drivers
- Road tests
- Medical qualifications and medical certificates
- Maintenance of driver files.

If traveling outside of Michigan, farm vehicle drivers, in addition to the above exemptions, do not have to maintain a list of violations. However, their vehicles must still meet all safety and licensing requirements.

### **WHERE DO YOU GET AN F ENDORSEMENT?**

The Michigan Secretary of State issues the endorsement. To add the "F" endorsement to your driver's or chauffeur license, you must pass both the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) General Knowledge and Combination Vehicles tests. Cost is \$5.00.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DON'T HAVE AN F ENDORSEMENT AND YOU ARE PULLED OVER BY THE POLICE?**

All Michigan drivers, including those driving implements of husbandry, are subject to the regulations of our Motor Vehicle Code. That means that regardless of what you are driving on public roads, or the F endorsement on your driver's license, you must follow the rules of the road. Failure to do so can lead to fines, costs, loss of driving privileges or possibly time in jail.