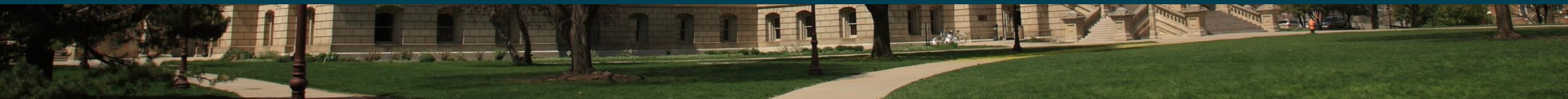




# Michigan Agriculture and Food Systems Workforce Advancement Initiative

Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity  
Workforce Development



# Agricultural and Foreign Labor Services (AFLS)

## About AFLS

Agricultural and Foreign Labor Services was created to help grow Michigan's economy by retaining and attracting global talent; by centralizing and streamlining employment and training services for Employers and Migrant and Seasonal workers; Ensuring equity in access to employment and training service programs for migrant and seasonal workers; and striving to meet the skilled labor needs of Michigan's employers. We accomplish this through the efforts of our staff in the following work units;

- Agricultural Employment Services
- Foreign Labor Services
- Office of the State Monitor Advocate



# Michigan Agriculture and Food Systems Workforce Advancement Initiative

## What is the purpose of the initiative?

The Michigan Agriculture and Food Systems Workforce Advancement Initiative (MAFSWAI) seeks to help Michigan food growers, processors, and distributors develop the technology- and data-savvy workforce they need to fill critical jobs by providing more job-based, experiential learning opportunities and credentials for migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs). These efforts will be accomplished through several partner organizations such as;

- Corporation for a Skilled Workforce (CSW)
- Michigan State University's - Migrant Student Services, Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS), and the Institute for Agricultural Technology,
- Michigan Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS)
- Telamon Corporation – National Farmworker Jobs Program,
- Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
- and several other partners.



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF  
LABOR & ECONOMIC  
OPPORTUNITY

WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT

# Michigan Agriculture and Food Systems Workforce Advancement Initiative

## Why this initiative now?

- Michigan's agricultural industry is worth \$101 billion and ~ 94,000 MSFWs and their household members conduct the labor-intensive agricultural work.
- Employers have had difficulty retaining workers and there have been labor shortages and instability in the labor force with few opportunities for farm workers to pursue the training needed to advance to higher paying jobs.
- In 2019, CSW and CRFS conducted research on local/regional food system workforce needs:
  - 41% of local and regional food system employers had job openings and 86% anticipate hiring over the next 3 years.
  - 80% of business survey respondents have formal education requirements for their employment, whether high school equivalent, associate or bachelor's degree.
  - Training needs, many of which involve mentorship or on the job training, were identified across all sectors.



# Michigan Agriculture and Food Systems Workforce Advancement Initiative

## Economic Opportunity for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers

- MSFWs and their families are facing many challenges. MSFWs comprise a large part of the labor supply yet are not well-connected to education and training opportunities.
- Through this project will help close the existing labor and skills gaps by increasing access to and completion of agriculture technology and other food system education and training programs for MSFWs.
- Our goal is to expand services to and place MSFW youth and adults on a solid career path where they gain the skills necessary to achieve economic self-sufficiency.
- The 10 counties that are home to the largest concentration of MSFWs is where we will work with partners to expand career services and employment training programs.
- In these regions we aim to: create stronger connections between the community-based organizations that serve MSFWs, the community colleges that offer agricultural technology and food system education and training, and the businesses that can provide opportunities for advancement.

# Michigan Agriculture and Food Systems Workforce Advancement Initiative

## Project Objectives

- Develop innovative educational programs in agriculture systems and technology,
- Help food businesses remain viable with a more reliable supply of skilled workers,
- Support MSFWs who want more economic opportunity to develop the skills needed to advance,
- Provide additional resources for education and training providers and farmworker support organizations to design these pathways and programs,
- Ensure the supports, like mentoring and coaching, are in place to help people work and learn simultaneously, and
- Contribute to the Michigan Sixty by 30 Goal with more MSFWs obtaining industry recognized credentials.

# Michigan Agriculture and Food Systems Workforce Advancement Initiative

## Where do the Michigan Works! Agencies fit into the initiative?

Through collaboration with agricultural employers, migrant and seasonal farm workers, and other partners, the Michigan Works! Agencies will support MAFSWAI through;

- Assisting in the recruitment and retention of MSFWs and/or employers to engage in the initiative,
- Determining eligibility of MSFW and employer participants for WIOA or other local workforce programs allowing for dual enrollment where applicable,
- Providing assistive and supportive services to remove barriers for MSFW participants,
- Providing mentoring and coaching services to MSFWs to ensure successful completion of program enrollment by identifying financial assistance programs and assisting with enrollment in education and training programs,
- Providing Career and Training Services by following up through a case management approach ensuring attainment of a certificate, license, or degree credential.



# Michigan Agriculture and Food Systems Workforce Advancement Initiative

## Where does the Telamon Corporation – NFJP fit into the initiative?

Through collaboration with agricultural employers, migrant and seasonal farm workers, and other partners, the Telamon-NFJP will support MAFSWAI through;

- Assisting in the recruitment and retention of MSFWs and/or employers to engage in the initiative,
- Determining eligibility of MSFW and employer participants for WIOA or other Telamon programs allowing for dual enrollment where applicable,
- Providing assistive and supportive services to remove barriers for MSFW participants,
- Providing mentoring and coaching services to MSFWs to ensure successful completion of program enrollment by identifying financial assistance programs and assisting with enrollment in education and training programs,
- Providing Career and Training Services by following up through a case management approach ensuring attainment of a certificate, license, or degree credential.



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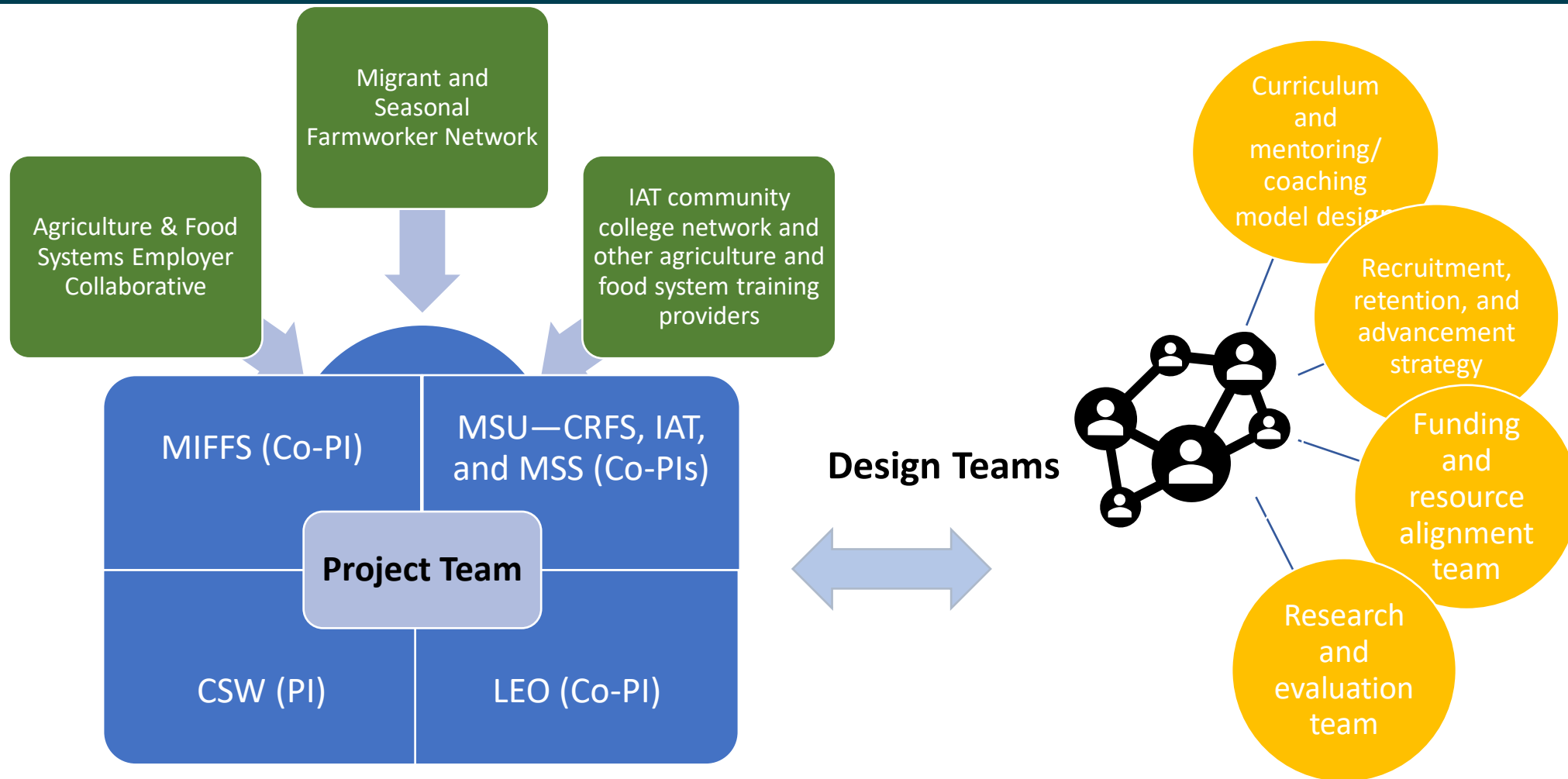
## Where do Education Partners fit into the initiative?

Through collaboration with migrant and seasonal farm workers, agricultural employers, and other partners, the Education Partners will support MAFSWAI through;

- Assisting in the recruitment and retention of MSFWs and/or employers to engage in the initiative by promoting Ag Tech education and training programs,
- Determining eligibility of MSFW and employer participants in education and training programs that engage classroom training, On-the-Job Training (OJT), Registered or Un-Registered Apprenticeships, Internships, and other applicable opportunities,
- Providing mentoring and coaching services to MSFWs to ensure successful completion of program enrollment,
- Developing and/or revising program promotional materials to the language(s) spoken among MSFWs in the region, this will help obtain the participant's buy-in by understanding the focus of the training and how it promotes employment advancement.



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