



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

GORDON WENK
DIRECTOR

October 23, 2018

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue
Washington DC 20250

and

The Honorable Scott Gottlieb, M.D.
Commissioner
U.S. Food & Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Avenue – W01
Silver Spring MD 20993

RE: Request for Food Safety PFAS Guidance

Dear Secretary Perdue and Commissioner Gottlieb:

As you are aware, perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) have been classified by the U.S Environmental Protection Agency as an emerging contaminant on the national level, having been found in the United States and many other countries. PFAS is a suite of chemicals historically used in thousands of applications throughout the industrial, food, and textile industries. It is incredibly stable, breaking down very slowly in the environment, and is highly soluble, easily transferring through soil to groundwater. PFAS is used in firefighting foams, food packaging, cleaning products, and various other products.

Under Governor Snyder's direction and leadership, the State of Michigan has committed to a proactive approach to identifying and defining the extent of PFAS contamination in our state. When that contamination is discovered, the state, along with our partners in local government, have acted immediately to protect public health. That partnership, in consort with the federal government, academia, and other stakeholders, has made the State of Michigan one of the national leaders in addressing PFAS contamination.

The state's systematic approach of identifying contamination sites includes statewide testing of all municipal and school water supplies. A coordinated state and local response to protect public health occurs whenever elevated levels of PFOA+PFOS are found in drinking water.

While drinking water is our primary focus, the public asks about the food supply, including use of PFAS in food packaging. Michigan feels that federal guidance should be the basis for our state response to food-related PFAS issues. However, with the lack of any known federal PFAS guidance or standards relating to the food supply other than some guidance on packaging and

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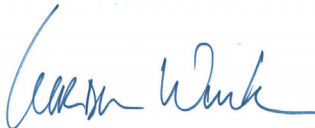
limited research on PFAS in food, we are finding it difficult to provide clear or standardized answers to food-related questions from the public, regulators, educators, and the food industry. Michigan would appreciate your sharing any existing guidance, as well as assistance in developing additional guidance needed related to PFAS in the food supply. We would be happy to work with you and other stakeholders in this process. While our review of scientific literature indicates that the nation's food supply is safe, your expertise to help address the overall safety of domestically produced and imported foods, including identifying which PFAS compounds are of greatest concern and at what level, is critically needed.

At the many public meetings convened by the Michigan PFAS Action Response Team around the state, we are also regularly asked about the safety of home-produced foods, including garden produce. More research is needed on plant uptake, particularly through use of irrigation water or biosolids containing PFAS; potential impacts to crops that become livestock feed; and water used for food processing.

Further, not only Michigan, but all states, the public, and the food and agriculture sector would benefit from a clear understanding of both advisory levels from a public health standpoint as well as regulatory response standards related to PFAS.

Michigan is looking for a nationally supported approach that protects human health but doesn't raise unnecessary concern over the safety of the food supply. Michigan businesses should not be put at a disadvantage to other out-of-state businesses simply because Michigan is aggressively looking for PFAS. A nationally consistent approach would greatly help create a level playing field for businesses.

Sincerely,



Gordon Wenk, Director
MI Department of Agriculture &
Rural Development



Carol Isaacs, Director
Michigan PFAS Action Response Team
Office of Governor Rick Snyder