

2027 Legislative Priorities



WISCONSIN
Agri-Business Association

Commercial Fertilizer Building Sprinkler Exemption

WABA supports exempting certain commercial agricultural buildings, specifically fertilizer and chemical buildings, from being required to have an automatic fire sprinkler system installed. In these facilities, sprinkler systems may create environmental hazards, as water can react with chemicals and fertilizers, potentially leading to dangerous reactions and water contamination. WABA supports this exemption to help protect agri-businesses while safeguarding environmental quality.

Uniform Beneficial Substances Bill

WABA supports adoption of the American Association of Plant Food Control Officials (AAPFCO) Uniform Beneficial Substances Bill to establish a consistent regulatory framework for plant biostimulants in Wisconsin. Adopting the uniform model bill will provide regulatory clarity, ensure consistent product definitions and labeling standards, promote innovation, and align Wisconsin with national best practices, benefiting manufacturers, retailers, and agricultural producers alike.

Eligibility for Ag Road Improvement Program (ARIP)

Under current program rules, a highway must show it cannot safely support agricultural traffic to qualify for improvement projects. This is currently demonstrated if the highway is designated a Class "B" highway or has been subject to a posted weight limit for at least one month in the previous year. This proposal is aimed at expanding the eligibility by allowing an additional way to demonstrate insufficiency: a registered professional engineer can certify through an engineering analysis that a highway cannot accommodate heavy agricultural traffic. WABA supports this change because it provides a practical, technical method to identify roads in need, helping ensure Wisconsin's agricultural producers can safely and efficiently move crops, livestock, and inputs across the state.

Support of FFA and Agriculture Education

WABA supports programs like the FFA because they are developing the next generation of agriculture workers. This proposal would allow students to participate in school-sponsored activities like FFA without being penalized for absences. This proposal supports experiential learning opportunities that help shape future leaders in agriculture through hands-on education, leadership development, and career exploration.



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Commercial Pesticide Applicator Recertification

Several surrounding states have altered their recertification process for commercial pesticide applicators to model other industries. Transitioning custom applicators from retesting to continuing education units (CEUs) strengthens both compliance and workforce stability. CEUs ensure applicators receive ongoing, practical training on safety, technology, and regulations—providing more meaningful oversight than a periodic exam. This model reduces barriers that discourage experienced workers, helping address workforce shortages while still maintaining high standards. By prioritizing continuous learning, CEUs improve applicator performance while protecting the industry's workforce.

Ag Road Improvement Program (ARIP)

In June 2023, Senate Bill 247 (Act 13) established the Agricultural Road Improvement Program (ARIP) as part of the 2023–25 biennial budget. The program provides funding to improve highways functionally classified as local roads or minor collectors, as well as culverts, that provide access to agricultural lands and facilities used to produce agricultural goods, including forest products. Due to overwhelming demand, the program was significantly oversubscribed and has proven highly successful. WABA strongly supports continuing and making ARIP a permanent program through dedicated funding in the 2027–29 state budget.

Commercial Driver Training Grant Program

Many WABA members employ at least one commercial driver's license (CDL) holder due to the agricultural industry's heavy reliance on trucking to transport products. The Commercial Driver Training Grant Program helps address workforce shortages by reimbursing employers for up to 50% of the cost of CDL training for each trainee. Continued funding for this program will help agribusinesses recruit, train, and retain qualified drivers while strengthening Wisconsin's agricultural supply chain. WABA supports continued funding for the Commercial Driver Training Grant Program in the 2027–29 state budget.

