

We estimate that at least 5,000 undocumented crop farmworkers could become eligible for CAW status throughout the state. The leading counties are Ottawa with at least 730 CAW eligible workers, 460 workers in Kent County, 330 workers in Macomb County, 310 workers in Kalamazoo County, and 260 in Van Buren County. Figure 1 shows the number of crop workers eligible for CAW status by county across the state of Michigan. A majority of the eligible crop workers work in the southwestern part of the state. Estimates for CAW eligibility of the remaining counties can be found in the second column of Table 1.

Table 1: Estimated CAW Eligible Workers by County in Michigan

| County | Estimated Certified Agricultural Workers | Estimated CAWs Eligible for Permanent Resident Status after 4 years | Estimated CAWs Eligible for Permanent Resident Status after 8 years |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| Allegan | 140 | 60 | 70 |
| Antrim | 40 | 20 | 20 |
| Arenac | 10 | 4 | 4 |
| Barry | 10 | 6 | 7 |
| Bay* | 70 | 30 | 40 |
| Benzie | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| Berrien | 240 | 110 | 130 |
| Branch | 30 | 20 | 20 |
| Calhoun | 140 | 60 | 70 |
| Cass* | 30 | 20 | 20 |
| Charlevoix | 10 | 4 | 5 |
| Cheboygan | 10 | 3 | 3 |
| Clinton* | 70 | 30 | 40 |
| Delta | 10 | 3 | 3 |
| Emmet | 10 | 6 | 6 |
| Genesee | 50 | 20 | 30 |
| Gladwin | 10 | 3 | 4 |
| Grand Traverse | 30 | 10 | 10 |
| Gratiot* | 50 | 20 | 30 |
| Hillsdale | 40 | 20 | 20 |
| Huron* | 70 | 30 | 40 |
| Ingham* | 160 | 70 | 80 |
| Ionia | 50 | 20 | 20 |
| Isabella | 20 | 8 | 9 |
| Jackson* | 50 | 20 | 20 |
| Kalamazoo* | 310 | 150 | 160 |
| Kalkaska | 20 | 9 | 10 |
| Kent* | 460 | 220 | 240 |
| Lapeer | 50 | 20 | 20 |
| Leelanau | 40 | 20 | 20 |
| Lenawee* | 80 | 40 | 40 |
| Livingston | 40 | 20 | 20 |

| | | | |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Macomb* | 330 | 160 | 180 |
| Manistee | 20 | 10 | 10 |
| Marquette | 40 | 20 | 20 |
| Mason | 60 | 30 | 30 |
| Midland | 10 | 5 | 6 |
| Monroe | 70 | 30 | 40 |
| Montcalm | 70 | 30 | 40 |
| Muskegon | 100 | 50 | 50 |
| Newaygo | 50 | 30 | 30 |
| Oakland* | 200 | 90 | 110 |
| Oceana* | 90 | 40 | 50 |
| Osceola* | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| Ottawa* | 730 | 340 | 380 |
| Presque Isle | 10 | 6 | 7 |
| Saginaw* | 160 | 80 | 80 |
| Sanilac | 50 | 20 | 20 |
| Shiawassee* | 10 | 5 | 6 |
| St. Clair | 10 | 6 | 7 |
| St. Joseph* | 160 | 80 | 90 |
| Tuscola | 50 | 20 | 30 |
| Van Buren* | 260 | 120 | 140 |
| Washtenaw | 70 | 30 | 40 |
| Wayne | 90 | 40 | 50 |
| Total | 5,000 | 2,400 | 2,600 |

Note: The * symbol indicates data for NAICS codes 111 (direct hire crop) and 1151 (crop support services) were disclosed in the QCEW database. Values in column 1 may differ from the sum of columns 2 and 3 due to rounding.

Access to Green Cards

Under Title 1 of the FWMA, CAW eligible crop workers would be able apply for permanent resident status (a green card) if they continue to perform farm work in the US. CAW eligible workers who have performed at least 10 years of US farm work could apply for permanent resident status in 4 years if they continue to work in US agriculture for at least 100 days per year, and those who have performed less than 10 years of US farm work could apply for permanent resident status after 8 years.

The share of the crop workforce in the Lake region that would be eligible for a green card in 4 years is about 12%, which is 47% of the CAW eligible workforce. This share translates to at least 2,400 Michigan crop production farmworkers that could obtain a green card in 4 years. Figure 2 displays the number of crop production employees in each county that could obtain a green card in 4 years. The leading counties are Ottawa County with at least 340 workers, Kent County with 220 workers, Macomb County with 160, Kalamazoo County with 150, and Van Buren County with 120. Estimates for green card eligibility after 4 years for the remaining counties can be found in column 3 of Table 1.

The share of the crop workforce in the Lake region that would be eligible for permanent resident status in 8 years is 13%, which is 53% of the workforce that is eligible for CAW status. In Michigan, we estimate that at least 2,600 workers would be eligible for a green card in 8 years. Figure 3 displays the number of workers in each county that would be eligible for a green card after 8 years. Again, the counties with the most eligible workers are Ottawa County with at least 380 workers, Kent County with 240 workers, Macomb County with 180 workers, Kalamazoo with 160 workers, and Van Buren with 140 workers. Estimates for crop workers eligible for permanent resident status in 8 years for the remaining counties can be found in column 4 of Table 1.

Regularization of undocumented farmworkers has important implications for Michigan's rural communities. Farmworker advocates have long sought a pathway to legal status and argue that it would reduce their vulnerability and promote employee welfare. From a production standpoint, regularization could pose new production challenges if employees leave agricultural work for other sectors of the economy once they obtain a green card. Such a trend would likely lead to increased demand for the H-2A visa program, which is typically more costly and administratively burdensome. The Farm Workforce Modernization Act also contains provisions for changing the H-2A program rules to make it easier and more efficient for producers to use.

Figure 2: Number of Farmworkers Eligible for Permanent Resident Status After 4 Years

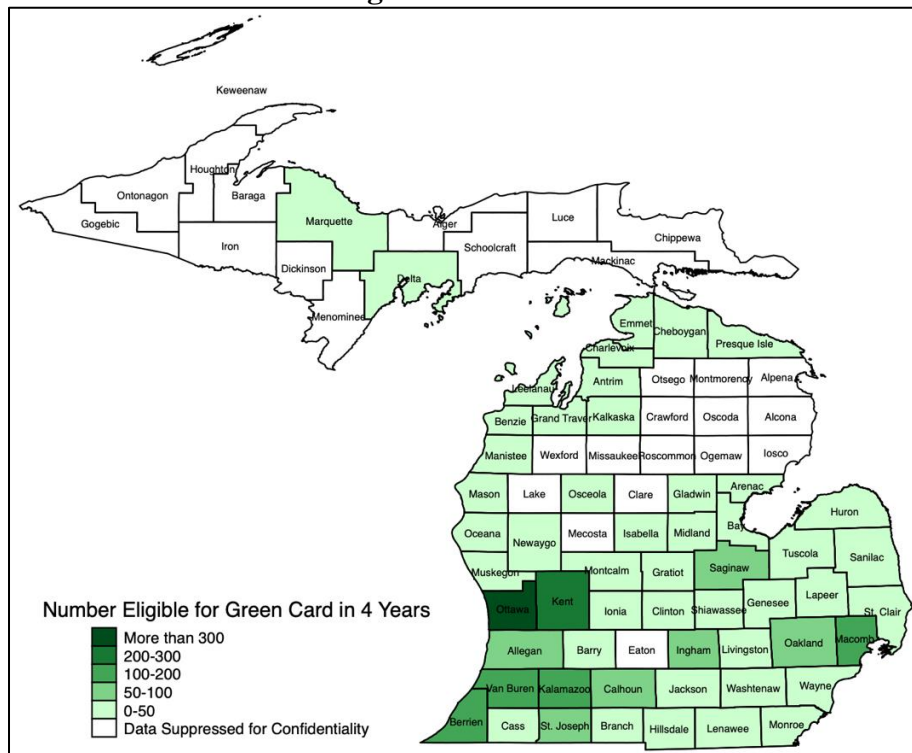


Figure 3: Number of Farmworkers Eligible for Permanent Resident Status After 8 Years

