



Guidelines for Essential Agribusinesses during the Safer at Home Order

On March 24, 2020, [Emergency Order No. 12](#) was issued by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) at the direction of Gov. Tony Evers to slow the spread of COVID-19. This order mandates that nonessential businesses statewide cease activities [except minimum basic operations (2 a.), and operations conducted exclusively by employees working from home (2 b.)]. The “Safer at Home” order is in effect until 8 a.m. on April 24, 2020, or until superseded by another order.

We are reaching out to you to help clarify whether your business is considered essential. Please review the information below as it relates to your business operations, and whether there are precautions needed to maintain social distance and sanitation to ensure safety for you and your clients.

Is my landscaping business considered essential?

In accordance with Section 13.a of the [order](#) and page 4 of the [frequently asked questions](#) updated on March 31, 2020, landscapers and their suppliers are considered an essential business or operation, so long as the service is necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, businesses, and buildings.

If your landscaping business is not necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, businesses, and buildings, you may still continue “Minimum Basic Operations.” Under Section 14 of the [order](#), provided that employees comply with Social Distancing Requirements, your business may carry out the following operations:

1. The minimum necessary activities to maintain the value of the business's inventory, preserve the condition of the business's physical plant and equipment, ensure security, process payroll and employee benefits, or for related functions, including where these functions are outsourced to other entities, and
2. The minimum necessary activities to facilitate employees of the business being able to continue to work remotely from their residences.
3. Minimum Basic Operations does **not** include serving customers in person. Minimum Basic Operations may include one person in a room or confined space, including a car or truck, fulfilling nonessential deliveries or mailing parcels. Delivery and parcel services cannot require a signature by the recipient. Other services or activities requiring more than one person may only continue via phone or virtually.

Construction, including housing construction, is an “Essential Infrastructure” under Section 10 of the [order](#), but optional or aesthetic construction must be avoided.

Can I still do my usual pesticide applications?

Businesses that conduct pesticide applications are “Essential Businesses or Operations” under Section 13.n of the [order](#).

Can I still conduct arborist work?

Businesses that conduct forestry and tree care work are “Essential Businesses or Operations” under Section 13.n of the [order](#).

Are greenhouses, garden centers, and production nurseries considered essential?

Greenhouses, Garden Centers, Nursery Growers and Commercial Flower Growers that are necessary to support essential businesses and operations, including food and beverage production, cultivation, transportation, processing, farming, and agriculture are considered “Essential Businesses and Operations” under Sections 13.c and 13.r of the [order](#) and the [CISA memorandum](#) issued on March 28, 2020.

More Information

Find additional guidance from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) at these links:

- [Crops and agribusiness](#)
- [DATCP toolkit for agribusiness](#)

Visit the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) website for clarification about whether your business is considered essential, or for submitting questions and explanations why your business should be considered essential: <https://wedc.org/essentialbusiness/>.

Contact

If you have questions, please email DATCP at the following:

- Nursery program: datcpnursery@wisconsin.gov
- Pesticide program: datcppesticideinfo@wisconsin.gov

Additional COVID-19 resources for businesses and employers, such as cleaning and disinfection protocols for frequently touched surfaces, can be found at the [DHS website](#).