

Update to Agricultural Transportation Handbook! Changes to USDOT Number Requirement

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The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) recently rescinded an exemption provided to farm vehicles transporting cargo in intrastate commerce from having a USDOT safety registration number. *Beginning on November 2, 2021, all single vehicles or combination of vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 26,001 pounds and greater, including farm vehicles as defined under ARS 28-2514, involved in intrastate commerce will be required to have a USDOT number.* The requirement of a USDOT number already exists for commercial vehicles involved in interstate commerce with a GVWR of 10,001 pounds or greater.

The USDOT safety registration is a number used to identify commercial motor vehicles transporting passengers or hauling cargo in commerce and is used to collect and monitor a company's safety information and collision data. USDOT numbers can be obtained free of charge at www.fmcsa.dot.gov/registration/do-i-need-usdot-number. For commercial vehicles requiring a USDOT number the USDOT number and company name must be displayed on the vehicle while operating in commerce. According to ADOT, it is permissible for the markings to be temporarily displayed on vehicles that are only used in commerce on a part-time basis.

The Arizona Farm Bureau provided comments to ADOT in support of retaining the exemption for USDOT number for farm vehicles involved in intrastate transport and argued removing the exemption would create an undue burden for farmers and ranchers who operate primarily in intrastate commerce, especially because various vehicle and trailer combinations can often put farmers and ranchers over the 26,001 pound threshold and oftentimes the vehicle is also used a personal vehicle. We also noted that Arizona was not alone in providing the exemption, since there are several other states who provide a similar exemption. However, Arizona Department of Motor Vehicles argued the exemption should be removed as having the USDOT number provides enforcement officials the ability to notify drivers of violations through a roadside inspection report, rather than issuing citations. Additionally, they noted there are no exemptions in federal regulations from the requirements of a USDOT number and that the state exemption for farm vehicles put the Department at risk of losing grant funding due to noncompliance and compatibility requirements under the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program.

For more information regarding USDOT numbers and other transportation topics, Arizona Farm Bureau members can obtain a free copy of the handbook by contacting transportation@azfb.org and including their full name, mailing address and the number of copies requested. Members can also login at www.azfb.org to access electronic versions of the handbook. 📖
