

Patti Mills

From: Elaina Rudder
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 6:23 PM
To: Virgil Peck
Subject: Overweight Exemptions/Permits for Grain and Agricultural Goods

Chairman Peck,

Please find below information pertaining to your request about overweight exemptions and permits in other states for grain and agricultural goods. I can provide additional information if you would like, but the following is a brief overview of what I found.

Overweight Exemptions

Based on a [50-state survey](#) completed by the U.S. Department of Transportation, around 25 states have an overweight exemption for grain and/or agricultural goods. Examples include:

- **South Dakota:** Vehicles hauling agricultural products from a harvesting combine to the point that the products are first unloaded, up to 50 miles, may exceed weight limits on non-Interstate highways by 10 percent. In addition, such vehicles are exempt from state axle and tire limits if the gross vehicle weight (GVW) is less than 80,000 lbs. and the vehicle is adjusted to the state axle and tire limits.
- **Tennessee:** Farm vehicles are trucks used by farmers to load grain, fiber, produce, livestock, milk, or other agricultural products produced on their farms and to transport the agricultural commodities to their respective markets. The trucks include farm to market transportation when the truck is operated by the farmer, the farmer's family, or an employee or a representative hired by the farmer to haul the commodity. These trucks have a 10 percent tolerance of error from the true gross or axle weight.
- **Wisconsin:** From Sept. 1 to Dec. 31 of each year, no permit is required for the transportation of corn, soybeans, potatoes, vegetables, or cranberries from the field to storage or processing facilities on non-Interstate highways. Vehicles can exceed applicable limits by up to 15 percent.

Overweight Permits

Based on the same [50-state survey](#) completed by the U.S. Department of Transportation, around 15 states have an overweight permit available for the transportation of grain and/or agricultural goods. Examples include:

- **Minnesota:** A road authority is authorized to issue an annual permit for vehicles or vehicle combinations to haul raw or unprocessed agriculture products with the following axle and weight limits:
 - Up to 90,000 lbs. with six axles (99,000 lbs. during a seasonal increase); and
 - Up to 97,000 lbs. with seven or more axles (99,000 lbs. during a seasonal increase).

[Note: These vehicles may not travel on Interstate highways (except for sealed intermodal containers as allowed by the federal government) and must comply with state axle weight limits and seasonal load restrictions.]

- **New Mexico:** A multiple trip special permit may be issued for an agriculture product transport vehicle. This permit allows a GVW increase of 5,000 lbs. over the state limits and does not authorize travel on Interstate highways.
- **North Dakota:** The Director of the Department of Transportation is authorized to issue permits to vehicles carrying agricultural products from the field of harvest to the point of initial storage site, hauling potatoes or sugar beets, or transporting solid waste from July 15 to December 1 and for the general movement of products from December 1 to March 7. Such permits allow the vehicles to exceed state weight limits for non-Interstate highways by 10 percent, provided the permitted vehicles do not exceed the GVW limit of 105,500 lbs.

Federal Bridge Formula

In 1975, Congress enacted the Bridge Formula to limit the weight-to-length ratio of a vehicle crossing a bridge. The federal gross weight limit on the interstate system is 80,000 lbs. unless the Bridge Formula dictates a lower weight limit. More information on weight limits and the formula can be found [here](#).

Although there is a federal gross weight limit, some states have a higher limit because states were allowed to keep or “grandfather” weight limits that were higher than 80,000 lbs. before the interstate system axle and gross weight limits were adopted in 1956 and amended in 1975. The states with grandfathered limits include:

- Connecticut;
- Hawaii;
- Idaho;
- Michigan;
- Nebraska;
- Nevada;
- New Jersey;
- New York;
- Washington; and
- Wyoming.

[Note: In the states that do not have grandfathered weight limits, the overweight exemption or permit does not generally apply to travel on interstate highways.]

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like any additional information.

Thanks,
Elaina

Elaina Rudder

Senior Research Analyst
Kansas Legislative Research Department
Room 68-W State Capitol Building
300 SW 10th Avenue
Topeka, KS 66612-1504
Elaina.Rudder@klrd.ks.gov
(785) 296-4395