



WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION

EST. 1891

Making the Most of Your WCMA Membership

September 19, 2024

Agenda

- Overview of WCMA
- Our Membership
- Signature Events
- Programs & Services
- Q&A



WCMA OVERVIEW

FROM 1891...

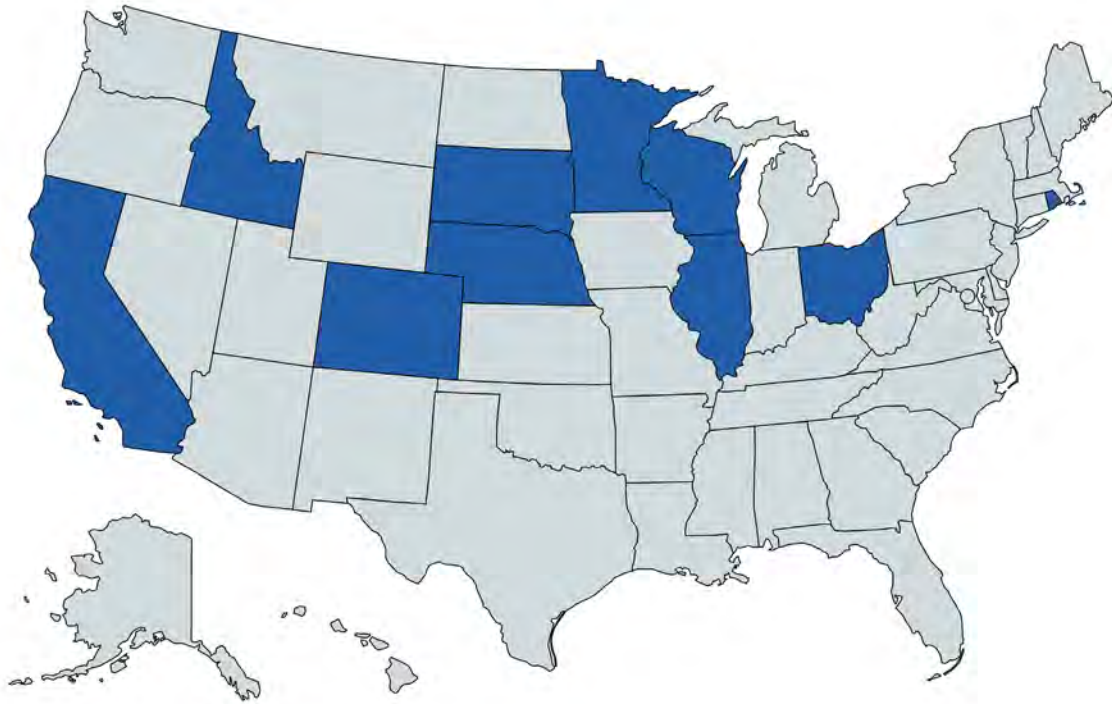


...TO TODAY





WCMA BOARD OF DIRECTORS



WCMA BOARD EXPANSION



Mindy Berrey
Land O'Lakes



Wilf Costello
Glanbia Nutritionals



Mark Federico
Narragansett Creamery



Kurt Epprecht
Great Lakes Cheese



Betsy Erdelyi
BMO Harris Bank



Orphee Paillotin
Alpinage Artisan Cheese



Jenny Drake
Grande Cheese Company

WCMA STAFF



JOHN UMHOEFER

Executive Director



**REBEKAH
SWEENEY**

Senior Director,
Programs & Policy



**GRACE
ATHERTON**

Communications
Director



**DANICA
NILSESTUEN**

Director,
Sustainability & Grants



SARA SCHMIDT

Membership
Director



JUDY KELLER

Senior Director,
Events



**CAITLIN
PEIRICK**

Events Director



**KIRSTEN
STROHMENGER**

Contest Director



WCMA MEMBERSHIP

WCMA MEMBERSHIP: GROWTH

**Since
2021:**

31

**New Dairy Manufacturer,
Processor, and Marketer
Members**

319

New Supplier Members

WCMA MEMBERSHIP: SCOPE

- 127 Dairy Processors
- 652 Suppliers





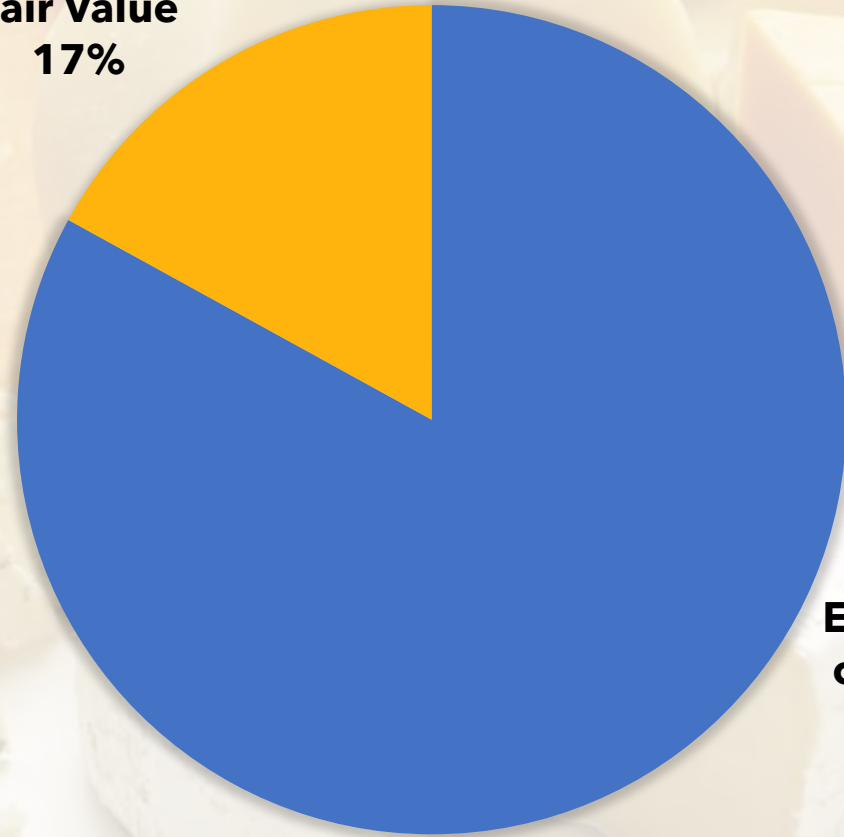
2024 WCMA MEMBERSHIP SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

2024 WCMA MEMBERSHIP SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

How does the cost of your membership compare to the value you get from it?

Fair Value
17%

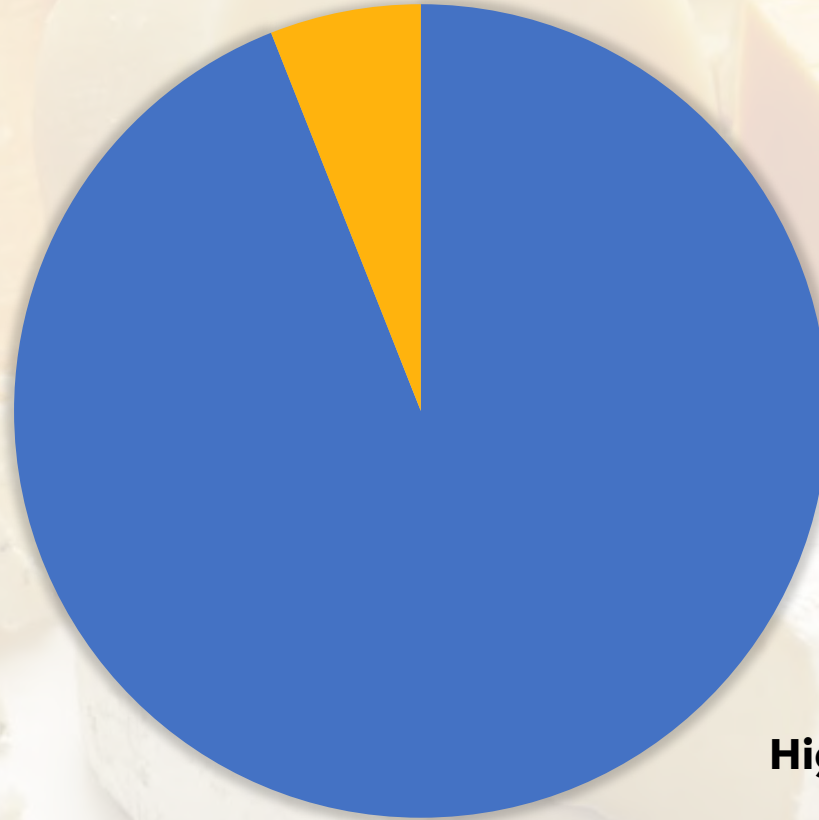
Excellent
or Good
Value
83%



2024 WCMA MEMBERSHIP SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

How would you rate your satisfaction with WCMA membership overall?

Somewhat Satisfied
6%



Highly Satisfied or
Satisfied
94%

WCMA Members Love...

Advocacy

Networking

Communications



WCMA Members Love...

Advocacy

Networking

Communications

WCMA Members Want...

Continued
advocacy!

More networking!

New groups &
committees!

A collage of various cheeses including cheddar, brie, and blue cheese. The cheeses are arranged in a pile, with some slices and some whole wheels. The background is a soft, light blue gradient.

Your ***ideas*** fuel our ***growth***.

Thank you!



WCMA EVENTS

CHEESECON

April 15-17, 2025 | Alliant Energy Center | Madison, Wisconsin

CheeseCon.org



CHEESECON

April 15-17, 2025 | Alliant Energy Center | Madison, Wisconsin

CheeseCon.org



CHEESECON

April 15-17, 2025 | Alliant Energy Center | Madison, Wisconsin

CheeseCon.org





CHEESE CON

April 15 - 17, 2025 | Madison, Wisconsin

CHEESE EXPO

April 14 - 16, 2026 | Milwaukee, Wisconsin



A close-up photograph of a large wheel of Swiss cheese, likely Emmentaler, showing its characteristic holes. A metal cheese puller with a wooden handle is resting on the cheese. The cheese is a pale yellow color, and the holes are of various sizes. The background is a soft, out-of-focus white.

CHAMPIONSHIP CHEESE CONTESTS

U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP CHEESE CONTEST



March 4-6, 2025

**Resch Expo
Green Bay, Wisconsin**

USChampionCheese.org







- **Entry Opens:** November 5, 2024
- **Early Entry Deadline:** December 13, 2024
- **Final Entry Deadline:** January 31, 2025
- **Contest Dates:** March 4-6, 2025

USChampionCheese.org

2025 B-TEAM



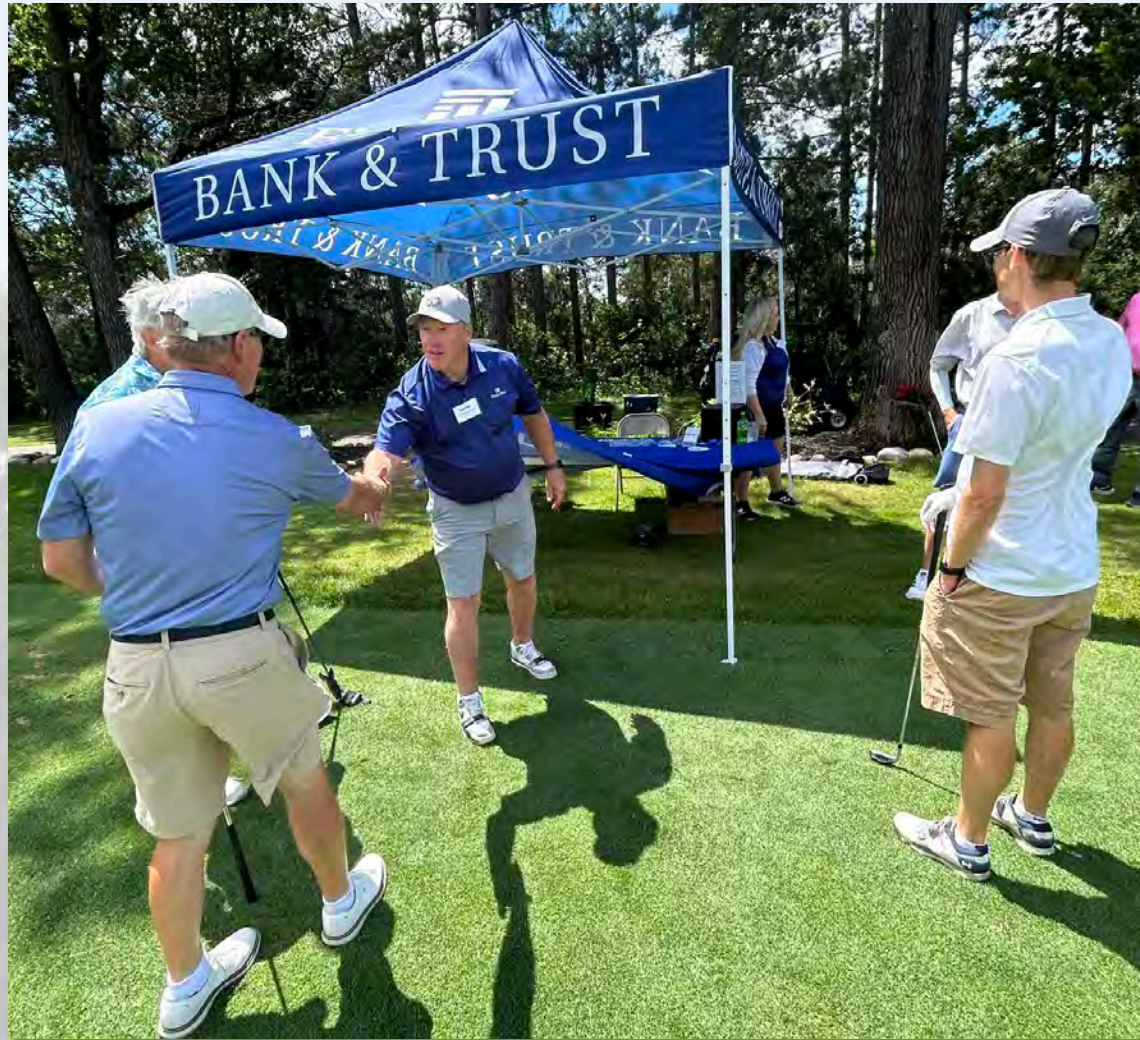


2024 WCMA GOLF OUTING & TRAP SHOOT













Save the Date! July 16, 2025

Golf at one of five courses:

Lake Arrowhead Pines Course & Lake Arrowhead Lakes Course, Nekoosa
Bullseye Course, Wisconsin Rapids
Northern Bay Course, Arkdale
"Sandbox" Course at Sand Valley (*par-3, walking course*)

Trap Shoot at WTA Homegrounds, Nekoosa

Enjoy Social Hour and Dinner at the Lake Arrowhead Clubhouse



WCMA PROGRAMS & SERVICES

WCMA Advocacy

WISCONSIN



WASHINGTON, D.C.





WCMA Policy Committee

Federal Priorities

- FMMO Reform
- Favorable Trade Agreements
- Protection of Common Food Names
- Food Labeling Transparency
- Immigration Reform
- Farm Bill Measures



State Advocacy



State Priorities

- Budget wins:
 - \$2M for Export Endeavors
 - \$1M for Dairy Processor Grants
 - \$8M for Dairy Innovation Hub
 - \$150M for Rural Roads
- Recent success:
 - Increased Dairy Hauling Capacity





WCMA Policy Committee



GRANTS

Grant Opportunities



Grant Opportunities



Business Builder Grants:

- Awards of up to \$100,000
- No required match
- Supports modernization, growth

Industry Impact Grants:

- Awards of up to \$100,000
- No required match
- Addresses a broader issue

Hidden Springs Creamery



Hidden Springs Creamery



1841



Anne Peck of Lake Mills, makes the first official Wisconsin cheese by adding milk from her neighbor's cows to that of her own small herd.

1912



Wisconsin officially becomes the leading dairy state in the nation, producing more milk, butter and cheese than any other.

1948



Robert McLean becomes the first U.S. Senator from Wisconsin to be elected to the U.S. Senate.

1985



1995



2002



2005



2007



2009



2011



2013



2015



2017



2019



2021



2023



2025



1888



William S. Howard, who founded Howard's Dairy Farm, "a journal devoted to dairy farming" in 1883, is elected as the 16th governor of Wisconsin symbolizing the rise of dairying.



1923

1923

1877



John Jacob, Swiss father from Dodge County, invents a Wisconsin original, Brick cheese.



Dairymen achieve an historic recognition with the establishment of the first Dairy School in the nation at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



Stephen Badrock, and age culture research chemist, develops the Badrock test, a unique method of measuring the butterfat content of milk. Later in 1895, Badrock discovers the natural milk enzyme glycolase, which aids cheese ripening.

1890

1890



1939

1939

1970

1970

1981

1981

2002

2002

2003

2003

2005

2005

2007

2007

2009

2009

2011

2011

2013

2013

2015

2015

2017

2017

2019

2019

2021

2021

Crave Brothers Farm

Learn More & Apply!

WisCheeseMakers.org/grants



WISCONSIN
CHEESE MAKERS
ASSOCIATION

EST. 1891

[About](#) [Events](#) [Resources](#) [Industry Careers](#) [Advocacy](#) [News](#)

Grants & Financial Resources

The profitability, sustainability, and long-term viability of the dairy industry is fundamental to a healthy economy. WCMA is committed to advocating for targeted investments in dairy farmers and processors, working with state and federal partners to administer grant monies effectively, and sharing available funding opportunities with WCMA members. This page will be continually updated as new grant opportunities and deadlines arise.

Questions can be directed to WCMA Grants & Business Programs Director Danica Nilsestuen at dnilsestuen@wischeesemakers.org or (608) 673-5547.

Upcoming Deadlines:

- **On-Farm Biosecurity Grants: Applications Open August 13, First come, first served**
 - 10 Reimbursable, no-match grants of up to \$10,000 to dairy farms to acquire essential supplies and equipment to prevent the on-farm spread of H5N1
 - Online application
 - List of eligible items
- **Ag Roads Improvement Program (ARIP): Applications due September 30th**
 - WCMA members can click [here](#) to download and complete a simple, two-page form to provide their local governments with essential information as they apply for ARIP grants.
 - Questions can be directed to WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy, Rebekah Sweeney
 - Applications can be found on DOT's website and a map of potentially eligible roads can be found [here](#).



WCMA Export Expansion Grant



Free, personalized
consultative services with
Jacqueline Cook (Cook
Alpine Ltd.)

- In 2023:
 - 12 businesses served
 - 550,000+ pounds of cheese each month
 - Over 6 million pounds per year

Apply Now!

WisCheeseMakers.org/Grants

WCMA Export Workgroup



WisCheeseMakers.org/dairy-exporting

Dairy Exporting Resources

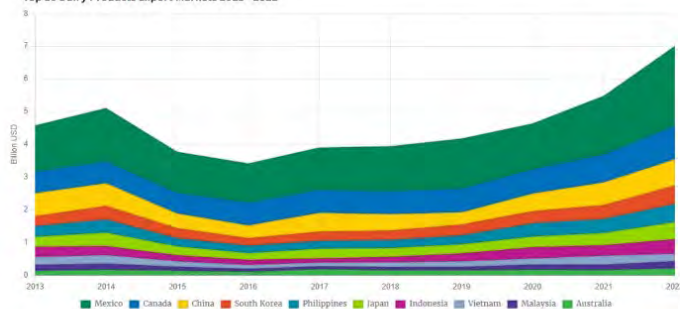
Exporting is essential to the growth of the dairy industry. Start here with our helpful library of export contacts, data, and resources.

In the News

U.S. Dairy Exports Post Third Straight Record Year

2022 Was Another Record Year for U.S. Farm Exports

Top 10 Dairy Products Export Markets 2013 - 2022



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service Data

Dairy Export Data

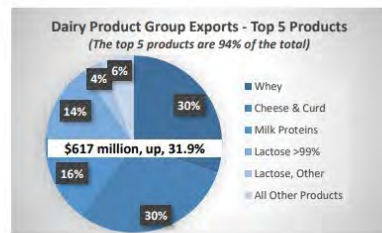
U.S. Dairy Product Exports in 2022

Wisconsin Agriculture Export Statistics

2022 International Agribusiness Center Export Highlights



DATCP International Agribusiness Center Data



Getting Started

Are you curious about what it would take to start an export program? Check out these helpful resources and partner organizations to learn more.

[Assess your Export Readiness](#)

Utilize the International Trade Administration's Export Readiness assessment and other useful tools and resources.

[Learn the Fundamentals of Exporting with Food Export Midwest USA](#)

Access more than 70 free recorded webinars and videos, ranging from market research to shipping & export documentation.

[Beginner Exporter one-on-one consultations and educational Seminars with DATCP's International Agribusiness Center](#)

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's International Agribusiness Center provides technical expertise, market development initiatives and export opportunities for Wisconsin's agricultural companies and producers.

Contact the International Agribusiness Center

[ExporTech](#)

ExporTech is an export acceleration program supported by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation that helps Wisconsin companies develop a targeted export strategy.

ExporTech Resources contacts

Additional Resources

Food Export Midwest USA

Food Export Midwest is a non-profit organization created in 1969 as a cooperative effort between 13 Midwestern state agricultural promotion agencies and the United States Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). Its purpose is to provide a wide range of services to facilitate trade between Midwestern food suppliers and importers around the world.

Branded Program: Reimbursement program for a wide variety of International marketing activities.

Buyer Missions: connect with vetted international buyers at 20+ organized events each year.

Virtual Consultations: Tap into the expertise of In-Market Representatives and explore questions related to exporting.

Market Builder: Custom research and expert feedback.

The International Trade Administration

The International Trade Administration promotes trade and investment as well as compliance with fair trade laws and agreements, focusing on promoting U.S. exports, defending against fair trade and attracting inbound investment.

Understand the Export Process

Navigate Shipping & Logistics

Research Foreign Markets

Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin (DFW)

Funded by dairy checkoff dollars, DFW works to develop markets for Wisconsin dairy products through promotion, research, education, and connections with export partners.

U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC)

USDEC is a non-profit, independent membership organization that represents the global trade interests of U.S. dairy producers, proprietary processors, cooperatives, ingredient suppliers and export traders. Its mission is to enhance demand for U.S. dairy products and ingredients by securing access and assisting suppliers to meet market needs that facilitate sales.

Materiality Workshop





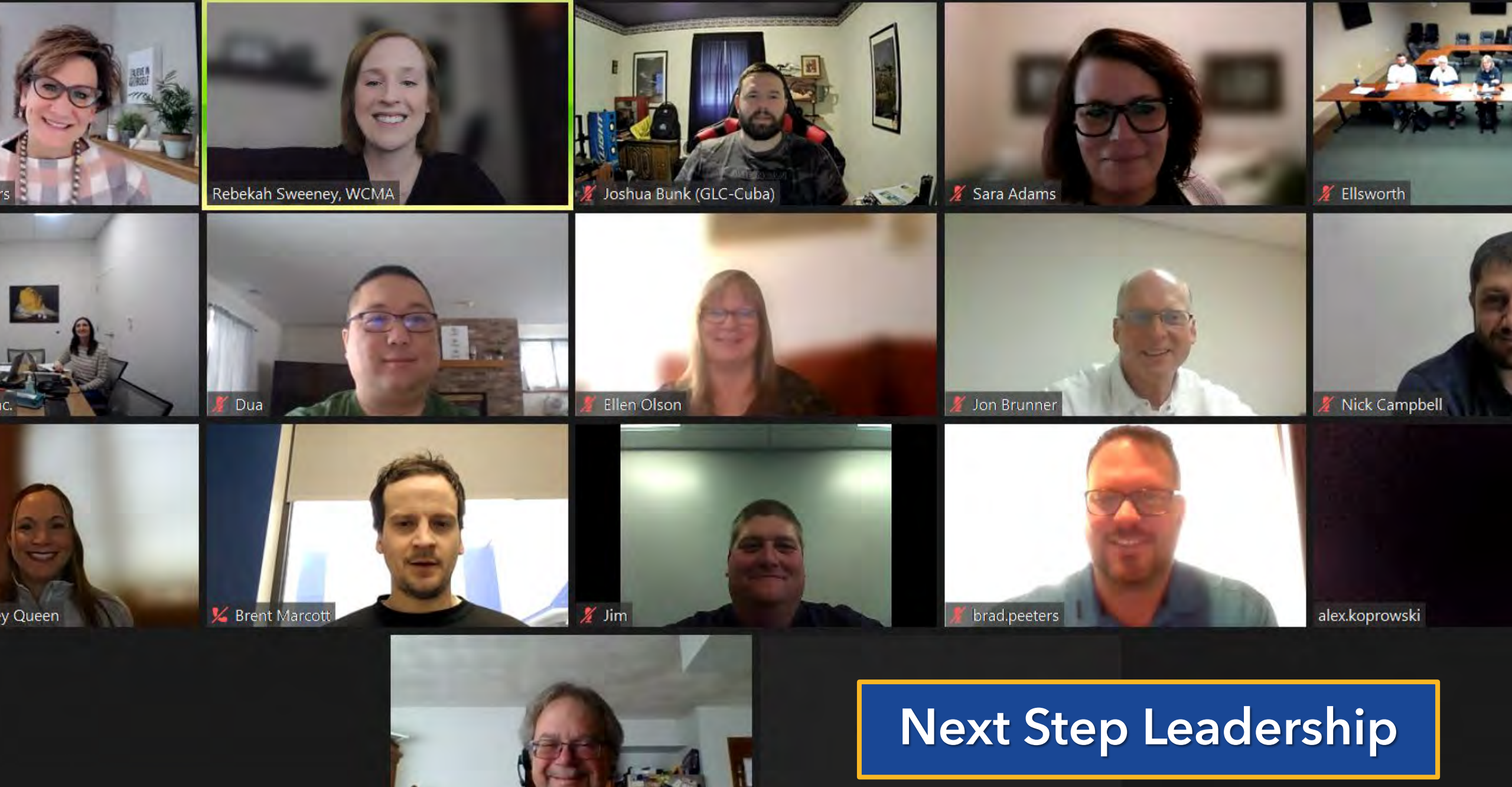
Materiality Workshop



WORKFORCE TOOLS

Front-Line Leadership





Rebekah Sweeney, WCMA

Joshua Bunk (GLC-Cuba)

Sara Adams

Ellsworth

Dua

Ellen Olson

Jon Brunner

Nick Campbell

y Queen

Brent Marcott

Jim

brad.peeters

alex.koprowski

Next Step Leadership



WiFi: WMA-Meeting
Access: 2023

Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors

Train the Safety Trainer



Key Educational Partners



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

River Falls



HEALTHY PEOPLE • HEALTHY PRODUCTS • HEALTHY PLANET

Monthly Free, Members-Only Webinars



The slide features the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association logo on the left, which consists of a blue square containing a yellow circle and a yellow square. To the right of the logo, the text "WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION" is displayed in blue, with "EST." below it. A large red play button icon is centered over the text. Below the play button, the title "Current Trends in Cheese Sales" is written in blue. At the bottom, the date "June 13, 2023" is shown. On the right side of the slide, there is a vertical stack of four small video thumbnails showing participants: John Umhoefer, Grace Ahlertson, a screen, and Paul Scharman.

**WISCONSIN
CHEESE MAKERS
ASSOCIATION**
EST.

Current Trends in Cheese Sales

June 13, 2023

**Webinar library and registration at
WisCheeseMakers.org**

Free Video Onboarding Series

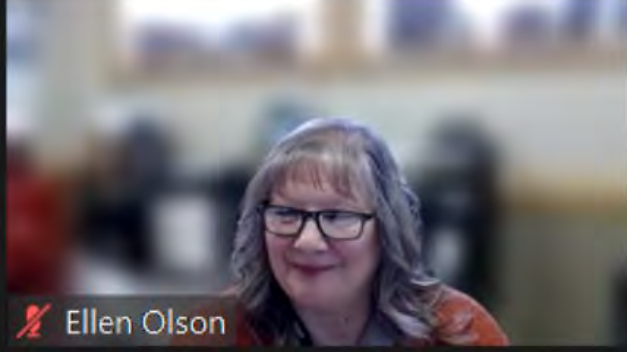




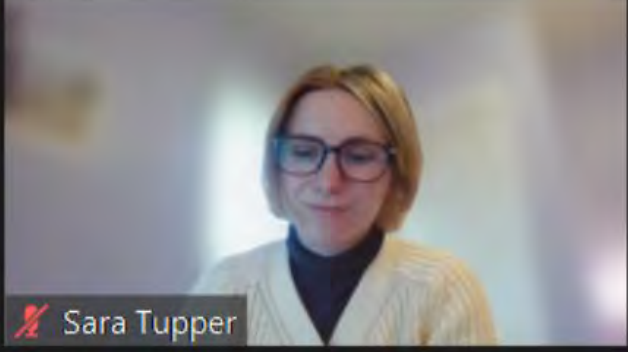
Rebekah Sweeney



Sara Schmidt, WCMA



Ellen Olson



Sara Tupper



William Weyers



Chauncey Behm



Dave Mandl



Tim Grimes



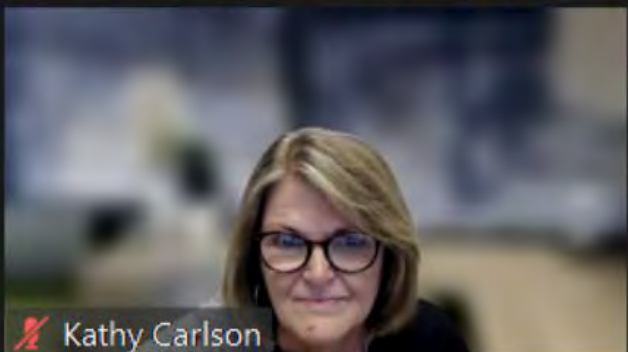
Lisa Grinde - Foremost Farms



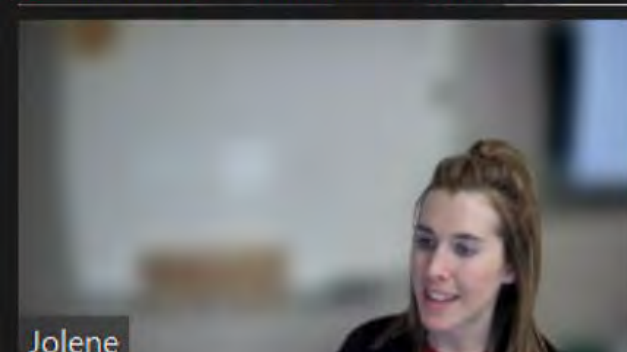
Alison Hoefs, Burnett Dairy Cooperati...



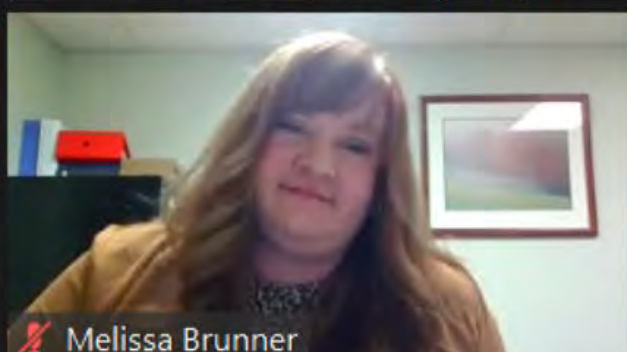
Jen Pino-Gallagher | M3 Insurance



Kathy Carlson



Jolene



Melissa Brunner



lynne swenson

Workforce & Education Committee

Wage & Workforce Survey



Online Jobs Board

Career Opportunities

WCMA is proud to promote career opportunities in the industry.

The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association is proud to promote career opportunities throughout the dairy processing industry. Members may post up to 10 listings per company, per month. Listings will be posted within two business days, and remain live for the following 30 days. This service is offered as a member benefit, at no charge.

SUBMIT A JOB OPENING

Search

Search News

>

Career Opportunities

▼

INTAKE OPERATOR

Posted In: Career Opportunities



APR 28

Job Title: Intake Operator Company: Westby Cooperative Creamery Location: Westby, Wisconsin Description: The Intake Operator is responsible for...

READ POST

PRODUCTION OPERATOR - DAYS

Posted In: Career Opportunities



APR 28

Job Title: Production Operator - Days Company: Milk Specialties Global Location: Clara City, Minnesota Description: At Milk Specialties Global,...

READ POST

PRODUCTION OPERATOR - NIGHTS - CLARA CITY, MN

Posted In: Career Opportunities



APR 28

Job Title: Production Operator - Nights Company: Milk Specialties Global Location: Clara City, Minnesota Description: At Milk Specialties Global,...

READ POST

A background image showing a person in a grey hoodie holding a block of yellow cheese in a deli counter. The person is wearing a grey hoodie and is holding a block of yellow cheese. The background is a blurred deli counter with various cheeses and a scale.

WCMA COMMUNICATIONS



WCMA NEWS

Your source for the latest
in dairy processing

August 27, 2024

news@wischeesemakers.org



SUBSCRIBER NOTE: WCMA's offices will be closed Monday, September 2 in observance of Labor Day. We wish you and your loved ones a safe and enjoyable day.

NEWS

Sen. Baldwin Advocates for Common Food Names



Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) this week [called on the Biden Administration](#) to continue protecting Wisconsin cheesemakers' use of common food names like parmesan, asiago, and fontina in international markets. Baldwin's [letter to U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai](#) follows a recent trade agreement that allows U.S. cheese producers to sell their products in Chile using common food names.

WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney praised Baldwin's effort, noting that the use of these terms "provides clarity for international consumers and greater economic opportunity for farmers and processors." [READ MORE...](#)



2024 WCMA MEMBER DIRECTORY



WISCONSIN
CHEESE MAKERS
ASSOCIATION

► WISN 12

► MADISON



WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP CHEESE CONTEST

**RIGHT
NOW**



Communications Support for WCMA Members

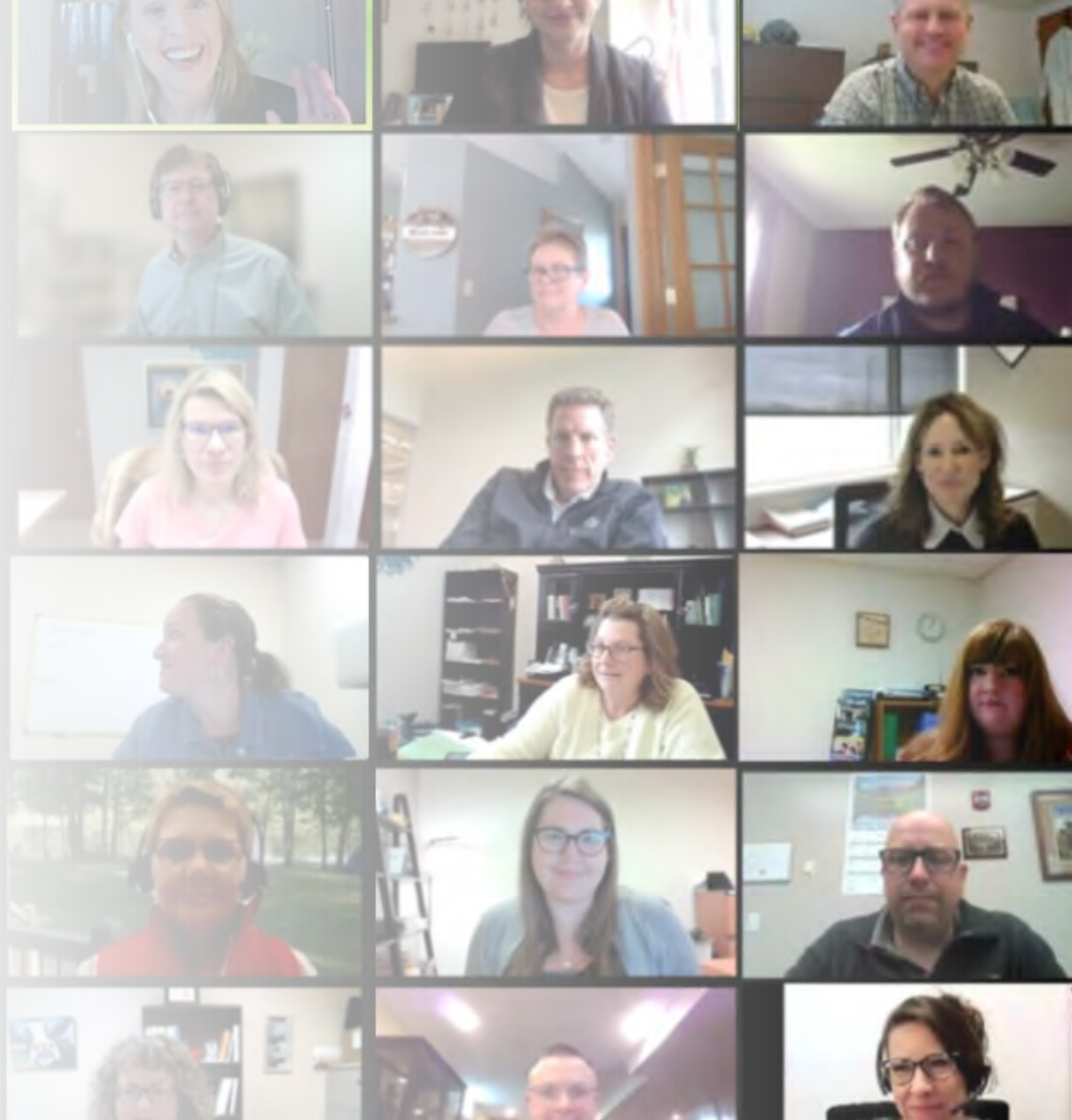
- Developing talking points and responses
- Assistance connecting with media outlets
- Interview preparation and practice
- Amplifying your successes

A background image of a person in a grey hoodie holding a block of yellow cheese in a grocery store. The person is holding the cheese with their right hand, and the cheese is a large, rectangular block. The background is slightly blurred, showing other grocery items and store lighting. A dark blue rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text "GET INVOLVED" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

GET INVOLVED

Open Groups & Committees

- Dairy Food Safety Alliance
- Export
- Health & Safety Group
- Policy
- Sustainability
- Technology
- Workforce & Education
- Young Professionals



Explore it all!

WisCheeseMakers.org

WATCH NOW

Sara Schmidt
WCMA Membership Director

Questions and Answers

Q&A

We've recently joined and want to get our products out in front of dairy processing members.

How can WCMA help us?

Q&A

How can I join a committee?

Q&A

I've never applied for a grant before, but I'm interested in trying for one.

Do you have any resources to help me?

Questions and Answers



**WISCONSIN
CHEESE MAKERS
ASSOCIATION**

EST. 1891

Save the date for
our next webinar:

FMMO Reforms Explained: What Dairy Processors Need to Know

**Tuesday, October 15
1:00 p.m. (CT)**

Register Now!
[WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.WisCheeseMakers.org)