



WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION

EST. 1891

Coronavirus Information and Resources

Bulletin Distributed: April 16, 2020

As often news and needs warrant, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association will distribute special bulletins alerting you to information and resources related to industry operations and coronavirus (COVID-19). Your WCMA staff is here to support you, and we thank you for your important work.

Evers Extends Safer at Home Order through Memorial Day, Wisconsin Schools Closed

Moments ago, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers announced an extension of the state's safer at home orders until 8 a.m. on Tuesday, May 26. Evers is also ordering schools closed for the remainder of the school year. [Read the full order here.](#)

The order also notes the continued importance of essential and critical businesses, including dairy manufacturing and processing. Essential and critical businesses are directed by the order to increase cleaning and disinfection practices, and adopt policies to prevent workers exposed to COVID-19 or those displaying symptoms from coming to work.

As a reminder, members of the Dairy Food Safety Alliance, led by the Center for Dairy Research, Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, and Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, have developed a [template standard operating procedure](#) (updated on April 14), in the event of a COVID-19 positive employee in your plant, as well as [employer guidance](#).

Sargento Foods Donates \$2 Million in Cheese to Help Food Banks Across Country

WCMA member Sargento Foods this morning announced it is [donating \\$2 million in cheese](#) to Hunger Task Force and Feeding America, to aid food-insecure families in Wisconsin and across the country. CEO Louie Gentine noted in a release on the gift, "We are honored to be a vital part of our nation's food supply and will do everything we can to make sure families have food on the table and to support our community in a real way."

WCMA is saluting all of its generous member companies and cooperatives via social media platforms. Please let [WCMA staff](#) know if we can help shine a light on your good news!

SBA Coronavirus Relief Funds Depleted

This morning, Small Business Administration officials announced they are now "[unable to accept new applications for the Paycheck Protection Program](#)" as they have [run out of the funding](#) approved by Congress less than two weeks ago.

Congress is [negotiating the terms of a fourth relief package](#) with an expansion and extension of PPP and other relief lending on the table.

MI, PA, WI Governors Call for State Stabilization Aid

[Governors from Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin today sent a letter to President Donald Trump](#), calling for \$500 billion in nationwide aid to stabilize states. The letter notes Wisconsin's unemployment rate has hit 15 percent, and that the state is on track to lose \$2 billion in revenue over the next year.

Evers Signs Coronavirus Response Bill

Just hours after Senate passage, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers yesterday signed the [state's coronavirus response bill](#) into law. The bill enables Wisconsin to access federal monies designed to maximize unemployment benefits and business aids. WCMA advocated for these elements of the bill, as well as a lift of the state's one-week waiting period for unemployment benefits, which was also included.

Trade Group: 30% of WI Restaurants Won't Survive

Leaders from the Wisconsin Restaurant Association (WRA) yesterday estimated that [30 percent of the state's restaurants will not survive](#) the economic strain of the coronavirus pandemic. The trade group believes another 30 percent are in jeopardy.

Coronavirus Headline News

Wisconsin:

- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Trump set to unveil \\$15.5 billion in coronavirus aid for farmers](#)
- *Spectrum News*: [Baldwin looks to shield farmers from coronavirus' economic impact](#)
- *WITI-TV*: [28 positive cases: Patrick Cudahy plant to close for two weeks to 'protect our team from COVID-19'](#)

National/International:

- *FOX Business*: [Coronavirus food shortages not happening, Perdue says](#)

- *Politico*: [Hot spots erupt in farm belt states where governors insist lockdown orders aren't needed](#)
 - *Associated Press*: [For meat plant workers, virus makes hard job perilous](#)
 - *U.S. News & World Report*: [U.S. coronavirus death toll passes 30K as Trump finalizes reopening plans](#)
 - *USA Today*: [Trump wants to reopen America in a few weeks. Federal officials warn the bar to do so safely may be set too high.](#)
 - *MSN*: [State-by-state coronavirus news](#)
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Visit [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org) for More Resources

WCMA will provide links to new and timely coronavirus resources for members in these bulletins, but we want to alert you that we update our coronavirus resources page on [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org) daily. Please visit the page for additional information on employee safety, regulatory flexibility, operations guidance, federal and state support, and ways to salute your critical, essential staff.

WCMA Key Contacts

WCMA staff is continuously reaching out to dairy manufacturer and processor members throughout this crisis to identify ways we can be of service. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at any time. Here are ways to get in touch.

- WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer: jumhoefer@wischeesemakers.org or 608-225-7130
 - WCMA Communications, Education, and Policy Director Rebekah Sweeney: rsweeney@wischeesemakers.org or 608-386-3012
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