



WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION

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Coronavirus Information and Resources

Bulletin Distributed: April 23, 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.

USDA Increases Monthly SNAP Benefits by 40%

USDA announced today it is [increasing funding for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP) households by \$2 billion per month. These emergency benefits represent a 40 percent increase in overall monthly SNAP benefits, and would provide the average five-person household an additional \$240 monthly in food purchasing power.

Tools to Become a USDA Food Vendor

WCMA members with interest in bidding on USDA solicitations must first become an approved vendor, a process which can take a few weeks. There are many tools to support your application, including the [step-by-step webinar](#) linked below.

In recent days, USDA has offered three solicitations for truckload quantities of [process cheese](#), [butter and cheddar cheese shreds](#), and [butter and cheddar cheese](#). The agency is tapping trade mitigation funds, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and its long-standing Section 32 funds for these new dairy buys.



A list of vendor qualifications is [available here](#), and a checklist of materials applicants will need to complete forms is [available here](#). More resources, including a comprehensive guide, are [available on USDA's AMS website](#).

At any time during the vendor application process, questions may be directed to [Andrea Lang, the New Vendor/Small Business Coordinator for USDA-AMS](#). WCMA staff is also happy to help.

SBA Issues New PPP Guidance to Limit Large Companies' Access

The Small Business Administration (SBA) issued [new guidance](#) today, making it less likely that large, publicly traded companies will be able to access new funding via the Paycheck Protection Program. Borrowers must certify that loan support is necessary.

The guidance comes just as [Congress prepares to approve a \\$310 billion](#) boost to the program, after its initial \$350 billion was used up in less than two weeks. Lenders expect fresh funds to be expended in days.

SBA officials noted that large public companies which accessed PPP funds prior to today's guidance publication can avoid their scrutiny by [returning relief loans](#) within two weeks.

Register for Dairy Food Safety Alliance Webinar

WCMA, together with its partners at the Center for Dairy Research and Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, will host a **free** Dairy Food Safety Alliance webinar on Wednesday, April 29 from 12-1 p.m.

Experts will detail:

- Standard Operating Procedure: What to do in the event of a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 positive employee

- Standard Operating Procedure: What to do when a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 positive employee returns to work
- Employer rights and responsibilities
- Government support programs
- Regulatory flexibility

Dairy Food Safety Alliance presenters, including CDR's Marianne Smukowski, DFW's Adam Brock, and WCMA staff will also field pre-submitted questions.

This free webinar is not open to the media. RSVP to [WCMA Office and Member Services Manager Sara Schmidt](#) with your interest in joining and include any questions you may wish to ask. You'll receive access information to this Zoom webinar (or telephone call-in option) in reply.

Coronavirus Headline News

Wisconsin:

- *WSAW-TV*: [State reports 5K now positive for coronavirus, up 207 from previous day](#)
- *WLUK-TV*: [No plans to shut down JBS plant as Brown County, USDA differ on who has authority](#)
- *WTMJ-TV*: [Dairy farms to receive help after weeks of milk dumping](#)
- *WISN-TV*: [Not staying at home \(in Milwaukee and Wauwatosa\)? It could now cost you \\$500.](#)
- *BizTimes*: [Medical College of Wisconsin model shows hospitals would fill in one month, if all social distancing ended May 26](#)

National/International:

- *CBS News*: [Publix is buying excess milk and produce from farmers and giving it to food banks](#)
 - *Lancaster Farming*: [Pennsylvania governor orders farm, agribusiness workers to wear masks](#)
 - *Washington Examiner*: [Kemp defends decision to reopen Georgia after Trump rebuke](#)
 - *Politico*: [Governors release new plan for reopening and suggest few states are ready](#)
 - *Tribune News Service*: [These eight states haven't issued stay-at-home orders](#)
 - *FOX News*: [Another 4.4 million Americans filed for unemployment last week](#)
 - *New York Times*: [McConnell: States should consider bankruptcy](#)
 - *Los Angeles Times*: [These U.S. citizens won't get stimulus checks - because they are married to immigrants](#)
 - *FOX News*: [Trump pushes back against CDC director's warning about second coronavirus wave](#)
 - *MSN*: [State-by-state coronavirus news](#)
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Visit 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 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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