



WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION

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Coronavirus Information and Resources

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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.

CDC Issues New Guidance for Essential Workers

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention today issued [new guidelines](#), which offers clear steps for essential workers exposed to coronavirus to return to their jobs.

CDC officials now say essential employees, including dairy processing workers, who have been within six feet of a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 can go back to work if they are not experiencing symptoms and adhere to the following protocol measures.

- **Pre-screen:** Employers should measure the employee's temperature and assess symptoms prior to them starting work. Ideally, temperature checks should happen before the individual enters the facility.
- **Regular monitoring:** As long as the employee doesn't have a temperature or symptoms, they should self-monitor under the supervision of their employer's occupational health program.
- **Wear a mask:** The employee should wear a face mask at all times while in the workplace for 14 days after last exposure. Employers can issue facemasks or can approve employees' supplied cloth face coverings in the event of shortages.
- **Social distance:** The employee should maintain 6 feet and practice social distancing as work duties permit in the workplace.
- **Disinfect and clean work spaces:** Clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment routinely.

[The complete guidance, including additional considerations, is available here.](#)

Members of the Dairy Food Safety Alliance, including staff from the Center for Dairy Research, Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, and WCMA, are working to update a template standard operating procedure for use in your facility.

Perdue Calls USDA Purchase "A Possibility"

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Sonny Perdue noted on Wednesday that a commodity purchase of milk and cheese, as suggested by leading dairy groups including WCMA, was "a possibility."

Perdue pledged a "balanced and fair" distribution of funds, but [indicated limitations](#). While Congress has directed \$14 billion to the Commodity Credit Corp. (CCC), that money will not become available until July. Until then, USDA has access to \$6 billion in existing CCC funds.

WCMA and its partners at Dairy Business Association and Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative, along with International Dairy Foods Association and National Milk Producers Federation, continue to push for commodity purchases and industry aid.

Milk Disposal Now Reported in 22 States

Milk disposal is now occurring in at least 22 states. Today, we have reports out of [Kansas](#), [New Mexico](#), [Texas](#), and [Utah](#) to share, in addition to previously-reported disposal in [Arizona](#), [California](#), [Florida](#), [Georgia](#), [Idaho](#), [Indiana](#), [Iowa](#), [Maine](#), [Massachusetts](#), [Nebraska](#), [New York](#), [Ohio](#), [Oregon](#), [Pennsylvania](#), [South Dakota](#), [Tennessee](#), [Vermont](#), [Wisconsin](#).

Here's a look at some of the latest headlines.

- *KFSN-TV*: [Coronavirus could force more California dairy farmers out of business](#)
 - *Arizona Republic/USA Today*: [Arizona dairy farms dumping a million pounds of milk a day due to overproduction](#)
 - *Idaho Statesman*: [Coronavirus is forcing some Idaho dairy farmers to dump thousands of gallons of milk a day](#)
 - *Syracuse.com*: [Coronavirus sends Upstate NY dairy industry into 'free fall' as milk dumping soars](#)
 - *Treasure Coast Palm/USA Today*: [Coronavirus curdles dairy supply chain, forcing Florida farmers to dump excess milk](#)
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Evers, Lawmakers Negotiating State Aid

Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers and legislative leaders are clashing, but continue to negotiate terms of state aid to address the impact of coronavirus.

Evers has introduced two legislative packages, the first of which:

- Eliminates the one week waiting period for unemployment benefits,
- Directs additional funding to the state Department of Administration, Department of Health Services, and National Guard, to support their beefed-up operations, and
- Provides support to child care workers and organizations serving the homeless.

[Complete details are available here.](#)

The Governor's second proposal:

- Directs the state to pay unemployment claims, versus using payroll taxes from

- businesses - many of which have closed,
- Increases funding for Medicaid providers,
- Boosts broadband expansion grants,
- Provides grants to food banks, and
- Launches a \$150 million grant program for small businesses.

[Complete details are available here.](#)

Republican legislative leaders have indicated support for some of the Governor's plans, including a lift of the waiting period for unemployment benefits, but they are pushing a provision allowing the Republican-controlled Joint Finance Committee to unilaterally cut state investments in healthcare, local government, and schools, should revenues drop. [Evers has said he could not support that measure.](#)

Coronavirus Headline News

Wisconsin:

- *Wisconsin Public Radio*: ['We need some help': Farmers look to officials, community for mental health resources](#)
- *WMTV-TV*: [Dozens of Wisconsin state parks to close indefinitely](#)

National/International:

- *WFMJ-TV*: [USDA approves Ohio COVID-19 disaster food distribution program](#)
 - *CNN*: [Coronavirus deaths in U.S. pass 14,000, but future projections better](#)
 - *CNBC*: [Mnuchin says U.S. could be open for business in May](#)
 - *Associated Press*: [Hurry up and wait? Why relief to small businesses has lagged](#)
 - *Reuters*: [Weekly jobless claims top 6 million for second straight week](#)
 - *CNBC*: [5 million more weekly unemployment claims expected, but layoffs are now broader and could be more permanent](#)
 - *Wall Street Journal*: [GOP bid to give more aid to businesses runs into Democrats' push for broader relief](#)
 - *Washington Post*: [Trump preparing to unveil second task force on economy](#)
 - *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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