



WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION

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Coronavirus Information and Resources

Bulletin Distributed: January 14, 2021

WCMA distributes member bulletins focused on coronavirus information on Thursdays and as breaking news warrants. WCMA delivers electronic newsletters with broader content on Tuesdays. Please contact [WCMA staff](#) with any questions.

WCMA Requests Expansion of Wisconsin Phase 1B Vaccination Group, With More Doses Coming

WCMA is this week requesting the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (WDHS) expand the state's Phase 1B vaccination group to include dairy processing workers.

WCMA's request, which will be submitted in partnership with other advocacy organizations representing Wisconsin agriculture and food processing, notes an announcement late Tuesday that the federal government will [release millions of doses](#) of vaccines currently in storage. Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers and seven other governors requested the release in a [letter to Operation Warp Speed](#), to expedite vaccination deployment efforts.

Earlier on Tuesday, a subcommittee of the State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee (SDMAC) announced it would recommend a Phase 1B and Phase 1C vaccination group. Its [recommended Phase 1B](#) would direct vaccinations to approximately 980,000 Wisconsinites, including those aged 70 or older, police and fire personnel, educators, additional health care workers, inmates, and mink farmers. State officials indicated that Phase 1C will likely include food processing workers and others in close-quarters manufacturing jobs, grocery store staff, public transit workers, as well as people aged 65 and older and adults with high-risk medical conditions.

WDHS is accepting public comments on the SDMAC subcommittee recommendations [via email](#) through 4:00 p.m. (CST) on Monday, January 18. The subcommittee will meet again Wednesday to review these comments and finalize recommendations for a full SDMAC vote on Thursday, January 21.

WCMA will continue to advocate for members' priority access to vaccines, and will continue to provide relevant updates via member newsletters and bulletins.

SBA Reopens Paycheck Protection Program

The U.S. Small Business Administration is [now accepting applications](#) for a second round of Paycheck Protection Program loans. The bipartisan coronavirus relief package approved late last month allocates another \$284 million to the program.

To be eligible for a second PPP loan - which cannot exceed \$2 million - a business must have 300 employees or fewer, have used or will soon use all of the money from its previous PPP loan for authorized uses, and can show at least a 25 percent decline in gross receipts between comparable quarters in 2019 and 2020.

SBA has issued nearly 5 million PPP loans since the program opened in April and has forgiven more than \$100 billion in loans.

Biden to Detail New Stimulus Package Tonight

President-elect Joe Biden is set to share details on a [new coronavirus package](#), which he has said will cost "trillions" of dollars, in an address tonight. Biden's proposal is expected to include \$2,000 direct stimulus payments for Americans, additional small business aid, state and local aid, an extension of supplemental federal unemployment benefits, and significant spending increases for vaccine deployment, testing and contact tracing. Biden is also expected to propose funding to support the safe reopening of schools, in a move to boost workforce participation.

Wisconsin Lawmakers at Impasse Over COVID Bill

Wisconsin Republican leaders appear to be [at an impasse](#) over a coronavirus response bill.

While Democratic Governor Tony Evers [pledged to sign](#) the Senate's pared-back version, state Assembly leader Robin Vos (R-Rochester) has only expressed disappointment over changes to his initial proposal. Assembly approval is necessary to send the bill to the Governor's desk to be signed into law.

The [Senate version](#) retains strong liability protection for businesses from frivolous COVID-19 suits, but removes many of the more controversial elements of the Assembly version, including legislative approval of the use of future federal pandemic aid. The Senate version also preserves an employer's right to set its own vaccine policies.

WCMA continues to advocate for [member priorities](#), and will continue to provide relevant updates via member newsletters and bulletins.

WDATCP Releases Pandemic Report

Today, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection released a [report](#) summarizing its efforts to respond to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The agency was responsible for distribution of nearly \$80 million in emergency support to Wisconsin farmers, food banks, and other eligible nonprofit

organizations. The report also details changes to administrative and regulatory policies to maximize flexibility with industry partners.

Coronavirus Headline News

Dairy Industry

- *VT Digger*: [Vermont groups join forces to aid state food assistance effort](#)
- *Feedstuffs*: [Farmer leaders learn from COVID impacts](#)
- *MagicValley.com*: [Food box round five helps Idaho dairy](#)

Wisconsin

- *Associated Press*: [More contagious COVID-19 variant detected in Wisconsin](#)
- *WLUK-TV*: [CDC giving \\$86 million in funding to Wisconsin health departments](#)
- *Associated Press*: [GOP balks at Evers' special session on unemployment](#)

National/International

- *Washington Post*: [U.S. sets single-day death record and new variants emerge](#)
 - *CNN*: [CDC to require all air travelers to U.S. show negative coronavirus test](#)
 - *WGN-TV*: [U.S. unemployment claims jump to 965,000 as virus takes toll](#)
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Visit [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org) for More Resources

WCMA's coronavirus resources page on [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org) is updated daily, featuring information on employee safety, regulatory flexibility, operations guidance, federal and state support, and ways to salute your critical, essential staff.

WCMA Key Contacts

Members with pandemic-related questions or concerns should feel encouraged to contact WCMA staff 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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