



WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION

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Coronavirus Information and Resources

Bulletin Distributed: July 20, 2020

WCMA offers member bulletins regarding coronavirus resources on Mondays and Thursdays, and as news warrants. WCMA delivers electronic newsletters with broader content on Tuesdays. Please contact [WCMA staff](#) with any questions.

Congress Begins Negotiating Aid Package Terms

Members of Congress returned to Washington, D.C. today to begin negotiations over the next economic stimulus and recovery package, with debate focused on whether the \$600-per-week unemployment enhancer should continue beyond July 31.

Congress is also set to hash out plans for business liability protections, aid for state and local governments, direct stimulus payments to Americans, and rent and mortgage assistance.

A proposal from U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-Michigan) would include \$5.5 billion in grants, loans and loan guarantees to assist small- and medium-sized food processors retool their facilities for the pandemic, including renovation projects that would provide employees with more opportunity for distancing and that would convert lines used for packaging food for institutional use to the consumer retail market

WCMA will alert members to relevant developments throughout negotiations.

USDA Awards \$24.7M in Cheddar Contracts

The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced it has awarded [contracts for the purchase of cheddar cheese worth a total of \\$24.7 million](#) to WCMA members Associated Milk Producers, Inc., Dairy Farmers of America, Great Lakes Cheese Company, Masters Gallery Foods, and Winona Foods. Darigold was also awarded USDA contracts.

Hunger Task Force Offers Partnership in Wisconsin

Food Security Grants Program

Last week, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) released a [Request for Proposals](#) for \$10 million in grants to help non-profit food banks and pantries purchase Wisconsin food products.

[Hunger Task Force](#), which organizes the [Hunger Relief Federation of Wisconsin](#)— a network of 90 groups addressing hunger statewide, will apply for significant grant dollars. Hunger Task Force invites WCMA members operating in Wisconsin to offer dairy products for their program via [this form](#). Please complete and return it via email to [Sherrie Tussler](#) as soon as possible and no later than Friday, July 24 at 5 p.m. [Hunger Task Force has purchased and distributed \\$1.3 million in Wisconsin dairy products](#) since the start of the pandemic, working successfully with many WCMA members to meet the rising needs of food insecure families.

HHS Launches Community-Based Testing at Pharmacies, Retail Stores Nationwide

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has launched a nationwide community-based COVID-19 testing program through a partnership with pharmacies and retailers. No-cost testing will now be available at many CVS, Kroger, Rite Aid, Walgreens, Walmart, and many independent pharmacy locations across the country. Complete details and a searchable list of locations is [available online](#). Wisconsin-based members should note that all of the state's [community-based testing sites](#) are detailed online.

Wisconsin Business, Health Care Groups Call on Public to Wear Masks, Practice Social Distancing

As coronavirus case numbers spike across Wisconsin, a broad coalition of the state's business and health care groups have released a public service announcement, calling on everyone to practice social distancing, wear face coverings, and properly wash their hands. The [coalition](#) includes the Wisconsin Restaurant Association, Wisconsin Grocers Association, and the Wisconsin Safety Council, run by Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce, among others.



Coronavirus Headline News

Dairy Industry

- *Dairy Foods*: [Dairy consumption might benefit seniors who contract COVID-19](#)
- *New York Times*: [Amid a deadly virus and crippled economy, one form of aid has proved reliable: food stamps](#)

Wisconsin

- *WISC-TV*: [Positive percentage of new COVID-19 tests rises to 10.3 percent as over 800 more cases emerge](#)
- *WKOW-TV*: [Wisconsin now seeing generalized community spread](#)
- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Teachers unions in largest districts call on Tony Evers to require schools start virtually](#)
- *WQOW-TV*: [Eau Claire business owners petition for mask ordinance](#)
- *Wisconsin Public Radio*: [Hospital leaders ask Green Bay officials to institute mask mandate](#)
- *WXOW-TV*: [Festival, Aldi implement mask mandates](#)

National/International

- *Reuters*: [U.S. coronavirus deaths surpass 140,000 as outbreak worsens](#)
 - *ABC News*: [Surgeon General pleads with Americans to wear face masks](#)
 - *Associated Press*: [State and local officials tussle over virus restrictions](#)
 - *The Hill*: [Jobless claims raise stakes in battle over COVID-19 aid](#)
 - *Washington Post*: [Oxford coronavirus vaccine safe and promising, according to early human trial results published in the Lancet](#)
 - *FOX Business*: [Coronavirus vaccine will be available for emergency use by end of year](#)
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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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