



WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION

EST. 1891

Coronavirus Information and Resources

Bulletin Distributed: June 8, 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.

Food Box Program Questioned While USDA Touts Growing Delivery Numbers

Even as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) touted [delivery of 9.6 million boxes of food as of today](#), Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and the Democratic members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture are [calling for more transparency](#) in the agency's administration of the Farmers to Families Food Box program.

USDA officials say 40 million boxes food boxes will be delivered by June 30. Program contracts worth \$1.2 billion were awarded in early May.

Here's a look at news coverage of the program roll-out and related concerns:

- *Successful Farming*: [There are holes in USDA's Food Box program, say Congressional Democrats](#)
 - *Wisconsin Public Radio*: [Wisconsin Democrats question federal food box program](#)
 - *Brownfield Ag News*: [Democrats critical of USDA Farmers to Families Food Box program](#)
 - *San Antonio Express-News*: [Established food companies lapping San Antonio's CRE8AD8 in food box program](#)
 - *San Antonio Current*: [San Antonio event planner 'not delivering' on USDA food relief contract](#)
 - *WXIA-TV*: [Perdue touts food box program in Atlanta](#)
 - *Minot Daily News*: [Food from USDA Farmers to Families Food Box program to be distributed in Minot Friday](#)
 - *Delaware State News*: [CHEER teams with USDA to distribute food](#)
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USDA Sees Strong Demand for CFAP Dollars

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reports it has processed more than \$1.4 billion in payments to more than 80,000 farmers nationwide who applied for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). More than \$337 million has been directed, thus far, to dairy farmers.

Program progress updates are released each Monday at 1:00 p.m. (CT) on [USDA's website](#), with the report breaking down payments by state and agricultural industry.

WEDC, CDC Guidance on Safely Reopening Retail

WCMA has heard from members who have interest in reopening their retail stores, beyond the curbside pick-up many employed over the past three months. Guidance on how to safely reopen retail shops is available via the [Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). Please note, it is critical to check with county public health officials to determine what, if any, local restrictions are in place.

WisPolitics Webinar: COVID-19, Trade Tensions, Turbulent Markets - Trouble for Wisconsin Ag

WCMA members are invited to join in a WisPolitics-WisBusiness webinar Thursday, June 11 from 12:00-1:00 p.m. (CT) discussing issues impacting Wisconsin agriculture, including COVID-19, trade challenges, and turbulent markets. Featured panelists include University of Wisconsin-Madison Ian Coxhead, Senator Janis Ringhand, Representative Travis Tranel, Cal Dalton of the United Wisconsin Grain Producers, and Dan Smith of Cooperative Network. This online event is free to WCMA members, but [pre-registration is required](#).

Wisconsin Expands Access to Food Aid

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (WDHS) announced today that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has approved of the agency's expansion of The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). WDHS changes will make food aid available to all Wisconsin households with incomes below 300 percent of the federal poverty level. For a household of one, that means an income of \$38,280 each year, and the level goes up with every additional family member. Complete details, including a directory of TEFAP pantries, are available on the [WDHS website](#).

WCMA Salutes Essential, Critical Dairy Processing Employees for June Dairy Month

WCMA is saluting your critical, essential workers throughout June Dairy Month, with three features on our social media

pages:

- A [Facebook profile frame](#)
- Messages of thanks, and
- #EssentialWorker spotlights



Today's #EssentialWorker Spotlight

WCMA is proud to salute your team members for their outstanding efforts amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Today on our social media channels, we're shining a spotlight on the administrative staff at Westby Cooperative Creamery who, with more than 100 years of combined service, work as a team to support the creamery's farmers, fans, and employees. Their leadership has been essential to seamless operations and employee safety throughout the pandemic. Bravo!

JUNE DAIRY MONTH

Join us in saluting
#EssentialWorkers.

Today, we thank the administrative staff
at **Westby Cooperative Creamery** for
their leadership and dedication.

You make a difference!

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Help us applaud our industry's best by [sending a picture of your staff member or team](#), and noting their work. WCMA will design and share shout-outs to these special dairy processing staffers on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. [Let us know if you have questions!](#)

Coronavirus Headline News

Dairy Industry:

- *DairyReporter.com*: [Saputo revenues up despite coronavirus impact](#)
- *New York Times*: [Farmers getting billions in virus aid, and Democrats are wary](#)

Wisconsin:

- *Appleton Post-Crescent*: [No new coronavirus deaths today, a first for the state since mid-May](#)
- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Milwaukee County's percentage of positive test rates remains high, at 16 percent, while statewide, downward trend continues](#)
- *WSAW-TV*: [Percent positive COVID-19 cases decreases for third day](#)

National/International:

- *Politico*: ['There's only so much we can do': Food banks plead for help](#)
 - *Fox Business*: [Will there be another coronavirus aid package following surprise jobs gain?](#)
 - *CNN*: [Here's where we stand on getting a coronavirus vaccine](#)
 - *Delish.com*: [Eight ways the coronavirus changed the way we shop for food](#)
 - *Seattle Times*: [Here's how airport screenings have changed since the COVID-19 outbreak](#)
 - *USA Today*: [Meatpacking plants can't shake rising coronavirus cases](#)
 - *National Public Radio*: [COVID-19 outbreak in Pacific Northwest seafood industry](#)
 - *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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