



WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION

EST. 1891

Coronavirus Information and Resources

Bulletin Distributed: May 4, 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 Announces Plan for Additional \$120M in Dairy Product Purchases

The [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#) today announced plans for \$470 million in additional food purchases with Section 32 funding, including \$120 million in dairy product buys.

Specific types of purchases will be determined by industry requests, market analysis, and food bank needs. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will begin issuing solicitations in June, with deliveries to start in July.

Solicitations will be posted to the [AMS Open Purchases Request website](#) once available, and shared via WCMA member bulletins and newsletters.

SBA Updates PPP Guidance, Addresses Employment Question

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) yesterday released [updated guidance](#) on the use of the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) and loan forgiveness.

Addressing a pressing concern for some in food processing industry, SBA notes that a borrower's PPP loan forgiveness amount will not be reduced if the borrower laid off an employee, offered to rehire the same employee, but the employee declined that offer. Employees and employer should be aware that employees who reject re-employment offers may forfeit eligibility for continued unemployment compensation.

Wisconsin Expands Mobile Testing Statewide

As part of the '[Badger Bounce Back](#)', Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers today announced a [plan to make Wisconsin one of the top states in testing per capita](#). Wisconsin is now prepared to provide 85,000 COVID-19 tests per week, ensuring that everyone in the state who needs a test will receive a test.

Last Friday, [Evers announced the Wisconsin National Guard will run free, mobile COVID-19 testing sites](#), and [more sites were announced](#) over the weekend. Here's a look at where free, drive-through testing will be available in the coming days:

- May 5, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.: Burnett County Highway Shop, 8150 State Road 70, Siren
- May 6, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.: Solon Springs Community Center, 11523 Business Highway 53, Solon Springs
- May 7, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.: Lake Superior Elementary School, 1101 Binsfield Road, Ashland
- May 8, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.: Western Wisconsin Health Center, 1100 Bergslein Street, Baldwin
- May 9, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.: St. Croix Valley Business Innovation Center, 1091 Sutherland Avenue, River Falls
- May 10, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.: CVTC/Prevea Health, 617 W. Clairemont Avenue, Eau Claire
- May 11, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.: CVTC/Prevea Health, 617 W. Clairemont Avenue, Eau Claire
- May 13, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.: Thorp High School, 605 S. Clark Street, Thorp
- May 14, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.: Rusk County Fairgrounds, Rusk County Fairgrounds Road, Ladysmith

A free, online assessment with nursing support is also always available via [Wisconsin Health Connect](#).

Evers Calls on Purdue to Address CO2 Shortage

WCMA is aware of our members' concerns for adequate, affordable supplies of CO₂ to safely package cheese products, and we have been working with the Office of Governor Tony Evers, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP), and industry partners to bring this concern to USDA and legislators.

We can now report that on Friday, May 1, Gov. Evers sent [letter to U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue](#) expressing concern over "the projected acute shortage in CO₂" and asking urging him to provide financial resources to Wisconsin's corn growers and ethanol producers.

WCMA will continue to advocate for member interests related to available CO₂ supplies. Please contact [WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer](#) to share concerns or questions.

Court to Review Safer at Home Order Tomorrow

The Wisconsin [Supreme Court is scheduled to hear oral arguments tomorrow](#) in a lawsuit from Republican lawmakers seeking to end Governor Tony Evers' Safer at Home order, which was extended by Department of Health Services Secretary-

Coronavirus Headline News

Wisconsin:

- *Monroe Times*: [COVID-19 outbreak reported at Wisconsin Cheese Group](#)
- *BizTimes*: [Palermo's temporarily closes Milwaukee pizza plant after five employees test positive for COVID-19](#)
- *BizTimes*: [85 employees at Patrick Cudahy plant test positive for COVID-19](#)
- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Number of confirmed positive coronavirus cases approaches 8,000 in Wisconsin as potential treatment rolls out to hospitals](#)
- *WLUK-TV*: [Sunday's COVID-19 state report shows increase in percentage of positive cases](#)
- *WISN-TV*: [Medical College of Wisconsin head: State's done 'exemplary job' in slowing spread](#)
- *WDJT-TV*: [Food pantries say recently unemployed are visiting pantries for the first time in their lives](#)

National/International:

- *New York Times*: ['We had to do something': trying to prevent massive food waste \(Featuring DFA\)](#)
- *TheDenverChannel.com*: [Colorado dairy farmers avoid disposing of milk, donate 30,000 gallons to area food banks \(Featuring DFA\)](#)
- *New York Times*: [Trump administration models nearly double the daily death toll by June](#)
- *The Hill*: [U.S. endures worst one-day death toll as states reopen](#)
- *FOX News*: [15 states lift or ease restrictions](#)
- *Washington Post*: [Trump says it is safe to reopen states](#)
- *Associated Press*: [Most states fall short of coronavirus testing thresholds](#)
- *MSN*: [State-by-state coronavirus news](#)

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

