



WCMA NEWS

Your source for the latest
in dairy processing

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NEWS

Fight to Save DBI Continues



Dairy Business Innovation Alliance

WCMA and our dairy industry partners continue to push hard to [protect the Dairy Business Innovation \(DBI\) Initiatives from a new 25 percent cost-share requirement](#) that threatens the future of this proven program.

Today, industry and DBI leaders are taking the conversation directly to U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). [WCMA joined advocacy colleagues from across the dairy industry](#) and leaders from the four DBI centers for a meeting with federal officials, reinforcing why the new requirement is unworkable for the existing centers and discussing a path forward — and discussions will continue.

Advocacy is also coming from the state level. In addition to messages sent by members of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, [Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers has joined the call](#) for USDA to reverse course, [urging Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins to remove the new requirement](#) and preserve the program's support for dairy farmers and businesses.



Meanwhile, WCMA members and dairy businesses are making their voices heard on Capitol Hill. More than 500 contacts have already been made with members of Congress, and WCMA continues to work directly with Congressional offices to build support for protecting DBI. The bipartisan support for the program remains an important asset as we press for a solution. See the action alert below to get involved!

The industry's message is also receiving significant attention in the news.

READ MORE:

- InBusiness Madison: [Evers urges Trump to reverse course on change to dairy program](#)
- WPR: [Wisconsin cheese makers say USDA funding match on dairy grants could kill small farms](#)
- WisBusiness: [Baldwin, groups warn new federal match requirements could kill dairy farm incubators](#)
- Dairy News Today: [USDA faces calls to drop dairy grant matching rule](#)

- Deli Market News: [WCMA calls on USDA to reserve new cost-share requirement for Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives; Rebekah Sweeney comments](#)
- Dairy Foods: [Dairy industry coalition asks U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to reverse DBI funding change](#)

The bottom line: We are not backing down. The four DBI centers have demonstrated the value of this program, helping dairy businesses innovate, diversify, enter new markets and strengthen their operations. We will continue working with USDA, OMB, Congress, state leaders and industry partners to find a way forward that preserves this critical resource.

Members Urged to Contact Congress Now



If you haven't yet contacted your members of Congress, please take a moment to make your voice heard. Every message helps demonstrate the dairy industry's commitment to preserving DBI.

CONTACT YOUR LAWMAKERS

Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

USDA Issues Guidance on SNAP Retailer Stocking Standards



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has issued [new guidance](#) to help retailers implement updated Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) staple food stocking standards, which take effect November 4, 2026.

Under the updated requirements, SNAP-authorized retailers must continuously stock at least seven distinct varieties in each of four staple food categories, including dairy, and offer perishable foods in at least three categories; there are 11 possible mammal-based varieties, including milk, cheese, yogurt, cream, and cultured dairy beverages. The guidance also clarifies which products count toward stocking requirements and which are classified as accessory foods, such as butter, ice cream and cheese dips, which do not count toward the required staple food varieties. [READ MORE...](#)

FDA Announces Draft Guidance for Food Traceability Rule, FDA Public Meeting on Rule November 6



On October 9, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released a draft guidance for the industry, ["Requirements for Additional Traceability Records for Certain Foods: Enforcement Policy for Certain Retail Food Establishments and Restaurants."](#) FDA asks that [comments on the guidance](#) be submitted by November 23.

FDA has engaged in extensive stakeholder outreach since it issued the final rule and found that many small retail food establishments (REFs) and restaurants lack the resources to engage in technology investments, training protocols, and staffing improvements that would help them comply with the rule. Due to these findings, FDA says it intends to exercise enforcement discretion for all requirements in the food traceability requirements for restaurants and REFs that during the previous three-year period have

had an average annual monetary value of food sold or provided of greater than \$250,000 but no more than \$1 million.

The [U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) will also host a [virtual public meeting](#) on November 6 to gather stakeholder input on implementation of the Food Traceability Rule, including lot-level tracking requirements and potential compliance flexibilities. This is an opportunity for those affected by the rule to make their voices heard, share implementation concerns, and hear perspectives from industry partners. General registration closes November 5, but those wishing to speak during the public comment period must register by October 26. [REGISTER NOW...](#)

New York State Dairy Modernization Grant Applications Due October 28



Farms and agricultural marketing cooperatives based in New York can [apply now](#) through October 28 for \$8.5 million through Round 2 of the state's Dairy Modernization Grant Program. Awards ranging from \$50,000 to \$250,000 will be given to fund projects that expand on-farm milk storage capacity, improve efficiencies, and invest in milk transfer systems and cooling technologies. Examples of eligible products are upgrading milk storage tanks, milk pipelines, farm milk loading systems, and equipment installation services. [READ MORE...](#)

Headlines

Wisconsin

- VernonReporter: [New France partnership aims to boost opportunities for Wisconsin agriculture, dairy and research sectors](#)

National & Global

- PBS: [Cuts to SNAP benefits push many Americans to seek help from food banks](#)
- ABC: [Trump sticks with tariffs even as US voters turn against them before the midterms](#)
- WZZM: [1 hospitalized after ammonia leak at Country Fresh Dairy in Wyoming](#)
- Bar Harbor Story: [Regional dairy farm improvement grant opening soon](#)
- The Business Download: [How Iowa's Amish dairy farmers turned their pastures into a national brand](#)
- All Recipes: [FDA announces recall on cheese for potential E. Coli contamination](#)
- ABC10: [Lawsuit says infant suffered kidney failure after eating recalled cheese](#)

WCMA Members Sargento Foods, Inc. & Masters Gallery Foods, Inc. Break Ground on Affordable Housing Project



On October 16, WCMA members [Sargento Foods, Inc.](#) and [Masters Gallery Foods, Inc.](#) broke ground on a new workforce housing subdivision called Scholar's Ridge in Plymouth, Wisconsin. All 102 homes in the development will be priced to provide affordable homeownership opportunities for working families. As a part of WCMA's state policy agenda, the Association advocates for affordable workforce housing, especially in rural communities. WCMA is pleased to see two of its members supporting this important work by investing in Scholar's Ridge.

FEATURED: SIGNATURE EVENTS

Learn more about WCMA's programs & services in this special rotating section! This week, we spotlight WCMA's signature events, offering exceptional opportunities for member connection and growth.



Never been to CheeseCon? [Click the "Play" button](#) to hear from WCMA members about why they continue attending year after year.

Act Now for Best CheeseCon 2027 Registration Rates!

Make plans now to join thousands of dairy processing professionals at [CheeseCon 2027](#), the nation's premier cheese, butter, whey, and cultured dairy products event, set for April 20-22 in Madison, Wisconsin! Hosted by Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) and the Center for Dairy Research (CDR), CheeseCon offers unbeatable networking opportunities, engaging educational seminars, tabletop exhibits from hundreds of trusted industry suppliers, and energizing celebrations of industry excellence.

Attendees can choose from a [Full Registration pass](#) or a [Single Day Registration Pass](#) for April 21 or April 22 — additional [add-ons](#) are also available. Register now to receive special early-bird registration savings offered for a limited time; full details can be found at [CheeseCon.org](#).

Have questions about CheeseCon? Please contact [WCMA's Events Team](#).

SIGN UP NOW

Create Connections and Increase Brand Awareness by Sponsoring CheeseCon and U.S. Championship Cheese Contest



Make a splash at [CheeseCon](#) with a wide variety of valuable sponsorships — including new opportunities — plus impactful ad spaces in the CheeseCon Official Program.

**SPONSOR
CHEESECON**



[U.S. Championship Cheese Contest \(USCCC\)](#) is the nation's premier technical competition for dairy products and ingredients. Show your support for industry excellence by sponsoring USCCC.

**SPONSOR THE
CONTEST**

EVENTS & CONNECTION

**Over 50 Members Attend Today's
Health & Safety Group Meeting**



WCMA welcomed more than 50 members to its Health & Safety Group meeting today at [Masters Gallery Foods, Inc.](#) in Oostburg, WI. The event featured networking; a safety culture presentation by Masters Gallery Foods—honored in 2025 as WCMA's Employer of the Year; insights from WCMA's OSHA Alliance partners; and a panel on emergency preparedness featuring dairy processors who have experienced emergencies firsthand.

Special thanks to Masters Gallery Foods for hosting the event, as well as event sponsors [Kelley Supply, Inc.](#) and [Nelson-Jameson, Inc.](#)

Register Now for WCMA Dairy Food Safety Alliance Meeting



Register for the [next hybrid meeting of WCMA's Dairy Food Safety Alliance](#) on October 29, from 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. (CT) for a day of education, peer networking, and the latest updates on timely food safety topics. Attendees will join Alliance partners Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) and the Center for Dairy Research (CDR) in person at WCMA's offices in Madison, Wisconsin, and online.

[Sign up now](#) to hear from dairy plant inspectors on survey insights, get an overview of a typical Wisconsin inspection report, receive the latest updates in food safety guidance, take a deep dive into the anatomy of a product recall, learn best practices for water use and reclaimed water protection in dairy plants, and much more. Don't miss this opportunity for connection and education.



Thanks go to meeting sponsor [Exiges Instrument Systems, LLC](#). **Additional sponsorships of this meeting are [available now](#) through tomorrow, October 21**, including complimentary registration and recognition. [Act now](#) to reach new audiences and show your support for dairy processors' efforts to maintain a safe food supply!

Become a Better Leader with November Front-Line Leadership Training



Join the last session of [WCMA's three-part Front-Line Leadership training series](#) is coming up next month. "[Part C: Cultivating a Team](#)", is designed for supervisors who want to cultivate a team mentality, communicate better, resolve conflicts, and manage their time and stress. The [virtual Part C training](#) will take place on November 12, while the [in-person training](#) will take place on November 19 at WCMA's offices in Madison, Wisconsin.

Missed Parts A and B? Not to worry — all three parts are offered à la carte and can be taken in any order. Sign-ups for the Spring Front-Line Leadership training series will open soon. Additionally, successful completion of all three parts of WCMA Front-Line Leadership results in a free, full registration to CheeseCon 2027 — a savings of approximately \$600. [Sign up now!](#)



Thanks go to [Nelson-Jameson, Inc.](#) for their generous sponsorship of the in-person training on November 19. Sponsorship of the [virtual meeting](#) on November 12 is still available. Become a sponsor to show your support for the dairy processing industry's next generation of leaders.

Upcoming WCMA Events

October 21-22	October 29	November 12	November 19	December 1
"Good Data, Better Decisions" Sustainability Workshop (In-Person)	Dairy Food Safety Alliance Meeting (Hybrid)	Front-Line Leadership Part C (Virtual)	Front-Line Leadership Part C (In-Person)	Train the Safety Trainer Course (Virtual)



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