

# WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE  
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



## INDUSTRY UPDATES



*Image Courtesy: Dairy Connection, Inc.*

## WCMA Cheers Opening of UWRF Wuethrich Family-Grassland Dairy Center of Excellence

WCMA members and staff on Friday cheered the **grand opening** of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF) Wuethrich Family-Grassland Dairy Center of Excellence.

A project more than a decade in the making, UWRF's dairy pilot plant renovation project required a \$9 million investment, with more than half coming from **private entities**, including \$1 million from the Wuethrich Family Foundation and Grassland Dairy Products and \$250,000 from WCMA.



*Image Courtesy: UW-River Falls*

The 6,000-square foot plant will now serve as a high-tech and hands-on learning hub for university students and dairy industry personnel, with production set to begin in

November.



Image Courtesy: Dairy Connection Inc.

WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer, a key project fundraiser, called the renovated facility the "new jewel of the University" and praised dairy plant manager Michelle Farner for her dedicate and perseverance through the renovation process.

WCMA thanks the many member companies and cooperatives that have contributed to the completion of the UWRF project, including: Advanced Process Technologies, Inc., AgriBank/Compeer Financial, Agropur, Ampco Pumps Company, Associated Milk Producers Inc., Complete Filtration Resources, Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery, Foremost Farms USA, FOSS North America, Hilmar Cheese Company, Land O' Lakes, Loos Machine Shop, Milk Specialties Global, Mullins Cheese, Nasonville Dairy, Nelson-Jameson, Pentair Südmo, Revela Foods, Saputo Cheese USA, Sargento Foods, Central Wisconsin Cheesemakers and Buttermakers Association, Fristam Pumps USA, Prairie Farms Dairy, Sartori Cheese, AGC Heat Transfer, Great Lakes Cheese, Inc., Kelley Supply, Klondike Cheese, LaGrandier's Hillside Dairy, Lynn Dairy and Lynn Proteins, Organic Valley, Valley Queen Charitable Foundations, Chr. Hansen, Dairy Connection, Dairy Farmers of America, Eau Galle Cheese, Henning's Cheese, Hydrite Chemical, Schuman Cheese-Lake Country Dairy, Winona Foods, Anderson-Negele, AgSource Laboratories, BMO Harris Bank, Eastern Wisconsin Cheesemakers and Buttermakers Association, Enerquip, LLC, National Utilities Co., Page & Pedersen International, Sani-Matric, Solecta, Specialty Cheese Company, and Whitehall Specialties.

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## Dairy Innovation Hub Releases Annual Report



The Dairy Innovation Hub has released its **fourth annual report**, reflecting its achievements at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Wisconsin-Platteville, and University of Wisconsin-River Falls. Across the campuses, nearly \$8 million in state funding per year advocated for by WCMA and other agricultural entities has supported more than 200 research projects and \$3.1 million for staff talent.

The Hub will host **Dairy Summit** on November 15 at UW-Platteville, detailing its projects for attendees in-person and online. **Register now** for this free event.

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# Sustainability Roundtable Talk



## Join in Virtual Sustainability Roundtable

As WCMA establishes a new member group devoted to supporting the U.S. dairy industry sustainability goals, we invite you to join us November 9 at 1 p.m. (CT) for a [virtual roundtable discussion](#).

During this meeting, WCMA will present the results of its recent member sustainability interests survey, and further identify member needs for education, support, and networking, by facilitating conversations about strategies to deliver impactful resources.

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Grants & Business Programs Director Danica Nilsestuen](#).

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## USDA Seeks White Cheddar Slices, Awards Contracts for Cheddar and Process Cheese

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is [soliciting contracts](#) for nearly 4 million pounds of white cheddar slices, with bids due November 1 at 1:00 p.m. (CT).

USDA last week also announced it was [awarding contracts](#) for a total of 38 million pounds of processed cheese to WCMA members Associated Milk Producers Inc., Bongards Creameries, and Great Lakes Cheese, and contracts for a total of 62 million pounds of cheddar to WCMA members Associated Milk Producers Inc., Bongards Creameries, Cedar Valley Cheese, Dairy Farmers of America, Great Lakes Cheese, Land O'Lakes, and Masters Gallery Foods.

Complete details on how to become a USDA-approved vendor are [available online](#).

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**ADVOCACY**

# Wisconsin Plans Public Review of MDV Phosphorus Variance; Possible Extension

Wisconsin regulators are opening a review of the successful Multi-Discharger Variance (MDV) program that has allowed cities, dairy plants, food processors and more to ease into low limits on phosphorus in wastewater. Approved in 2017 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Wisconsin Department of Administration and Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) officials are evaluating currently available information to determine if it is appropriate to extend the MDV beyond 2027.

To offer public feedback on a [summary report on the program](#), WCMA members are invited to take part in one of two upcoming listening sessions:

- **November 10, 2023 from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon (CT)**, WDNR GEF2 Building - Room G09, 101 S. Webster Street, Madison
- **November 13, 2023 from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon (CT)**, Portage County Annex Building, Conference Rooms 1 & 2, 1462 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point

[Click here to register](#) to attend the Madison-based meeting, either in-person or online. note that the Stevens Point meeting will be held in-person only, and no pre-registration is required. Contact [WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer](#) with your interest in participating in these listening sessions.

## SIGNATURE EVENTS



## WCMA Webinar

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### World Championship Cheese Contest 101

## Learn How to Enter & Make an Impact with Your Contest Participation

[Register now](#) for WCMA's next webinar, set for Tuesday, November 14 at 1:00 p.m. (CT), to join in World Championship Cheese Contest 101.

This free program, open to all, offers a "how to" on contest entry, an explanation of the judges' technical evaluation process, and tips on making the most of your participation, whether or not you win the coveted title of World Champion Cheese. Helmed by [WCMA Contest Director Kirsten Strohenger](#), our program will also feature a contest judge and past competitor detailing their experiences.

This one-hour webinar will include time for your questions. If you'd like to pose a question in advance, please email [WCMA staff](#) by Monday, November 13 at 12:00 p.m. (CT).

**REGISTER NOW**

This offering is the latest in [WCMA's monthly webinar series](#). Webinar topics are driven by WCMA member feedback and cover a range of themes such as business

development, communication strategies, and industry resources. Have an idea for a future webinar offering? [Let us know!](#)

# CHEESE EXPO

Global Technology for Dairy Processors

April 16-18, 2024 | Baird Center  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Special Events: April 16, 2024

Exhibits & Seminars: April 17-18, 2024

## CheeseExpo Exhibit Floor is 88% Sold; Sponsorship Opportunities Filling Fast



**RESERVE YOUR  
BOOTH SPACE**

**Booth space** and **sponsorships** are now limited for **CheeseExpo**, North America's premier event for cheese, butter, and whey processors. Set for April 16-18 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, CheeseExpo will welcome more than 4,000 attendees, including representatives from hundreds of global dairy manufacturing and processing companies and cooperatives.

Visit the **Exhibitor Information page at [CheeseExpo.org](https://www.cheeseexpo.org)** to learn priority sign-up times for all WCMA supplier members, and claim your exhibit space for the largest expo in the dairy industry.

Now is also the time to claim **CheeseExpo 2024 sponsorships**. Learn about all available sponsorships in our **online brochure**. To learn more, please contact **WCMA Events Director Caitlin Peirick**.

**RESERVE YOUR  
SPONSORSHIP**

**EDUCATION**

Register Now!



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## 2024 Leadership Trainings

### Registration Open for Winter/Spring Front-Line Leadership Trainings on [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org)

Equip your valued employees with the skills they need to excel in leadership roles by registering them in of the next round of WCMA Front-Line Leadership Training leadership training. Registration for these popular sessions is [now open online](#) to WCMA members.

This engaging series, boasting a cumulative participant rating of 9.5/10, helps both new and seasoned supervisors build critical skills in conflict resolution, communication, stress and time management, and the cultivation of a team mentality.

Here's a look at our fully virtual Winter 2023/Spring 2024 offerings:

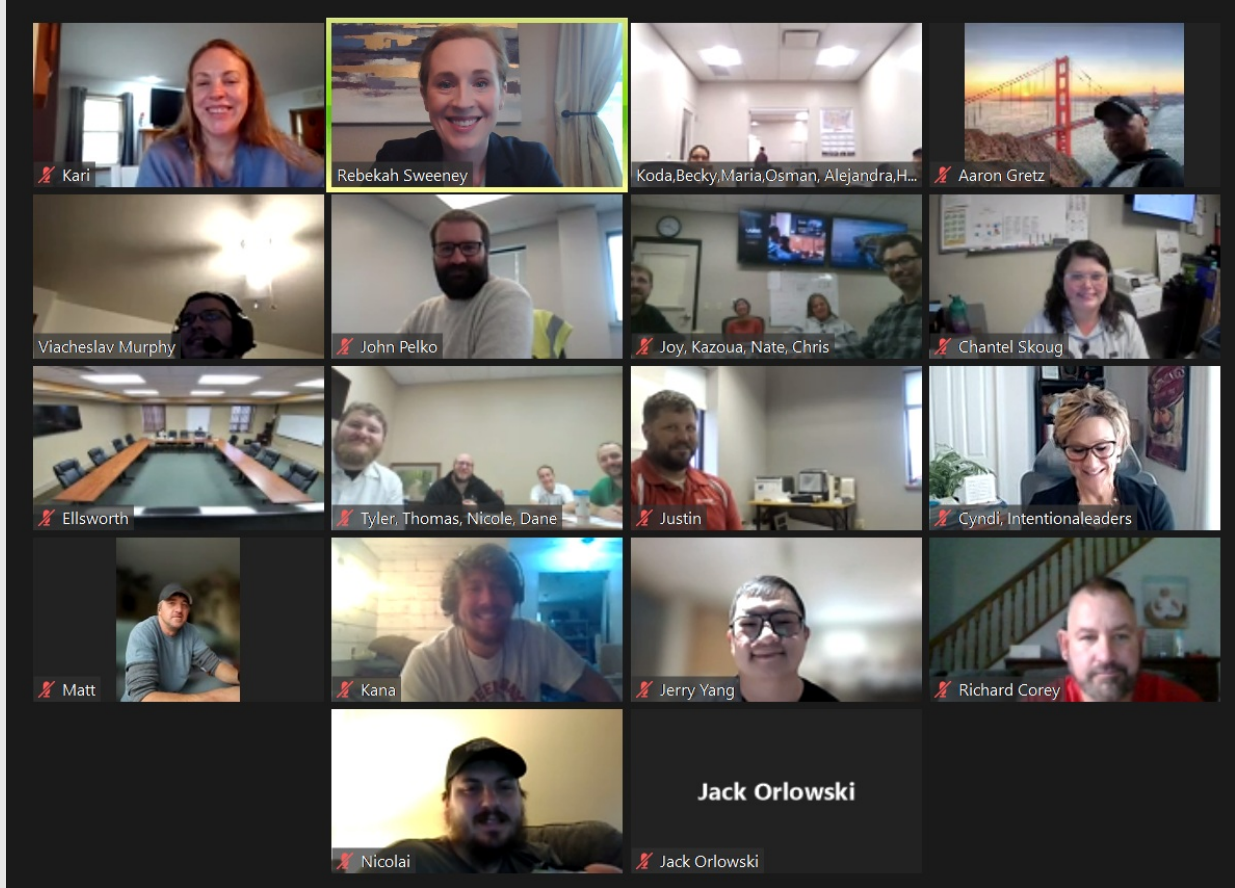
- Part A, offered on January 23 and January 24, will focus on developing essential leadership skills.
- Part B, set for February 26 and February 29, will provide strategies to help supervisors boost staff performance.
- Part C, scheduled for April 2 and April 3, will help trainees learn to foster a collaborative team mindset in their workplace.

Each class is a one-day offering, running from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (CT). Offered a la carte, they may also be taken in any order.

**REGISTER NOW**

Questions? Please contact [WCMA Membership Director Sara Schmidt](#).

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## Kudos to WCMA Front-Line Leaders

Kudos to the front-line leaders joining in WCMA's virtual training with today, learning new strategies for performance feedback and effective delegation. We appreciate their energy and enthusiasm from the start of the class - and can see why their employers from Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery, Kansas Dairy Ingredients, Mosaic Meadows-LaClare Creamery, Schuman Cheese, Winona Foods, and WOW Logistics are investing in them, and in their continued education.



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# EMPLOYEE SAFETY TRAININGS

New offerings!



## Register Now for WCMA's New Safety Trainings

Register now to join in two all-new WCMA trainings designed to support dairy processors'

efforts to keep their valued team members safe on the job.

The **WCMA Train the Safety Trainer Course** will equip the dairy processing industry's safety trainers with the knowledge, skills, and strategies to effectively communicate safety expectations and protocols for maximum compliance. This course is taught in an interactive style and covers best practices for design and delivery methods used by successful workforce safety trainers.



This course will be offered [in-person at WCMA's training center in Madison, Wisconsin on December 12, 2023](#) and [virtually on January 30, 2024](#).

**REGISTER NOW**

**WCMA Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processing Workers** will teach participants about their rights, employer responsibilities, and - most importantly - how to identify, abate, and avoid job-related hazards they may encounter.

The industry-specific curriculum concentrates on safety strategies related to the key focus areas of OSHA's ongoing [food processor LEP](#).



This course will be held [six times in 2024](#) with virtual offerings on February 20, May 14, and September 24 and in-person offerings at WCMA's training center in Madison, Wisconsin on April 9, June 4, and October 15.

**REGISTER NOW**

Questions or ideas? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

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## Additional Industry Training Opportunities

WCMA is pleased to share opportunities for industry training and enrichment. Here's a look at upcoming courses hosted by WCMA members and partners:

- November 13-14: [HACCP for Food Processors](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- November 15-16: [SQFI Training](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- November 17: [Internal Auditor SQF Short Course](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- December 6: [Cheesemaking Fundamentals](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- On-Demand:
  - [Introduction to Food Safety Principles \(English and Spanish\)](#) - Cornell University
  - [Artisan Dairy Food Safety Coaching](#) - Cornell University
  - [Online HACCP Training](#) - North Carolina State University
  - [Good Manufacturing Practices in Food Safety](#) - North Carolina State University
  - [Environmental Monitoring in the Dairy Industry](#) - North Carolina State University
  - [Preventive Controls for Dairy Processors](#) - North Carolina State



- University
- [Food Safety Basics For Artisan Cheesemakers](#) - North Carolina State University

## WORKFORCE



### Register Now for Free, Virtual WCMA Workforce & Education Committee Meeting November 16

**Register now** to join in WCMA's next Workforce & Education Committee meeting, set for Thursday, November 16 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. (CT). This free and open committee welcomes both dairy processing and supplier member participants - and is perfect for any leader with human resources responsibilities.



**Anne Troka**  
*Sargento Foods*

This meeting will feature an engaging guest presentation from Senior Manager of Community and Workforce Development Anne Troka of WCMA member Sargento Foods on strategies for effective career opening advertisement. Learn how to identify your target audience and reach them through the best channels, communicate an accurate and appealing job description, and analyze your outcomes for improvement!

WCMA staff will also facilitate group discussion about WCMA's Job Fair, trainings, and annual Wage & Workforce Survey.

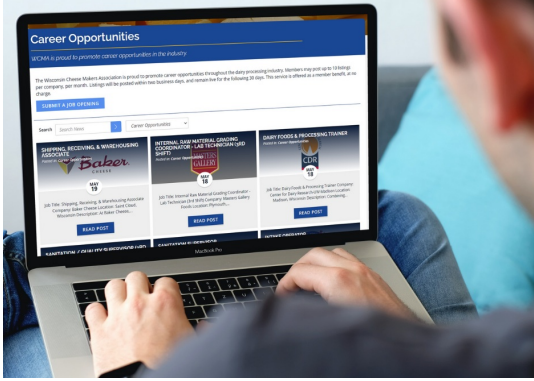
**REGISTER NOW**

Questions or ideas? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

### Post Job Openings on Free WCMA Jobs Board

Visit [WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org) today to share your career openings on WCMA's online jobs board, available to members only - for free!

Members can post up to 10 job openings per month. Each posting is published within two business days and remains live on our website for 30 days after submission.



This week, the [Jobs Board](#) features opportunities from members Associated Milk Producers, Inc., CFR, Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese, Center for Dairy Research, Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery, Foremost Farms USA, Masters Gallery Foods, and Specialty Cheese Company.

Have questions about the Jobs Board? Please contact [WCMA Business Operations Manager Ryan Dunn](#).

## IN THE NEWS

### Wisconsin

- *WISN-TV*: [Walworth County brothers set record for world's largest grilled cheese](#)

### National/International

- *Roll Call*: [Getting a new speaker may not clear hurdles to agriculture bills](#)
- *KGAN-TV*: [Sen. Grassley expects farm bill to be extended another year despite needed changes](#)
- *WTOL-TV*: ['We are talking about thousands of people being affected': Local food banks facing a loss in funding with stalled farm bill](#)
- *AgClips*: [USDA extends milk loss program assistance deadline to October 30](#)
- *Buffalo News*: [National Grid gives \\$1.5 million boost to new cheese plant](#) (Featuring WCMA member Great Lakes Cheese)
- *Dairy Herd Management*: [Organic Valley partners up on seaweed feed](#) (Featuring WCMA member Organic Valley)
- *San Diego Union-Tribune*: [Nine who tested positive for salmonella products consumed raw dairy products from Fresno farm](#)

## MEMBERSHIP

### Deadline Approaching: Vote by November 3 for WCMA Distinguished Service Award Nominees

[Cast your vote today](#) to help select the individuals that will be honored with the WCMA Distinguished Service Award in April 2024. This award recognizes supplier partner members who have played a significant role in building the success of the U.S. dairy industry.

In 2023, this honor was presented to Debra Cherney, Cherney Microbiological Services and Bob Fassbender, T.C. Jacoby & Co. This

fall, nine WCMA members are on the ballot, and your vote will help advance these candidates to finalists.

**Vote “yes”** to advance as many candidates as you like. Up to 10 individuals can vote from each WCMA member company.



**Debra Cherney**



**Bob Fassbender**

*2023 Honorees, pictured with Recognition Committee member Ted Jacoby*

All votes must be received by Friday, November 3. The finalists selected by industry will be considered by the WCMA Board of Directors at its December meeting, where the 2024 Distinguished Service Award honorees will be named.

**VOTE NOW**

Questions? Please contact [WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer](#).

[WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org)  
(608) 286-1001



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