



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



COVID-19 UPDATES



Wisconsin Dairy Processing Workers Eligible for COVID-19 Booster Shots

Wisconsin state officials [announced last week](#) that food and agricultural workers across the state, including dairy processing employees who were fully vaccinated at least six months ago, may now receive a booster of the Pfizer COVID-19 shot. Booster shots are also available to Wisconsinites over the age of 50 with health conditions such as obesity that put them at a higher risk of severe illness.

[FIND A VACCINE APPOINTMENT](#)

State, Federal Courts Uphold Vaccine Mandates

As lawsuits continue over the legality of COVID-19 vaccine mandates, U.S. courts are [ruling in favor](#) of the ability of private businesses, local governments, and higher

education institutions to require the shots. The rulings align with guidance from the [U.S. Equal Opportunity Employment Commission](#), which confirms that such mandates do not violate federal law.

Employees of most federal contractors have until December 8, 2021 to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, according to [recent guidance](#) issued by a Biden Administration task force. Details on federal vaccination requirements for [private employers](#) with 100 or more workers are still pending. WCMA will update members with further information as it becomes available.

USDA Announces Loan Guarantee Initiative

A new loan guarantee program will provide \$100 million to help expand food processing capacity and increase supply chain resilience, the [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) said Monday](#). A training webinar for rural and food sector lenders is planned for October 14.

USDA to Provide \$500M to Offset Pandemic Market Disruptions

The U.S. Department of Agriculture [announced preparations last week](#) to invest \$500 million to provide relief from agricultural market disruptions. Details on eligibility and the application process are yet to be announced. WCMA will update members with further information as it becomes available.

Coronavirus Headline News

Wisconsin

- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Wisconsin second in the nation in the increase in average daily COVID-19 cases in last two weeks](#)
- *Wisconsin State Journal*: [Wisconsin surpasses 8,000 COVID-19 deaths](#)
- *Eau Claire Leader-Telegram*: [September had most COVID-19 fatalities in western WI since January](#)
- *WISN-TV*: [Pharmacy manager: People can get flu shot, COVID-19 vaccine at same time](#)

National/International

- *Associated Press*: [U.S. hits 700,000 COVID deaths just as cases begin to fall](#)
 - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*: [Fauci says U.S. is turning the corner on COVID surge, and more need to get vaccinated](#)
 - *MSN*: [COVID is killing rural Americans at twice the rate of people in urban areas](#)
 - *Eater*: [Food, agriculture, and grocery workers can get Pfizer booster shots in Oregon](#)
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INDUSTRY UPDATES



Agropur Secures State Support for \$168M Facility Expansion in Wisconsin

At a press conference held yesterday, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers and state officials joined WCMA member Agropur to [announce plans](#) for a new \$168 million, 210,000 square-foot state-of-the-art facility in Little Chute, Wisconsin.

The project is expected to increase the facility's milk processing volume from 300 million to 750 million pounds per year, with about 85 percent of the milk to be supplied by local farms. The new plant will also create up to 54 jobs and generate an estimated \$100 million in economic activity in the Fox Valley.



Agropur will be eligible for up to \$4.5 million in state tax credits over the next four years based on meeting hiring and capital expenditure goals. "Beyond speed and efficiency, the new processes and equipment will provide greater flexibility and will allow Agropur to offer a broader line of products to meet our customers' needs," said Doug Simon, President, US Operations, Agropur. "With this new plant, we're increasing production capacity so Agropur can help its clients live up to their brand promises."

For more information, see related news coverage of the announcement:

- [WDJT-TV: \\$4.5M announced to support expansion in Wisconsin's dairy industry](#)
- [WITI-TV: Wisconsin's dairy sector expansion project unveiled](#)
- [WLUK-TV: Agropur announces expansion in Little Chute](#)
- [Dairy Reporter: Agropur to expand Wisconsin plant](#)

- *Grand Rapids Herald Review*: [Tax credits support dairy expansion](#)
 - *Green Bay Press Gazette*: [Agropur announces \\$168 million expansion of cheese production capacity in Little Chute](#)
 - *Wisconsin Public Radio*: [Evers announces \\$4.5M in state tax credits for new, automated cheese plant](#)
 - *Wisconsin State Farmer*: [WEDC to contribute \\$4.5M in tax credits for Agropur cheese plant expansion](#)
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Cascade Cheese Begins Packaging Expansion

Cascade Cheese in Cascade, Wisconsin, has begun site preparations for an expansion of its on-site packaging operations. The natural cheese manufacturer produces conventional and organic mozzarella and provolone for markets nationwide. Owner Keith Babler (pictured at left above) met with WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer Monday and discussed growth plans, highlighting the manufacturer's growing need for packaging space due to previous plant additions that have automated operations and boosted cheese output.



WCMA, CDR Highlight DBIA at World Dairy Expo

WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research joined thousands of dairy professionals from around the world last week as the industry returned to World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin.

Throughout the week, Association staff and CDR personnel shared information on the [Dairy Business Innovation Alliance \(DBIA\)](#) with Expo attendees. The DBIA offers expert technical assistance, accessible educational resources, and grant funding to dairy farmers and processors throughout the Midwest.



USDA Awards Process Cheese Contracts

WCMA members Associated Milk Producers, Inc. and Great Lakes Cheese Company have been [awarded contracts to supply process cheese](#) for federal food assistance programs in 2022, the U.S. Department of Agriculture said last week.

ADVOCACY



Join WCMA Tomorrow to Support Wisconsin Agricultural Export Bill

Members are invited to join WCMA staff on Wednesday, October 6, at the Wisconsin State Capitol to testify in support of legislation to increase the state's agricultural exports. Beginning at 10 a.m. (CT), the Assembly Committee on Agriculture will hear testimony on [Assembly Bill 314/Senate Bill 325](#), which would direct \$5 million over a five-year period to boost the state's efforts to export agricultural products, earmarking \$2.5 million for dairy exporting initiatives.

Members who are interested in testifying should contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs and Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

Submit Comments by Nov. 1 on USDA Climate-Smart Agriculture Initiative

Agricultural producers, processors, business owners, and rural community members have until 11:59 p.m. (ET) on November 1 to [submit comments](#) on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) new Climate-Smart Agriculture initiative. USDA is seeking input specifically on:

- The current state of climate-smart commodity markets,
- Systems for quantification,
- Options and criteria for evaluation,
- Use of information collected,
- Potential protocols,
- Options for review and verification, and
- Inclusion of historically underserved communities.

Public comments may be submitted through the [Federal Register](#). Have questions? Please contact [USDA staff](#).

IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers, Democrats propose \\$25 million legislative package aimed at boosting farmers](#)

- [WDJT-TV: 'Late Show' host Stephen Colbert receives warm Wisconsin welcome from Sargento Cheese](#) (Featuring WCMA member Sargento Cheese)

National/International

- [Washington Post: White House calls for 'new course' on China trade ties](#)
- [Farmers Advance: The ongoing shipping crisis is raising concern in the dairy industry](#)
- [Yahoo! Finance: Food stamps just got boosted by a record 30 percent — here's what it means for families](#)
- [PBS News Hour: Americans may soon pay more for milk, cheese as rising heat stresses livestock](#)
- [Feedstuffs: Milk cow migration spurred by processing capacity](#)
- [Hoard's Dairyman: Dairy product sales continued to grow in 2020](#)
- [The New York Times: Cheese making at Jasper Hill Farm gets a French advantage](#)
- [Dairy Herd Management: One-on-one with national checkoff CEO Tom Gallagher: A legacy of unity](#)
- [Illinois Business Journal: Prairie Farms Dairy announces planned CEO transition](#) (Featuring WCMA member Prairie Farms Dairy Inc.)
- [KAMC-TV: Lubbock to produce 1 million pounds of cheese per day, new facility in 2022](#)
- [WITI-TV: Say cheese! Culver's 'CurderBurger' is no joke](#)
- [Yahoo! Life: Costco now sells a cheese Advent calendar](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS



WCMA Webinar

Cybersecurity Threats & Strategies to Safeguard Your Business

Reserve Your Space Today in WCMA Cybersecurity Webinar

In our world of ever-advancing technology, it's critical for entrepreneurs - especially those in essential industries such as dairy processing and manufacturing - to understand the risks of doing business online and take proactive steps to protect their operations. As your resource for accurate, up-to-date information, WCMA is pleased to invite you to join in a [free cybersecurity webinar](#) October 12 at 1:00 p.m. (CT).

WCMA will host these industry experts sharing their insights on the rise of online threats to your business and profitability, and practical steps you can take to increase your cybersecurity:



Michael Hemberger
Wisconsin Dept. of
Justice



Emily Selck
M3 Insurance



Jen Pino-Gallagher
M3 Insurance

Members are invited to submit questions to [WCMA staff](#) by 12:00 p.m. (CT) next Monday, October 11. These questions will be prioritized during the webinar time reserved for Q&A.

REGISTER NOW

This event is the first in a new monthly webinar offered exclusively to WCMA members at no cost. Have an idea for a future webinar offering? Contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#). Thanks for your engagement!



Register Today for DBIA Social Media Webinar

Social media has made it easier than ever for businesses to reach consumers anytime, anywhere. However, successfully integrating social media into your overall marketing strategy requires planning and effort. Interested in learning more? Mark your calendar for

October 26 at 1:30 p.m. (CT), when the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance will host a [webinar focused on social media marketing](#).

Agricultural communications expert Nikki Warner will lead an informative session discussing the role of social media marketing, the "Do's and Don'ts" of an effective social media strategy, how to build a social media community, and how to develop Key Performance Indicators to gauge your progress.

[REGISTER NOW](#)

EDUCATION



Front-Line Dairy Leaders Strengthen Positive Impact on Staff Performance

WCMA proudly welcomed a group of member employees to the Front-Line Leadership Training - Part B this week. We thank the group for their engagement and dedication to the dairy processing industry. Kudos also go to their employers, WCMA members Baker Cheese, Emmi Roth, Grande Cheese Company, Great Lakes Cheese Company, Klondike Cheese Company, Schuman Cheese (Fall Creek), and Wapsie Valley Creamery.



Industry Training Spotlight: DFW Food Defense Training October 19-21

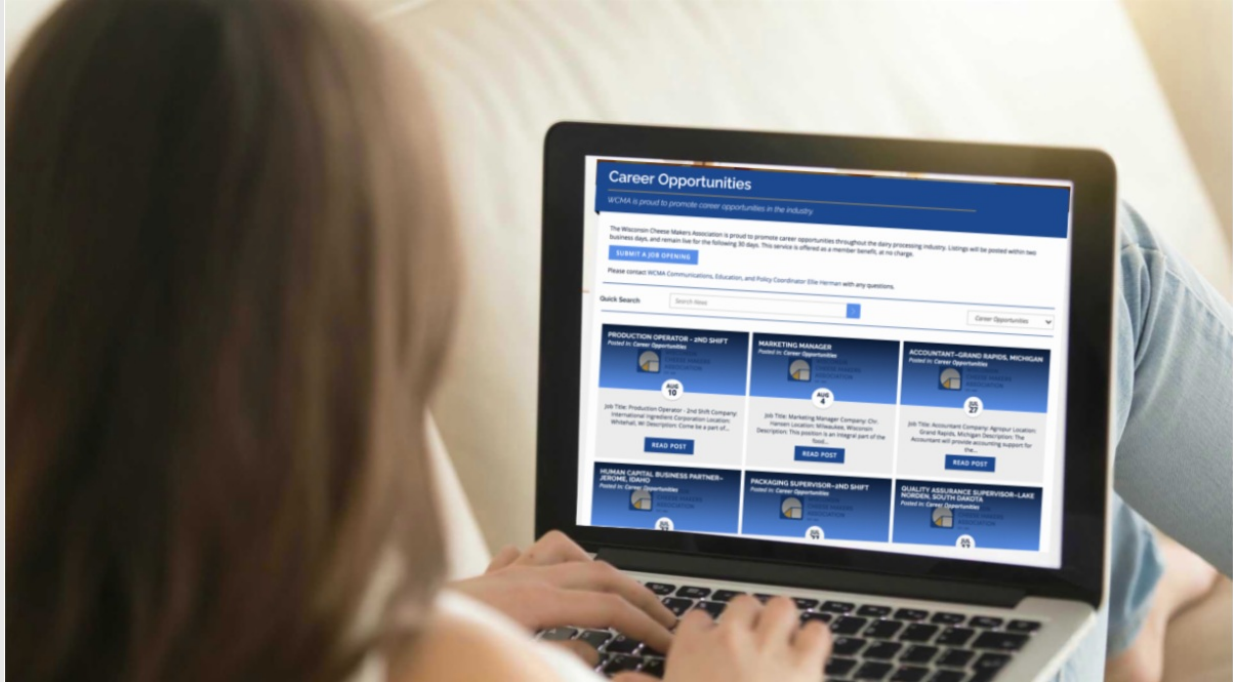
Food defense planning and training is essential to preserving your brand and protecting public health. During this [three-day Food Defense Training](#), hosted by Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin (DFW) and the Food Protection and Defense Institute, participants will gain the knowledge they need to create and/or refine a Food Defense Plan and learn practical skills that can be applied to their facilities. Attendance is limited to 20 participants, so register today!

Basic HACCP training is required to take this course, and PCQI training is highly recommended. Participants must send a copy of their HACCP certificate before the course begins to [DFW staff](#).

Additional Industry Training Opportunities

WCMA is pleased to share opportunities for industry-specific training and enrichment. Here's a look at some upcoming trainings hosted by our partners:

- October 12: [Cheesemaking 101: What a Licensed Cheesemaker Should Know - On-Demand](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- October 12: [Food Safety Workshop \(HACCP\) Online - On Demand](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- October 19: [Process Cheese Course - On Demand](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- October 19-21: [Food Defense & FSPCA Intentional Adulteration Short Course](#) | Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- October 20: [Dairy Ingredients Fundamentals](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- November 15-18: [Advanced Cheese Technology](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- November 16: [Cheesemaking 101: What a Licensed Cheesemaker Should Know](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- January 20, 2022: [Certificate in Dairy Processing - Online](#) | Center for Dairy Research



List Your Job Openings with WCMA

WCMA's [online jobs board](#) currently features industry career opportunities from member companies Agropur, Arena Cheese, Crystal Farms, Emmi Roth USA, Masters Gallery Foods, and RELCO. All WCMA members are invited to [post openings](#). It's free and easy!

[ADD CAREER OPPORTUNITIES](#)

MEMBERSHIP

Limited Ad Space Available in 2022 WCMA Member Directory

Advertising space is beginning to fill in the 2022 WCMA Member Directory. Don't miss your opportunity to connect with the global dairy processing community!

Placing an ad in the WCMA Member Directory can help showcase your company to more than 600 dairy manufacturers, processors, marketers, and industry suppliers across the country and around the world. Advertising spots are allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis, and the deadline to reserve space is Friday, October 29.

[RESERVE AD SPACE TODAY](#)

Questions? Please contact [WCMA Business and Membership Manager Sara Schmidt](#).

Submit Images, Stories for 2022 WCMA Member Directory: "Together We Grow"

WCMA is seeking photos and stories of exceptional growth in your workforce for inclusion in our 2022 Member Directory! In accordance with the theme "Together We Grow," the

directory will feature images of member employees and teams alongside brief narratives highlighting their career growth and advancement.

By close of business on Friday, November 5, **WCMA members are invited to submit images** of their employees or teams with 1-2 sentences explaining:

- Why they enjoy their work in the dairy processing industry
- How their work proves valuable to the company
- How they are growing and developing in their career
- How WCMA has helped support them in their work



Pictured above: 2021 WCMA Member Directory

WCMA encourages members to consider submitting images and stories that reflect the diversity of their operations. Please submit images of the highest available resolution.

Have questions? Please contact **[WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton](#)**.

WCMA Social Media Campaign Highlights Dairy Processing Industry Leaders

WCMA invites you to get to know the 21 enthusiastic industry leaders who serve on our Board of Directors and guide our work each day. We'll profile the Board on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and in this newsletter on a weekly basis. This week, we're pleased to introduce Craig Filkouski of Great Lakes Cheese Company!

Craig Filkouski Great Lakes Cheese

WCMA Board Member

Favorite Cheese

Sharp Cheddar

Proudest Achievement

The opportunity to play a lead role in a growth-oriented company that prioritizes hard work, integrity, and providing high-quality products at a low cost to our customers.

Why I Support WCMA

"WCMA unifies a broad and diverse membership of dairy manufacturers, processors, and suppliers. The association's educational offerings, legislative policy positions, and networking opportunities help move the entire dairy industry forward."



WISCONSIN
CHEESE MAKERS
ASSOCIATION
EST. 1991



To share ideas regarding WCMA social media campaigns or other communications, please contact [WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton](#).

WCMA Welcomes New Manufacturer Member

WCMA is pleased to welcome new dairy manufacturer member Burnett Dairy Cooperative, led by CEO David Gaiser. Headquartered in northwest Wisconsin, the cooperative manufactures a variety of award-winning cheeses for retail, deli, foodservice, and private-label customers.

Primary contact information for the cooperative is available in WCMA's [online member directory](#).



WCMA Welcomes New Supplier Members

WCMA warmly welcomes two new supplier members this week: [Oterra](#) and [Vincent Urban Walker & Associates](#). Primary contacts for both companies can be found in WCMA's [online member directory](#).

For 130 years, WCMA has served as the voice of cheese and dairy manufacturers, processors, marketers, and suppliers to the industry. Today, WCMA represents 110 dairy processing companies and cooperatives operating across the United States and around

the world, and more than 575 supplier companies. We appreciate your engagement and support.

Sign Up Colleagues for WCMA E-Newsletters

Thanks for subscribing to WCMA's weekly e-newsletter! This benefit is available to all WCMA member employees. Let us know if we should [add your colleagues](#) to our mailing list, or if you'd like to share feedback on our communications.

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