

WCMA News

Your source for the latest in dairy processing

November 10, 2026
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NEWS

USDA Revises Dairy Business Innovation Program Cost-Share Requirements



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is **revising cost-share requirements** for the Dairy Business Innovation (DBI) Initiatives program following engagement with the four DBI centers and dairy industry stakeholders, WCMA noted. Under revisions to the 2026 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), the four DBI centers will no longer be required to provide cost share as part of their applications or for activities related to managing their programs, enabling them to continue operations as they have in the past.

Subawards to dairy businesses, including both farmers and processors, will be subject to a new cost-share requirement, though USDA is allowing each DBI center the flexibility to establish the cost share within a range of 10% to 25% of the federal funds requested.

The changes represent an important step toward maintaining the flexibility and accessibility of a program that provides critical support to dairy farmers and processors across the country. Members with questions, or who wish to get involved in WCMA's advocacy efforts, should contact **WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney**.

WCMA Details Mid-Term Election Results



With the 2026 election now concluded, WCMA is providing members with a nonpartisan overview of key results for awareness.

Wisconsin

- **Governor Race**
  - Democrat David Crowley will be Wisconsin's next governor, defeating Republican U.S. Representative Tom Tiffany in a race that capped an extraordinary political comeback.

- **Key Congressional District Races**
  - **Congressional District 1**: Mitchell Berman (D) declared victory over Bryan Steil (R) in Wisconsin's 1st Congressional District, ending more than three decades of Republican representation
  - **Congressional District 3**: Rebecca Cooke (D) defeated incumbent U.S. Representative Derrick Van Orden (R) in a rematch for western Wisconsin's 3rd Congressional District.
  - **Congressional District 7**: Republican Michael Alfonso defeated Democrat Fred Clark in Wisconsin's 7th Congressional District.

National

- **Senate Races**
  - Democrats gained at least seven U.S. Senate seats on Election Day for a projected 54-seat majority. Democrats needed a net gain of four seats to take control, while holding the seats they already occupied. Of the 35 Senate seats contested Tuesday, 22 were held by Republicans and 13 by Democrats.
- **House Races**
  - Democrats made significant gains in the U.S. House on Tuesday, flipping a number of Republican-held seats and securing strong control of the chamber with at least 237 seats. Republicans entered the election with a narrow majority, meaning Democrats needed only a handful of pickups to take control.

For a detailed analysis of upcoming leadership elections and on WCMA's advocacy plans for the session ahead, please contact **WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney**.

AMS Issues Solicitation for Mozzarella Cheese, Cheddar Cheese, and Fluid Milk



USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) announced that it is seeking mozzarella and cheddar cheese as well as fluid milk. USDA is seeking to purchase 8.73 million pounds of **mozzarella** — offers are due by 1 p.m. (CT) on November 12, and awards will be announced on November 25. USDA is seeking to purchase 1.55 million pounds of **mozzarella string cheese and kosher process cheese** — offers are due by 1 p.m. (CT) on November 16, and awards will be announced on November 30.

USDA is seeking 1.43 million pounds of **cheddar** — offers are due by 1 p.m. (CT) on November 13, and awards will be announced on November 30. Lastly, USDA is seeking to purchase 862,200 gallons and half gallons of **fresh fluid whole, 1%, and skim milk** — offers are due by 1 p.m. (CT) on November 16, and awards will be announced on November 30.

Applications for WCMA Student Scholarships Totaling $29,000 Now Open



Apply now at **WisCheeseMakers.org/Scholarships** to be considered for WCMA's seven student scholarships, worth a total of $29,000. Applications must be received by February 19, 2027. Two WCMA scholarships target students attending a college, university, or technical school in the United States, or

high school seniors registered to attend a qualifying school next fall.

Preference for these **scholarship awards** will be given to candidates pursuing degrees and careers connected to the dairy industry:

- **WCMA Myron P. “Mike” Dean Cheese Industry Student Scholarship**
  Two students will be awarded the WCMA Myron P. “Mike” Dean Cheese Industry Student Scholarship, worth $5,000 each. Any employee or child of an employee at a WCMA dairy manufacturing, processing, or marketing member company may apply. In 2026, this scholarship was awarded to Emma Adleman of Sartori Company and Collin Zimmermann of Masters Gallery Foods.
- **WCMA Cheese Industry Supplier Student Scholarship**
  Employees or children of employees at WCMA supplier member companies may apply for the WCMA Cheese Industry Supplier Student Scholarship. Three students will receive scholarship awards of $5,000 each. In 2026, this scholarship was awarded to Luke Boyle of Novonesis, Christoffer Martin of Complete Control Solutions, and Paytan Swiertz of ProActive Solutions USA.
- **Brian Eggebrecht Student Scholarship Supporting Skilled Trades in the Dairy Industry**
  Two students will be awarded the WCMA Brian Eggebrecht Student Scholarship Supporting Skilled Trades in the Dairy Industry, worth $2,000 each. This award is open to students attending any technical school in Wisconsin, or high school students registered to attend a Wisconsin technical school. In 2026, this scholarship was awarded to Eric Koran and Caden Lepple.

Successful applicants will be announced in March 2027, with awards presented on April 21 at **CheeseCon** in Madison, Wisconsin.

Headlines

Wisconsin

- Wisconsin State Farmer: **Dairy Checkoff cites growth in annual report while farmers question returns**
- eDairy News: **Wisconsin agricultural and dairy exports reach record $2 billion despite tariff disruptions in China and Canada**
- Dairy Business Middle East & Africa: **Good Culture partners Associated Milk Producers to open cheese facility**

National & Global

- Reuters: **China extends US trade truce by two months**
- The Mid-West Farm Report: **Feds rescind new 25% matching fund rule for Dairy Business Innovation Initiative Centers**
- Dairy Reporter: **Plant-based dairy alternatives linked to nutrient deficiencies, study calls for mandatory fortification**
- Medical Daily: **Washington bird flu outbreak hits 40 dairy herds after Yakima death, but farmworker testing totals stay unreported**
- Capital Press: **As bird flu spreads, dairy industry awaits vaccine**

WCMA Joins CDR for 40th Anniversary Celebration

Sartori Company Expands Whey Processing Capacity



WCMA celebrated the Center for Dairy Research's 40th anniversary at a special reception yesterday. WCMA is proud to have been formally partnered with CDR both in the execution of **CheeseCon** and **CheeseExpo** as well as a multitude of educational and training opportunities for WCMA members over the last 35 years. WCMA looks forward to many more decades of collaboration.



WCMA member **Sartori Company** announced that it will be investing $47 million to expand and equip its **Plymouth whey converting site**. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation will support the project by authorizing up to $450,000 in state income tax credits over the next three years. WCMA proudly advocates for state funding for projects like this one at Sartori Company.

FEATURED: FOOD SAFETY

Learn more about WCMA's programs & services in this special rotating section! This week, we spotlight WCMA's food safety offerings and related news.

WCMA Members Join DFSA Meeting



Never been to a WCMA DFSA Meeting? Click the "Play" button to hear from Gale Beard of Master Gallery Foods, Inc. on why he values these opportunities for connection and education.

On October 29, WCMA and Center for Dairy Research held a hybrid Dairy Food Safety Alliance (DFSA) meeting at WCMA's offices. Along with networking with fellow food safety professionals, participants heard from dairy plant inspectors on survey insights, got an overview of a typical Wisconsin inspection report, received the latest updates in food safety guidance, took a deep dive into the anatomy of a product recall, learned best practices for water use and reclaimed water protection in dairy plants, and much more.

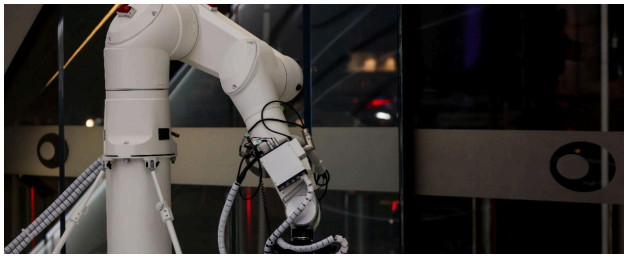
More information about DFSA and food safety resources are available at WisCheeseMakers.org.

Researchers Examine Consumer Perspectives on Raw Milk and Food Safety



A recent Purdue University publication explores the factors that influence consumer interest in raw milk, including perceptions of product quality, naturalness, local food systems, and trust in the food supply. The authors discuss how these beliefs shape food purchasing decisions and food safety perceptions. **READ MORE...**

New Review Highlights Food Safety Applications for Artificial Intelligence



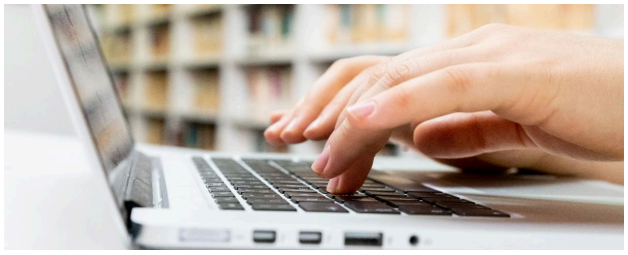
A recently published review examines how artificial intelligence is being applied across food safety systems, from monitoring and testing to data analysis and decision support. The article also discusses opportunities and challenges associated with adopting AI technologies in food production and regulatory environments. **READ MORE...**

FDA Revokes Use of Certain Substances as Color Additives



The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced that it is revoking the authorizations of certain substances used in color additives, including annatto extract. FDA revoked the authorization of methylene chloride, ethylene dichloride, and trichloroethylene in the manufacture of several color additives. These revocations will become effective on January 11, 2027. **READ MORE...**

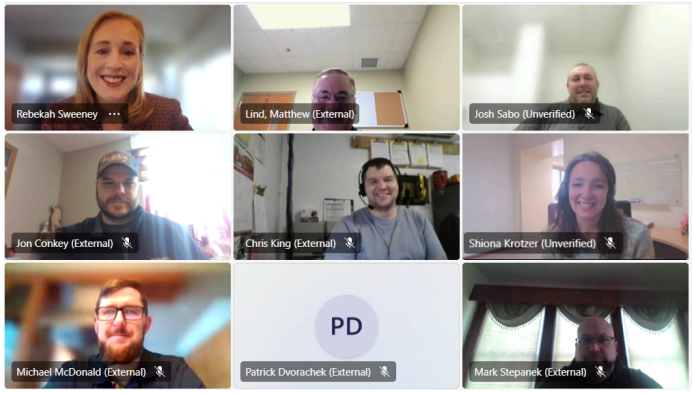
WCMA Offers FSMA Compliance Support



DFSA offers FSMA-compliant templates for dairy processors covering SOPs, records, and support documents. These resources can be used for self-assessments, shared throughout the supply chain, or to enhance and develop FSMA-compliant food safety documentation. **READ MORE...**

EVENTS & CONNECTION

Register for WCMA Train the Safety Trainer Online Course, December 1



Sign up now for **Train the Safety Trainer**, set to be held online on December 1 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (CT). Designed with input from WCMA's Health & Safety Group, this training equips the dairy processing industry's safety trainers with the knowledge, skills, and strategies to effectively communicate safety expectations and protocols for maximum compliance. Sign up now to build your skills as a trainer and enhance your organization's safety culture.

Sponsorships of this meeting are **available now**. Don't miss this opportunity to reach new audiences and show your support for the dairy processing industry's next generation of leaders.

Stay Up-to-Date on Dairy Export with WCMA Webinar



Build your network, get updates on the latest dairy export trends, and learn strategies to start or grow your exporting business at the next **virtual meeting of WCMA's Dairy Export Group** on December 2, from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (CT). The meeting will begin with an update from USDEC on dairy and cheese exporting, followed by the latest developments in federal trade policy provided by WCMA's Senior Director of Programs and Policy, Rebekah Sweeney.

The rest of the meeting will be spent on practical guidance on the paperwork and certifications needed to successfully export dairy products to international markets. Sponsorships of this meeting are **available now**. Don't miss this opportunity to show your support for the dairy processing industry's efforts to stay updated on export trends and grow export knowledge and networks. Questions about this event can be directed to **Director, Sustainability & Grants Danica Nilsestuen**.

Sign Up for Dairy Innovation Hub's Dairy Summit on November 17



Dairy Innovation Hub will be hosting its **Dairy Summit on November 17**. The event is hybrid — for those attending in person, the event will be held at UW-Platteville. The summit will feature the hub's newest projects. Attendees will be able to attend research presentations, as well as hear from a panel of dairy farmers who will discuss challenges and priorities from the farm.

In-person attendees will get to join small-group tours of UW-Platteville's Pioneer Farm, where they will learn about Hub-supported research and facilities focused on dairy management, dairy manufacturing, agroecosystems, and manure innovation. The summit is free to attend, but **registration** is required.

Upcoming WCMA Events

November 12	November 19	December 1	December 2	December 10
Front-Line Leadership Part C (Virtual)	Front-Line Leadership Part C (In-Person)	Train the Safety Trainer Course (Virtual)	Dairy Export Group Meeting (Virtual)	WCMA Webinar: 2027 Dairy Market Forecast (Virtual)



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