



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



SIGNATURE EVENTS



Final Days for U.S. Championship Cheese Contest Early Entry Discount

Only two days remain to take advantage of special early entry rates for the 2023 United States Championship Cheese Contest®. [Enter the Contest now through Thursday, December 1](#) and enjoy a **\$10 per-entry discount** on fees!

WCMA will host the 21st biennial U.S. Championship Cheese Contest February 21-23 in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Entries of cheese, butter, yogurt, and dry dairy ingredients from across the country will be evaluated by a team of expert judges before the nation's Top 20 cheeses - and the 2023 U.S. Champion - will be announced in a special livestream event.

For full entry rules, all 118 Contest classes, shipping information, and key deadlines, please consult the [Official Entry Kit](#).

ENTER THE CONTEST

Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Events Manager Kirsten Strohmenger](#).



Watch Free Webinar for Inside Look at the Contest

For a closer look at the U.S. Championship Cheese Contest, [watch WCMA's free webinar](#), recorded November 15. This session features a deep dive on entry procedures and the judging process with Contest staff and Chief Judge Jim Mueller, followed by firsthand accounts and tips from Marieke Gouda and Sartori Company, both previous Contest winners.



Act Now to Reserve CheeseCon Exhibit Space

Exhibit space on CheeseCon's largest-ever trade show floor is **over 80 percent sold out!** Check your email for your access code and [visit CheeseCon.org](#) now to secure your space. Remaining booths will fill quickly, so don't delay.

CheeseCon is your opportunity to connect with 3,000 dairy industry CEOs, marketers, distributors, plant managers, and more. Join **hundreds of trusted dairy industry suppliers** on our 75,000-square-foot exhibit floor, network with friends and colleagues, expand your knowledge with world-class educational seminars, and enjoy exciting celebrations of the industry's best.

As the nation's largest gathering of dairy processors, CheeseCon is your one-stop shop to grow your business. [Reserve your exhibit space today](#) and join us April 4-6, 2023 in Madison, Wisconsin!

SECURE YOUR BOOTH

Please contact [WCMA Events Manager Caitlin Peirick](#) with any questions or to have your exhibitor access code resent.

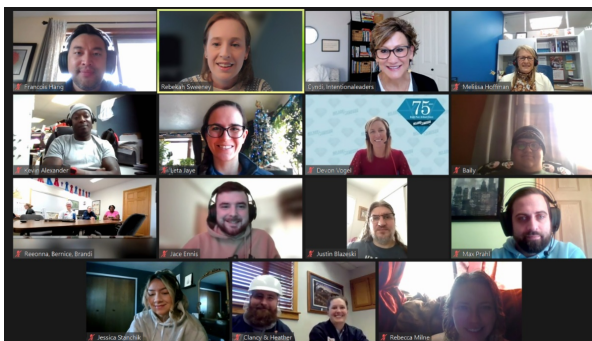
EDUCATION



WCMA Industry Education

WCMA Unveils New Front-Line, Advanced Leadership Trainings for 2023

Act now to take advantage of the next round of WCMA's highly rated Front-Line and Advanced Leadership trainings, beginning in January. Registration is [now open online](#) to all WCMA members.



Front-Line Leadership

Front-Line Leadership is designed to help new and experienced supervisors build critical skills in conflict resolution, communication, stress and time management, and cultivation of a team mentality. Since 2017, over 500 trainees have graduated from this popular

Advanced Leadership Series

Open to mid-level managers and employees transitioning to management positions, the Advanced Leadership Series features guest speakers from industry, group discussions, and a final project designed to help participants showcase their new knowledge.

program.

The series has three parts that are offered a la carte and may be taken in any order. Each part costs just \$135 per person.

- Part A, offered on Tuesday, January 31 and Tuesday, February 7, will focus on developing essential leadership skills.
- Part B, offered on Tuesday, March 14 and Tuesday, March 21, will provide strategies to help supervisors boost staff performance.
- Part C, scheduled for Tuesday, April 18 and Tuesday, April 25, will help trainees learn to foster a collaborative team mindset in their workplace.

Tuition for this course is just \$495 per person. Enrollment is limited to 20 individuals, who will undergo the training as a cohort.

- Part 1 on Tuesday, September 19 pushes participants to take initiative in driving change and generating positive results for their company.
- Part 2 on Wednesday, November 1 focuses on the development and application of a creative and collaborative problem-solving process.
- Part 3 on Tuesday, January 9, 2024 details the tools and strategies leaders can use to foster collaboration and resolve workplace conflict.

REGISTER NOW

Members with questions about WCMA's educational offerings may contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).



WCMA SCHOLARSHIPS

**Applications Open Now for \$19,000 in
WCMA Student Scholarships**



Students connected to the dairy industry, including WCMA member employees and their children, are encouraged to [apply now through February 7](#) for WCMA's annual student scholarship program.

A total of \$19,000 will be distributed to seven recipients across three scholarships. Winners will be announced in March, with awards presented to recipients on Wednesday, April 5 at [CheeseCon](#) in Madison, Wisconsin.

The [WCMA Myron P. "Mike" Dean Cheese Industry Student Scholarship](#), worth \$3,000 each, will be awarded to two students. Any employee or child of an employee at a WCMA dairy manufacturing, processing, or marketing member company may apply. In 2022, Bailee Aisenbrey of Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery and Jamie Feldmann of Sartori Company received this 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 \$3,000 each. The 2022 recipients of these awards were Jenna Jakel of Loos Machine & Automation, Stephanie Kraemer of IFF (Danisco), and Jack Pluta of Excel Engineering.

Two students will receive the [**Brian Eggebrecht Student Scholarship Supporting Skilled Trades in the Dairy Industry**](#), worth \$2,000 each. This award, launched in 2021 and named in honor of Championship Cheese Contest Chairman and generous donor Brian Eggebrecht, is open to students attending any technical school in Wisconsin, or high school students registered to attend a Wisconsin technical school. Priority consideration for this scholarship will be given to students pursuing technical certificates, technical diplomas, or associate degrees that may lead to a career in the dairy industry. Applicants for this award are *not* required to be connected to a WCMA member company or cooperative. In 2022, Bryce Gustafson and Xiapor Lor of Masters Gallery Foods were selected for this scholarship.

APPLY TODAY

All applicants must include school transcripts, a letter of recommendation, and a completed application form. Questions may be directed to [**WCMA Business & Membership Manager Sara Schmidt**](#).



Additional Industry Training Opportunities

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

- February 15: [**Internal Auditing Principles**](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- February 15-16: [**Master Cheesemaker Short Course - Exploring and Investigating Cheese Defects \(In-Person\)**](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- February 16: [**Supplier Auditing Principles**](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- Rolling Admission:
 - [**Online HACCP Training**](#) - 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



Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association

Health & Safety Group

New Speaker Added: Join WCMA Health & Safety Group Meeting on December 6

Attend the [next meeting of WCMA's Health & Safety Group](#) next Tuesday, December 6 from 11:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (CT) for helpful updates, useful information, and networking with your health and safety colleagues in dairy processing. Join us in-person in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, or online via Zoom.

As requested by WCMA members, this meeting will focus on the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) guidance for the safe storage and use of combustible dust, such as cellulose; an update on OSHA's Local Emphasis Program (LEP) focused on food manufacturers' safety practices; and other resources for employee safety training. Newly added speaker Matthew Lind, Safety Instructor at Chippewa Valley Technical College, will focus on slips, trips, and falls, and how dairy processors can take advantage of their local technical college as a training resource.

Here's a look at the meeting agenda:

- 11:00 a.m.: Meeting Call to Order
 - Agenda Overview & Introductions
 - Combustible Dust Safety Protocols
 - Featured Speaker: Danica Harrier, ASP, Consultant and Program Administrator, SHARP and IQAP Coordinator, Wisconsin Safety and Health Consultation Program
 - Employee Safety Training Resource: WisCon
 - Featured Speaker: Danica Harrier
- 12:00 p.m.: Networking Lunch
- 12:30 p.m.: Meeting Resumes
 - Progress Update: OSHA Local Emphasis Program for Food Processors
 - Featured Speaker: David Schott, MS, CSP, Occupational Safety & Health Administration
 - Strategies to Prevent Slips, Trips, and Falls
 - Featured Speaker: Matthew Lind, Safety Instructor, Chippewa Valley Technical College
 - Employee Safety Training Resource: Technical Colleges
 - Featured Speaker: Matthew Lind
 - Group Business
 - Discussion of Needed Resources, Upcoming Meetings
- 2:30 p.m.: Adjournment



Danica Harrier, ASP
*Occupational Safety &
Health Administration*



David Schott, MS, CSP
*Occupational Safety &
Health Administration*



Matthew Lind
*Chippewa Valley
Technical College*

Future Health & Safety Group meetings will cover a wide range of issues related to worker safety in dairy processing, guided by member feedback. Attendees can expect a platform for discussion, insights from respected industry experts, and opportunities to share ideas with their peers.

REGISTER TO ATTEND

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



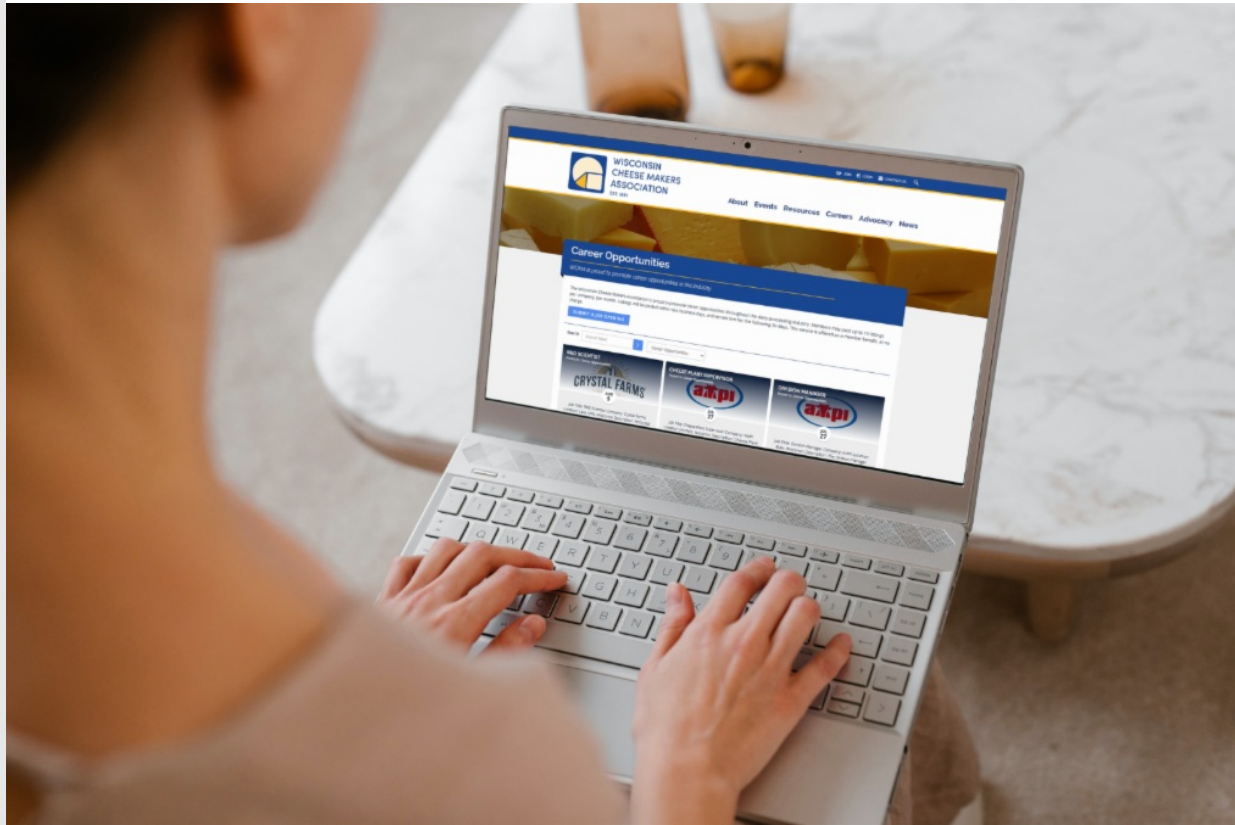
RSVP to Join WCMA Workforce & Education Committee on New Meeting Date

All WCMA members are welcome to join the next virtual meeting of the Workforce & Education Committee on Wednesday, December 7 from 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (CT). The December meeting agenda includes:

- 11:00 a.m.: Meeting Call to Order
- 11:10 a.m.: Launch of WCMA Workforce Video Resources
 - Video Onboarding Series
 - Industry Recruitment Video
- 11:45 a.m.: 2023 WCMA Wage & Workforce Survey
- 12:15 p.m.: Other WCMA Workforce Tools
 - Job Fairs
 - Leadership Trainings
 - Member Ideas and Needs
- 12:25 p.m.: Committee Business
- 12:30 p.m.: Adjournment

JOIN MEETING

To RSVP for the meeting and share ideas, please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).



View, Share Industry Career Opportunities

Visit WCMA's [online jobs board](#) to view and share current dairy industry career opportunities. Positions with the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, as well as WCMA members Foremost Farms USA and Tetra Pak are featured this week.

Have an opportunity at your company or cooperative? WCMA members may [post up to 10 openings](#) per company, per month on the Jobs Board - for free!

Please contact [WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton](#) with questions.

INDUSTRY UPDATES

Free Export Consultative Services!

Ten spaces available
First-come, first-served

Start or expand your export endeavors with up to 30 hours of no-cost consultative services with Ryan Wucherer of MCT Dairies!



Claim Your Free Export Consultation Sessions

Just **five spaces are available** for up to 30 hours of export consultative services with Ryan Wucherer of MCT Dairies, offered through WCMA at no cost to dairy processors thanks to funding from the Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports. Both new and experienced dairy exporters are encouraged to **act now to reserve their spot** in this valuable program!

Consultations for businesses new to exporting will include:

- Evaluations of their product line, helping to identify potential global customers;
- Direction to in-depth educational resources, such as ExporTech™;
- Aid in the creation of their export plan; and,
- Aid in the execution of their export plan through the completion of necessary export paperwork and by connecting the business with potential carriers and distributors.

For those already engaged in export activities, consultations will include:

- Evaluations and recommendations on refinements in their export business model;
- Identify areas for export growth;
- Aid in the execution of export plans; and,
- Recommendations on improvements in products, packaging, marketing, labeling, sales or distribution.

APPLY NOW

Have questions or need assistance? Please contact **WCMA Director of Grants & Business Programs Danica Nilsestuen**.

Join Food Export's Focused Trade Mission to Korea in March 2023

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) invites dairy companies and cooperatives to join a **Focused Trade Mission to Seoul, Korea**, hosted by Food Export-Midwest and Food Export-Northeast on March 13-15. Early registration is open now through next Monday, December 5.

Services covered under the \$400 early registration fee include one-on-one meetings with

qualified buyers, custom product research, market briefings, translation, a tabletop showcase and trade reception, on-site assistance, and more. Questions may be directed to [WDATCP staff](#).

REGISTER ONLINE

WDATCP Opens Local Food Purchasing Program to Wisconsin Farmers



Wisconsin farmers, including dairy producers, are invited to apply now for a [new Local Food Purchase Assistance program](#) administered by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The program will utilize funding and partnerships to purchase food from local farmers to provide food to underserved communities, support the logistics of moving food around the state, and further develop online resources for Wisconsin's food network. Applications for the program open tomorrow, Tuesday, November 30th at WILocalFood.org.

Further details about the program, including application and eligibility criteria and a free informational webinar, can be [found online](#).

IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Wisconsin cheese company pays Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity mortgages](#) (Featuring WCMA member Sargento Foods)
- *WHBY Radio*: [Made in Wisconsin: LaClare Creamery](#) (Featuring WCMA member Mosaic Meadows - LaClare Family Creamery)

National/International

- *Wisconsin State Farmer*: [Cheese sales drive U.S. dairy consumption growth](#)
- *Wall Street Journal*: [Globalized supply chain brings more turbulent food prices](#)
- *Dairy Business*: [Leaders share dairy's sustainability progress during Alliance meeting](#) (Featuring WCMA members Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative and Schreiber Foods)
- *Mid-West Farm Report*: [Dairy innovation from former waste](#)
- *Dairy Girl Network*: [Recognizes Forward Under 40 award winners](#) (Featuring WCMA member Land O'Lakes)
- *WTVD-TV*: [Make-A-Wish Foundation sends North Carolina boy to Wisconsin to be a cheesemaker](#) (Featuring WCMA member Baker Cheese)

ADVOCACY



Join Virtual Meeting of WCMA Policy Committee

Register now to join the next virtual meeting of the WCMA Policy Committee on Tuesday, December 20 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. (CT). As the 2023 federal and state legislative sessions approach, members will discuss and set WCMA's 2023 policy advocacy agendas. An online survey will be distributed in advance of this meeting, to help gauge priorities ahead of our discussion and to ensure more members can provide input in our process.

To RSVP for the meeting and share ideas, please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

ATTEND MEETING



George Crave
Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese

#DBIADelivers Spotlights Grant Recipients

Since the creation of the [Dairy Business Innovation Alliance \(DBIA\)](#) in the 2018 Farm

Bill, WCMA and CDR have partnered to administer over \$3.7 million in 79 grants across two programs to dairy farmers and processors in participating states.

WCMA's newest social media series, DBIA Delivers, highlights the successes of dairy entrepreneurs that have taken their businesses to the next level thanks to DBIA grants.

This week, join us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#) as we look back on the ways #DBIADelivers for grant recipients Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese, Landmark Creamery, Royal Guernsey Creamery, and Widmer's Cheese Cellars.

WisCheeseMakers.org
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