



# WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE  
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



## SIGNATURE EVENTS



*Click the "play" button to see why the World Championship Cheese Contest is the world's premier technical dairy product evaluation competition!*

## Enter World Championship Cheese Contest for a Chance at International Recognition

Enter the 35th biennial World Championship Cheese Contest today at [WorldChampionCheese.org](https://WorldChampionCheese.org) for your chance at the coveted title of World Champion Cheese! WCMA is accepting entries now until January 26, 2024. **Submit your entries by December 1 to receive our special early entry rate of just \$75 per entry.**

In 2024, this prestigious competition will feature 142 classes of dairy products, welcoming entries of cheese, butter, yogurt, and dry dairy ingredients. Judging will occur March 5-7 at the Monona Terrace Convention Center in Madison, Wisconsin.

Complete details are available in the official [Contest Entry Kit](#), now available online. Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Contest](#)



[Director Kirsten Strohmenger](#).

ENTER TODAY



## WCMA Webinar

### World Championship Cheese Contest 101

## Get Key Contest Entry Details, Tips in Free WCMA Webinar

Learn how to submit entries and make the most of your participation in the World Championship Cheese Contest in [WCMA's next free webinar](#) on Tuesday, November 14 at 1:00 p.m. (CT).

Open to all prospective entrants, this session will feature [WCMA Contest Director Kirsten Strohmenger](#), a contest judge, and a previous competitor detailing their experiences and sharing pro tips for a great Contest - whether or not you come away with a medal!

This one-hour webinar will include time for Q&A. To submit a question in advance, please email [WCMA staff](#) by Monday, November 13 at 12:00 p.m. (CT).



## Promote Your Company with CheeseExpo Marketing Opportunities - Selling Quickly!

**CHEESEEXPO**  
Global Technology for Dairy Processors  
April 16-18, 2024 | Baird Center  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Special Events: April 16, 2024  
Exhibits & Seminars: April 17-18, 2024

Limited [CheeseExpo 2024 sponsorships](#) are still available! Showcase your company to the global dairy processing industry with one of our impactful marketing opportunities.

Consider a high-visibility Partner Sponsorship, spotlighting your business for thousands of attendees. Three of these opportunities remain available at just \$4,500:

- [Wednesday & Thursday Lunch Partner](#)
- [Exhibit Floorplan Partner](#)
- [Registration Partner](#)

Looking to make an impact in print? Secure [advertising space in the 2024 CheeseExpo Official Program](#), available to every attendee! Choose from a full-, half-, or quarter-page ad, highlighting your company in full color.

Learn about all available marketing opportunities in our [online brochure](#). Ready to reserve your sponsorship or advertisement, or have questions? Contact [WCMA Events Director Caitlin Peirick](#).

**BECOME A SPONSOR**

**ADVOCACY**





## Senate Approves Agriculture Funding Plan

The U.S. Senate on Wednesday **voted 82-15** to pass the first three of its fiscal 2024 appropriations bills, including a bill funding for both the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA).” The USDA-FDA bill included \$6.3 billion for the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) nutrition program, a \$615 billion increase from last year, though short of what hunger relief advocates say is needed. The White House is noting it will pursue additional funding because of higher-than-expected enrollment and food costs for WIC.

Newly-minted Speaker of the House Mike Johnson (R-LA 04), plans to bring to the floor an alternate version of the USDA-FDA funding bill the week of November 13. Federal government funding is now set to expire November 17.

WCMA will keep members apprised of funding developments and advocacy opportunities via this newsletter. Members with questions may contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

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## WCMA Notes: Extending Sustainability to Government



"Sustainability is a big tent that allows businesses to place their profitability, their governance, their care for employees and their impact on the environment into a single, strategic way of thinking," writes [WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer](#) in this month's WCMA Notes column. Though most dairy processors are already familiar with the concept, Umhoefer notes that the industry has work to do among lawmakers and regulators. Read the full column now at [WisCheeseMakers.org](#).

[READ MORE](#)

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## WCMA Invites Members to Voice Support for Multi-Discharger Variance Extension

Wisconsin regulators are opening a review of the successful Multi-Discharger Variance

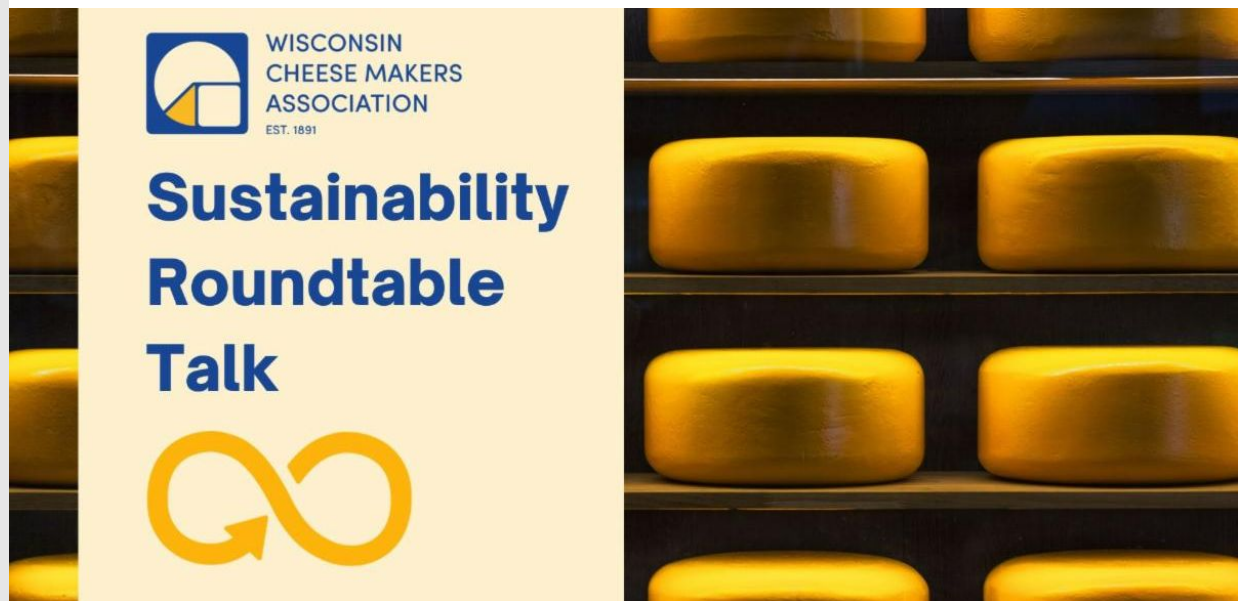
(MDV) program that has allowed cities, dairy plants, food processors and more to ease into low limits on phosphorus in wastewater. Approved in 2017 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Wisconsin Department of Administration and Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) officials are evaluating currently available information to determine whether 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:

- **In-person or online: November 10, 9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (CT)**, WDNR GEF2 Building - Room G09, 101 S. Webster St., Madison
- **In-person only (no registration required): November 13, 9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (CT)**, Portage County Annex Building, Conference Rooms 1 & 2, 1462 Strongs Ave., Stevens Point

Please contact [WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer](#) with your interest in participating in these listening sessions.

## INDUSTRY UPDATES



## RSVP for Virtual Sustainability Roundtable This Coming Thursday

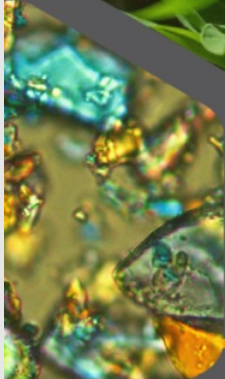
Help shape WCMA's newest member workgroup, devoted to supporting the U.S. dairy industry's sustainability goals, at a [virtual roundtable](#) November 9 at 1 p.m. (CT). During the meeting, WCMA will present the results of our recent member sustainability survey, and further identify member needs for education, support, and networking, by facilitating conversations about strategies to deliver impactful resources.

[REGISTER NOW](#)

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



**DAIRY  
SUMMIT**



**NOVEMBER 15**

hosted by:  
UW-Platteville  
& live streamed

## Join Dairy Innovation Hub for Annual Summit November 15

Sign up today to attend the [fourth annual Dairy Summit](#), hosted by the Dairy Innovation Hub on Wednesday, November 15 from 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (CT). Attendees are welcome in-person at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville or online.

The program begins with a panel on the latest on-farm research in Wisconsin and a showcase of the latest Hub research projects. After a networking lunch, attendees will hear a panel discussion featuring State Senator Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green) and State Representatives Travis Tranel (R-Cuba City) and Dave Considine (D-Baraboo).

Additional details for this free, public event, including a full agenda, are [available online](#).

## GRANTS



## Wisconsin Fast Forward Worker Training Grant Deadline Extended

Applications are open now until 3:00 p.m. (CT) on November 28 for the [Industry Sectors Worker Training Grants](#) through the Wisconsin Fast Forward program at the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. The grants reimburse the costs of customized occupational training for unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers. More information is [available online](#).

## WORKFORCE



## Attend WCMA Workforce & Education Committee Meeting November 16

**Register now** to join WCMA's next Workforce & Education Committee meeting on Thursday, November 16 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. (CT). Open to both dairy processing and supplier members, this free and open committee 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 effectively advertising career openings. Learn how to identify and reach your target audience, communicate an accurate and appealing job description, and analyze your outcomes for the future!

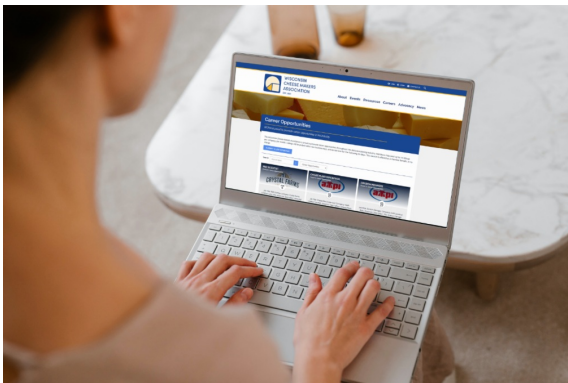
WCMA staff will also facilitate group discussion about WCMA's Job Fair, trainings, and annual Wage & Workforce Survey.

**REGISTER NOW**

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

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## Share Open Positions on WCMA Jobs Board



Visit [WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org) today to share your career openings on WCMA's online jobs board - 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.

**POST OPENINGS**

This week, the [Jobs Board](#) features opportunities from members Bassett Mechanical, Crystal Farms, Foremost Farms USA, Grande Cheese, Masters Gallery Foods, Organic Valley, and Specialty Cheese Company.

Have questions about the Jobs Board? Please contact [WCMA staff](#).

## IN THE NEWS

### Wisconsin

- *KCRG-TV*: [Nearly 100 employees impacted as Wisconsin cheese plant expected to close](#)
- *Spectrum News 1*: [Now hiring: Masters Gallery Foods grows to meet demand for cheese](#)
- *Matador Network*: [A Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker explains how to find the best cheese in the state](#) (Featuring WCMA members Roelli Cheese Co. and Hook's Cheese Company)

### National/International

- *Financial Times*: [British cheese exporters warn of losses unless new Canada deal is reached](#)
- WHLT Radio: [Unique gift idea: 4,500-pound cheddar cheese for sale at Michigan grocery store](#) (Featuring WCMA member Henning's Cheese)
- *Eater*: [When cheese can tell the future](#)
- *New York Times*: [A tour of British farmhouse cheesemaking](#)

## EDUCATION



# EMPLOYEE SAFETY TRAININGS

**New offerings!**



## Sign Up to Join New WCMA 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.

WCMA's **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's **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](#).



WISCONSIN  
CHEESE MAKERS  
ASSOCIATION

**2024 Leadership Trainings**

## Reserve Space in Winter/Spring Front-Line Leadership Classes Today

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 Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).



## WCMA Advanced Leadership Participants Talk Growth with Agropur's Sipple

WCMA applauds last week's Advanced Leadership class for their engagement in a recent session focused on problem-solving strategies. The group heard from WCMA Director Mike Sipple of Agropur on growing as a leader. Participants hailed from WCMA members Burnett Dairy Cooperative, Complete Filtration Resources, Foremost Farms USA, Grande Cheese Company, Land O'Lakes, Nelson-Jameson, Ornuia Ingredients North America, Pine River Pre-Pack, Saputo Cheese USA, Sartori Company, Schuman Cheese, Specialty Cheese Company, Valley Queen Cheese, Winona Foods, and Wisconsin Cheese Group.

## 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
  - [Online Dairy Science and Sanitation \(English and Spanish\)](#) - 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

## MEMBERSHIP



*Image courtesy: Center for Dairy Research*

## EWCBA Elects New President, Honors Sommer

WCMA congratulates Dean Sommer of the Center for Dairy Research, who was presented last week with a Life Membership by the Eastern Wisconsin Cheesemakers and Buttermakers Association (EWCBA) at its annual meeting.

Association members also enjoyed an update from WCMA's John Umhoefer and elected a new team of leaders for the upcoming year:

- President: Cody Renard
- Vice President: Zachary Henning
- Treasurer: Michelle Luepke
- Secretary: Shari Riesterer





- Director: John Metzig
- Director: Tim Stearns

Congratulations to all!

# WELCOME



## NEW WCMA MEMBERS!

### Dairy Manufacturers, Processors, & Marketers



New WCMA dairy manufacturer member **Toscana Cheese Company LLC** produces fresh mozzarella and Oaxaca cheeses at its 43,000-square-foot New Jersey facility.

Visit WCMA's [online member directory](#) for more information.

WisCheeseMakers.org  
(608) 286-1001



Wisconsin Cheese Makers Assn. | 5117 West Terrace Drive, Suite 402, Madison, WI 53718

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