



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



ADVOCACY



Wisconsin Assembly Committee Unanimously Passes Dairy Hauling Bill

WCMA applauds the members of the Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Agriculture, who last week unanimously voted to advance [Assembly Bill 440](#), related to increased dairy hauling capacity. Our thanks also go to WCMA members Jeff Montsma of Agropur, pictured at left, and Scott Potts of BelGioioso Cheese, pictured at right with Rep. Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc), for taking the time to share their support for this bill with lawmakers at the committee's hearing in November.

The bipartisan proposal - already unanimously approved by the State Senate - would extend an existing permit for overweight hauling (98,000 pounds over six axles) of milk to the hauling of all liquid dairy products, including liquid whey. The change would alleviate pressure from a truck driver shortage, support greater fuel efficiency and overall sustainability, improve road safety, and bring Wisconsin in line with higher hauling limits allowed in other key dairy states.

The bill is expected to receive a vote in the full Assembly in January, where it must be approved before it advances to the Governor. WCMA will provide updates for members on

House to Vote This Week on Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act



Members of the House are set to vote Wednesday on the [Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act](#). The bipartisan proposal would allow whole and reduced-fat milk to again be served in the School Meals Program for the first time since these options were removed from the program in 2012. In June, in concert with the International Dairy Foods Association, WCMA submitted [a letter to support the bill](#).

The bill is led by House Agriculture Committee Chairman GT Thompson (R-PA) and Rep. Kim Schrier (D-WA). It has more than 100 bipartisan cosponsors, demonstrating significant positive momentum for this issue in Congress. WCMA will continue to share relevant developments with members.

View, Share CDR Raw Milk Fact Sheet



As state legislatures debate the legalization of raw milk sales, WCMA remains committed to sharing resources and information on the dangers of these proposals. Members are encouraged to review and share the [Center for Dairy Research's Raw Milk Fact Sheet](#) detailing the significant food safety risks posed by consuming unpasteurized milk.

WCMA continues to advocate against a draft bill aiming to lift Wisconsin's current restriction on raw milk sales, as the product can contain dangerous disease-causing bacteria that pasteurization is designed to kill. Email your state lawmakers today using WCMA's [easy-to-use advocacy tool](#) and urge them not to support this proposal. For more information, please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

GRANTS



Latest DBIA Awards Total \$3.7 Million to 41 Dairy Processors

The Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA), a partnership between WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research (CDR), yesterday announced **41 grants totaling nearly \$4 million** for farmstead and commercial dairy processing businesses across the Midwest.

In this latest round, DBIA will be distributing 37 Dairy Business Builder grants totaling \$3.3 million to small-to-medium farms and processors in nine of the 11 participating states. Nearly 70 percent of Business Builder awardees are first time winners. Recipients include eight WCMA member businesses:

- Alpinage Artisan Cheese, Oak Creek, WI
- Burnett Dairy Cooperative, Grantsburg, WI
- Caputo Cheese/Wiscon Corp., Melrose Park, IL
- Cinnamon Ridge Farms, Donahue, IA
- Hidden Springs Creamery, Westby, WI
- Marieke Gouda/Holland's Family Cheese, Thorp, WI
- Specialty Cheese Company, Reeseville, WI
- Westby Cooperative Creamery, Westby, WI

DBIA is also awarding four Dairy Industry Impact grants totaling \$400,000 to small dairy processing businesses in Wisconsin and Minnesota. This grant program supports projects in targeted topic areas that have the potential to positively impact the dairy industry as a whole. In the latest grant cycle, applications were accepted for projects related to exporting dairy products. All four Industry Impact awardees are WCMA members:

- Milk Specialties Global, Eden Prairie, MN
- Renard's Cheese/Rosewood Dairy, Algoma, WI
- Sartori Company, Plymouth, WI
- Specialty Cheese Company, Reeseville, WI

In total, including these grants, DBIA has awarded more than \$13 million in grants to 128 dairy processing businesses in the Midwest since its inception. U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisconsin) successfully led the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives program to passage through Congress as part of the 2018 Farm Bill. Since the creation of the program, Sen. Baldwin has championed increasing investments to support the work of the DBIA in Wisconsin and across the Midwest. Programs in California, Tennessee, and Vermont have also received funding. More information is available at cdr.wisc.edu/dbia.

IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *The Badger Herald*: [Cheesemaking organism may become state microbe, researchers say](#)
- *Wisconsin Public Radio*: [Food Friday: 'Tis the season for cheese boards](#)
- *Milwaukee Magazine*: [Ask MilMag: What is the Most Wisconsin Thing You've Ever Experienced?](#)

National/International

- *Dairy Processing*: [Cultures, enzymes are catalysts for dairy products](#) (Featuring WCMA members Chr. Hansen, IFF, and Nelson-Jameson,
- *VermontBiz*: [Curt Alpeter named CEO of the Grafton Village Cheese Company](#)
- *Winsight Grocery Business*: [Kroger's Murray's Cheese gets into the subscription business](#) (Featuring WCMA member The Kroger Co.)

MEMBERSHIP



WCMA Directors Meet in Madison

Many thanks go to the members of WCMA's Board of Directors, who gathered in Madison, Wisconsin and virtually via Zoom last week. The group heard updates on WCMA's recent regulatory and legislative advocacy, membership growth, and upcoming events including the World Championship Cheese Contest and CheeseExpo. Directors also cast their votes to determine the winners of WCMA's Recognition Awards, to be announced soon.



WCMA SCHOLARSHIPS

Apply Today for WCMA Student Scholarships



Submit your application today for WCMA's [annual student scholarships](#) - and mark your calendar for April 17, when a total of \$19,000 in scholarship awards will be presented at [CheeseExpo](#) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Seven awards are available across WCMA's three scholarships: the WCMA Myron P. "Mike" Dean Cheese Industry Student Scholarship, the WCMA Cheese Industry Supplier Student Scholarship, and the Brian Eggebrecht Student Scholarship Supporting Skilled Trades in the Dairy Industry. Complete details on all awards are [available online](#).

Applicants for all WCMA scholarships must supply school transcripts, a letter of recommendation, and a completed application form. All applicants will be notified of their application status in March.

EDUCATION



Sign Up for New WCMA Safety Trainings

Limited space remains available in a series of all-new safety trainings - designed with input from WCMA's Health & Safety Group - to help support dairy processors' efforts to keep their team members safe on the job.

Train the Safety Trainer

WCMA's interactive **Train the Safety Trainer Course** will equip the industry's safety trainers with the knowledge, skills, and strategies to effectively communicate safety expectations and protocols for maximum compliance.

Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors

For safety education geared toward all dairy processing employees, register your team members for **Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors**.

Taught in a [convenient virtual format on January 30](#) by instructors from Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) with significant experience in dairy processing plants, this interactive class covers best practices for design and delivery methods used by successful workforce safety trainers.

For \$219 per person, participants will come away with a wealth of new skills and strategies, a packet of training materials, and a certificate of completion from Chippewa Valley Technical College and WCMA that they and their employer can retain as a record of instruction.

Each class is limited to just 24 participants, so sign up today!

**REGISTER
NOW**

Offered six times in the coming year both [in-person and virtually](#), **Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors** will teach attendees about their rights; employer responsibilities; and how to identify, abate, and avoid job-related hazards. The curriculum concentrates on the key focus areas of the Occupational Safety & Health Administration's ongoing Local Emphasis Program for food processors: machine guarding, lockout/tag out, prevention of slips, trips, and falls, chemical controls, and control of hazardous energy.

In-person classes cost \$179, including lunch and snacks. Virtual sessions are offered at just \$149. These classes are capped at 24 attendees, so don't wait!

**REGISTER
NOW**

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



Limited Space Remaining in WCMA Front-Line Leadership Classes

Join the ranks of over 1,000 WCMA member employees who have sharpened their leadership skills and expanded their networks through WCMA's popular [Front-Line Leadership Trainings](#)! These courses fill quickly, so register now to secure your space.

SIGN UP ONLINE

Each class is a one-day offering, running from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (CT). All Front-Line Leadership classes are offered a la carte and may be taken in any order. Here's a look at our fully virtual offerings in the coming months:

- Part A will focus on developing essential leadership skills.
 - [January 23](#) - **Two seats left!**
 - [January 24](#)
- Part B will provide strategies to help supervisors boost staff performance.
 - [February 26](#)
 - [February 29](#)
- Part C will help trainees learn to foster a collaborative team mindset in their workplace.
 - [April 2](#) - **Three seats left!**
 - [April 3](#)

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

Additional Industry Educational Opportunities

WCMA is pleased to share opportunities for industry training and enrichment. Here's a look at upcoming offerings from WCMA partners:

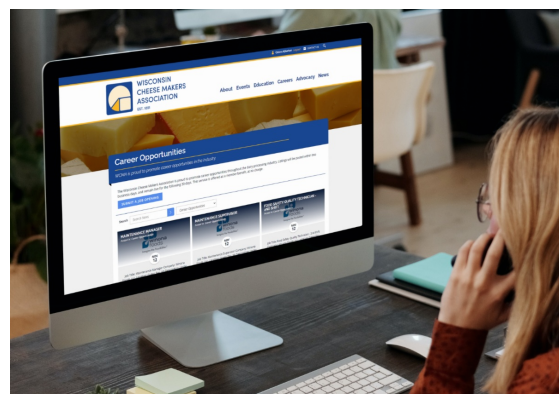
- On-Demand:
 - [Introduction to Food Safety Principles \(English and Spanish\)](#) - Cornell University
 - [Online Dairy Science and Sanitation \(English and Spanish\)](#) - Cornell University
 - [Artisan Dairy Food Safety Coaching](#) - Cornell University
 - [Online HACCP Training](#) - North Carolina 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

WORKFORCE

Post Career Opportunities on Free, Online WCMA Jobs Board

Visit WisCheeseMakers.org today to share your career opportunities on WCMA's free online jobs board! 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 Bassett Mechanical, Crystal Farms, Foremost Farms USA, Masters Gallery Foods, and Sabrosura Foods.



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

SUBMIT POSTINGS

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