



# WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE  
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



## WCMA SIGNATURE EVENTS



## Plan Ahead for Expanded Education Sessions at 2022 CheeseExpo

Join thousands of your colleagues in dairy processing April 12-14, 2022 at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee for the event of the year: [CheeseExpo!](#)

**CHEESEEXPO**  
Global Technology for Dairy Processors

Your hosts WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research (CDR) promise more educational seminars and workshops than ever before, to match a record number of exhibits from trusted industry suppliers. [Register by February 1](#) for a 20 percent discount!

Leaders from the **Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, U.S. Dairy Export Council, and Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin** join WCMA and CDR to lend their expertise to a robust seminar lineup on the mornings of April 13 and 14. 2022 CheeseExpo is your hub for up-to-date knowledge on a wide range of hot topics in dairy processing, including:

- Opportunities to advance international sales and sustainability efforts
- Domestic opportunities for value-added cheese sales
- Updates on recently-completed cheese research projects
- New and advanced technology in value-added cheese production
- Dairy product safety and sanitation
- Strategies to recruit and retain an effective workforce
- Methods for controlling cheese quality, including brine management, phage monitoring, and flavor defects in cheddar cheese
- Ways to create an effective cheese grading program

Visit [CheeseExpo.org](#) today to reserve your seat in these engaging sessions. Questions?

REGISTER NOW



## World Championship Cheese Contest Offers Exciting New and Expanded Classes

Enter now to compete in a host of [new and expanded categories](#) in the 2022 [World Championship Cheese Contest](#), proudly hosted by the WCMA March 1-3 in Madison, Wisconsin! Entries are being accepted now through January 26 using our secure [MyEntries](#) system.

Among the new classes this year, the fast-growing favorite – **cheese curds** – make their official debut with classes for both flavored and unflavored curds.

Categories have also been added for regular and flavored cream cheeses, semi-soft cheeses with natural rinds, cheeses with blue molding (including sheep's milk cheeses with blue mold, smear ripened cheeses that are washed with wine or spirits, and two types of dry dairy ingredients.

For a full list of all 141 distinct classes offered in the 2022 World Championship Cheese Contest, check out our [comprehensive entry kit](#).



Don't miss this opportunity for world-class evaluation and competition of your best products - [enter now!](#) Have questions about the contest? Please contact [WCMA Events Manager Kirsten Strohenger](#).

ENTER TODAY



## Evers Directs \$30M to Food Security Initiative

Wisconsin food banks will receive an **additional \$30 million** in federal pandemic aid funding to help fight hunger through the purchase of Wisconsin-made products, including milk, cheese, yogurt, and butter, Governor Tony Evers announced last week.

The investment more than doubles the \$25 million previously allocated to the state's Food Security Initiative, a program WCMA has successfully advocated for since its inception. WCMA thanks Gov. Evers for again investing in this program and applauds dairy processors for their commitment to feeding their communities.

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## Coronavirus Headline News

### Wisconsin

- *WTMJ-TV*: **COVID-19 hospitalizations in Wisconsin are at their highest level since January 2021**
- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: **Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers seeks 100 FEMA workers, utilizes National Guard nurses for hospital staffing shortages as COVID-19 surges**

### National/International

- *Forbes*: **160,000 unvaccinated Americans died from COVID-19 since June — shots could have saved them, study finds**
- *Associated Press*: **Kroger ending some COVID-19 benefits for unvaccinated staff**
- *Wall Street Journal*: **Pfizer says its COVID-19 pill likely works against Omicron**



# POLICY COMMITTEE

## Join WCMA Policy Committee January 12

[Register today](#) to join the next WCMA Policy Committee meeting, set for Wednesday, January 12 from 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. (CT) in Madison, Wisconsin. Your voice is valuable - use it to effect real change that encourages the growth of the dairy processing industry!

The meeting will include lunch at The Madison Club and special guest speakers **Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary Randy Romanski** and **State Senator Joan Ballweg**. These state leaders will share updates on key policy topics of interest to WCMA members, including bipartisan efforts to boost agricultural exports, Dairy Rules Advisory Committee activities, truth-in-food-labeling legislation, and more. Their presentations will be followed by committee discussion before meetings with state lawmakers in the Capitol.

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

[REGISTER NOW](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS



## WCMA Webinar

*Growing Your Dairy Business with  
Support from Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin*

## Space Available in Today's WCMA Webinar

Register now to join WCMA **today** for a [free, members-only webinar](#) focused on practical strategies to help grow your dairy processing business.

From 1:00-2:00 p.m. (CT), Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin (DFW) leaders will share expert insights on how dairy businesses can successfully boost their operations using DFW as a resource. Presentations include:

- **Chad Vincent, Chief Executive Officer**, providing an overview of the history, strategy, and structure that informs DFW's work;
- **Jen Walsh, Chief Operating Officer**, discussing ways DFW utilizes research insights to ensure effective programming;
- **Suzanne Fanning, Chief Marketing Officer**, offering insight into DFW's multi-faceted marketing efforts, from consumer-facing campaigns to the Cheeselandia community and more; and
- **Kirk Scott, Senior Vice President, Dairy Company Communications**, sharing

DFW's approach to reaching dairy professionals across a variety of different channels and industry sectors.



**Chad Vincent**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Jen Walsh**  
Chief Operating Officer



**Suzanne Fanning**  
Chief Marketing Officer



**Kirk Scott**  
Senior Vice President

Register today: [WisCheeseMakers.org/Events](https://WisCheeseMakers.org/Events)

**JOIN TODAY**

Following the program, WCMA staff will facilitate a question-and-answer session with presenters. Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

## Register Now for WCMA Young Professionals January Outing



**SIGN UP TODAY**

Act now to reserve your space in WCMA's next Young Professionals event on Friday, January 21!

We'll start with a tour of Nasonville Dairy in Marshfield, Wisconsin, followed by a networking lunch at nearby Rose Bowl Lanes Bowling Alley.

Registration includes both lunch and activities, and costs \$30 per person. Only 16 spots are left, so don't delay!

Have questions or ideas for future Young Professionals gatherings? Please contact [WCMA Events Manager Kirsten Strohmenger](#).

**EDUCATION**



## Build Leadership Skills with WCMA Trainings

Research shows a [clear link between training and worker retention](#) – and WCMA members know from firsthand experience the value of keeping skilled team players. WCMA is here to help with a fresh line-up of our popular leadership trainings. By member request, all trainings will be offered in a hybrid format, allowing participants to join in-person in Madison, Wisconsin, or online via Zoom.

Our Front-Line Leadership classes, designed specifically for new and seasoned supervisors, can be taken in any order:

- February 10: Front-Line Leadership - [Part A: Developing Essential Leadership Skills](#) - 10 spaces left
- March 17: Front-Line Leadership - [Part B: Positively Impacting Staff Performance](#) - 11 spaces left
- April 7: Front-Line Leadership - [Part C: Cultivating a Team](#) - 10 spaces left

WCMA's [Next Step Leadership](#) course also returns Thursday, March 31 for established leaders who have completed any of our Front-Line or Advanced Leadership trainings. In this unique session, we'll review basic leadership concepts and take a deep dive into talent retention strategies.

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

**REGISTER TODAY**



# WCMA SCHOLARSHIPS

## WCMA Offers Seven Scholarships in 2022

**Applications are open** until **February 16, 2022** for seven WCMA student scholarships worth a total of \$19,000. Applicants must provide school transcripts, a letter of recommendation, and a completed application form by February 16 to be considered for a scholarship.

In 2022, two students will be awarded the **WCMA Myron P. "Mike" Dean Cheese Industry Student Scholarship**, worth \$3,000 each. Any employee or child of an employee of a WCMA dairy manufacturing, processing, or marketing member company may apply.

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.

WCMA will also select two students to receive the **Brian Eggebrecht Student Scholarship**, worth \$2,000 each. This award, named in honor of Championship Cheese Contest Chairman and generous donor Brian Eggebrecht, aims to support skilled trades in the dairy industry. It is open to students attending any technical school in Wisconsin and high school seniors registered to attend a Wisconsin technical school.

Application forms are available at [WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org) or by request from **WCMA Business & Membership Manager Sara Schmidt**. Successful applicants will be announced in March 2022, with awards presented on April 13 at CheeseExpo in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



## Sign Up Today for CDR Certificate for Dairy Processing - Online

Register now for the Center for Dairy Research's online **Certificate for Dairy Processing** course, scheduled to begin January 20, 2022. Led by respected industry experts, the

program will use a convenient online format and practical approach to educate students on the basic aspects of dairy processing.

Each Thursday from 3:00-5:00 p.m. (CT), participants will delve into the fundamentals of dairy processing, such as food safety, milk quality, cheese production, cheese ripening and defects, cheese evaluation and functionality, and more. Students will also be expected to complete a short project of their choosing with the assistance of a mentor.

**REGISTER NOW**

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## 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:

- January 11-12: [Food Safety Workshop](#) | University of Wisconsin-Stout

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## INDUSTRY UPDATES

### Attend WDATCP Meetings on Pasteurization, Phosphatase Testing

Join a [meeting of the Pasteurization Subcommittee](#) of Wisconsin's Dairy Rules Advisory Committee tomorrow, Wednesday, December 15 at 1:00 p.m. (CT). Agenda topics include current regulations on broken pasteurizer seals, certification of industry emergency pasteurizer re-sealers, and electronic pasteurization records.

Additionally, the [Phosphatase Testing Subcommittee will meet](#) virtually on January 13. The group will discuss items such as current phosphatase testing regulations and next steps for a possible study on the Charm method for phosphatase testing in cheese.

As an active member of the [Dairy Rules Advisory Committee](#), WCMA advises the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) on actions to improve the state's dairy rules and regulations.

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## Apply by January 7 for Dairy Processor Grants

WCMA members operating in Wisconsin can apply now for [Dairy Processor Grants](#) of up to \$50,000, available via the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP). **Thanks to WCMA's lobbying efforts, the available funding for this program has been doubled to \$400,000 for 2022!** Applications are due January 7, with successful applicants to be announced in February.

Eligible applicants must operate a licensed dairy processing plant in Wisconsin that is engaged in pasteurizing, processing, or manufacturing milk or dairy products. Awards can be used to address a wide range of dairy business needs, such as food safety, staff training, plant expansion or modernization, and professional consulting services. Projects must increase capacity or production, and processors are required to provide a match of 20 percent of the grant amount.

Applications must be received by [WDATCP staff](#) by 5:00 p.m. (CT) on Friday, January 7, 2022. For assistance with your application, please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

**APPLY TODAY**

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## Prepare Now to Apply for DBIA Business Builder Grants in 2022



Small- to medium-sized dairy processors in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin can prepare now to apply for a new, \$1 million round of grants administered by the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA). This advance notice allows applicants to develop business plans, secure vendor quotes, and take advantage of webinars and other resources [now available online](#).

The DBIA, a partnership between the Center for Dairy Research and WCMA, will open its

Dairy Business Builder grant competition on February 1, 2022, with completed applications due March 31, 2022. Eligible projects will include dairy farm diversification and on-farm processing, the creation of value-added dairy products, and efforts to market dairy products for export. Reimbursement grants of up to \$50,000 each will be awarded through a competitive review process.

The DBIA is supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Since its inception as part of the 2018 Farm Bill, the DBIA has administered nearly \$1.5 million in 38 grants to dairy farms and businesses in all five participating Midwestern states. The program also offers technical assistance and education to dairy farmers and processors in the region.

## WORKFORCE



## Build Your Workforce at WCMA Job Fair at CheeseExpo 2022

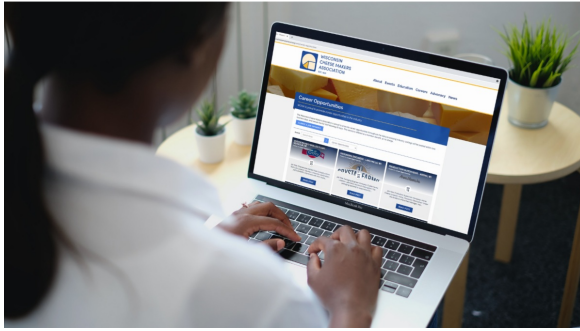
Recruit the best and brightest at the [WCMA Job Fair](#), set for Tuesday, April 12 from 3:00-5:00 p.m., just ahead of CheeseExpo 2022 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin!

**RESERVE YOUR  
BOOTH**

**Only eight spaces remain** for exhibiting member companies and cooperatives, and both dairy processors and industry suppliers are invited to participate. A booth cost of just \$200 includes your table, skirting, chairs, passes for up to four representatives from your organization to staff the Job Fair, as well as a full buffet of snacks and beverages. Space is first-come, first-served, so act now to reserve your booth!

This special event offers an exclusive opportunity for WCMA members to connect with students participating in the Collegiate Dairy Products Evaluation Contest, which will also be held at CheeseExpo. Students hail from 15 colleges and universities across the U.S. WCMA is also working with representatives from the University of Wisconsin System, the Wisconsin Technical College System and various high school agricultural program coordinators to bring in more prospective interns and employees for your businesses!

## Share Career Openings on WCMA Jobs Board



Visit WCMA's [online jobs board](#) to see and share career opportunities from members Baker Cheese, Caloris Engineering, and Savencia Cheese USA - Kolb-Lena, Inc.

Have an opportunity at your company or cooperative? WCMA members can [post openings](#) on the Jobs Board anytime - it's free and easy!

### POST JOB OPENINGS

## IN THE NEWS

### Wisconsin

- *Wisconsin State Farmer*: [AmeriCorps Farm to School program is win-win for farmers, schools and community](#) (Featuring WCMA member Springside Cheese)
- *WITI-TV*: [What's new in holiday specialty cheeses](#) (Featuring WCMA members LaClare Family Creamery, Maple Leaf Cheese and Uplands Cheese)

### National/International

- *Progressive Dairy*: [October U.S. dairy export value higher](#)
- *Bloomberg*: [That cream cheese shortage you heard about? Cyberattacks played a part](#)
- *KHSL-TV*: [Success for one cheese kit company is helping local cheesemakers get recognition during pandemic](#) (Featuring WCMA members Central Coast Creamery and Rogue Creamery)
- *Food & Wine*: [The Whole Foods '12 Days of Cheese' sale returns with a dozen cheesy deals](#) (Featuring WCMA members Rogue Creamery and Uplands Cheese)
- *The Daily Record*: [Eight great gift ideas for the holidays from Holmes County](#) (Featuring WCMA member Guggisberg Cheese)
- *AgWeb*: [Embracing change: How the magic of cheese helped revive a Missouri dairy](#)

## BelGioioso Expands New York Production



Congratulations to WCMA member BelGioioso Cheese on the [addition of a cold storage warehouse](#) at their Glenville, New York facility! The \$6 million project will expand capacity at the plant, where production has tripled since its opening in May 2020.

## IN MEMORIAM

## Jim Kraemer

WCMA mourns with the family and friends of Jim Kraemer, who [passed away last week](#) at the age of 90. Jim, a well-known figure in Wisconsin's cheese industry, led Kraemer Wisconsin Cheese for 43 years with his late wife, Joanne.

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## Jerrold N. "Jerry" Meissner

WCMA mourns with the family and friends of Jerrold N. "Jerry" Meissner, a dairy farmer and longtime associate of Nasonville Dairy. Jerry passed away on December 13. A full obituary is not yet available. Details are expected in the coming days from [Rembs Funeral Home](#).

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## MEMBERSHIP



## WCMA Board Members, Past Presidents Gather

Our thanks go to WCMA's Board of Directors for their thoughtful, productive engagement at their meeting last week. Current WCMA President Steve Bechel of Eau Galle Cheese welcomed Past Presidents Kim Heiman, Myron Olson, Mark Schleitwiler, Mike Sipple, Steve Stettler, and Jeff Wideman, as well as WCMA



Recognition Committee Chair  
John Epprecht.

These insightful industry professionals have provided decades of strong leadership and innovative direction for WCMA's endeavors, enabling us to better serve members and encourage the growth of the dairy processing industry. WCMA sincerely appreciates their time and service.

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## 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 Brian Baker of Baker Cheese, Inc.!

### **Brian Baker** **Baker Cheese, Inc.**

#### **Favorite Cheese**

String Cheese

#### **Proudest Achievement**

Growing our company into a key supplier of string cheese in the nation without sacrificing our dedication to high quality cheese.

#### **Why I Support WCMA**

"WCMA has a legacy of a dedicated mission and strong values in maintaining and growing the cheese and dairy industry beyond just Wisconsin. The authentic people that help drive our industry are enjoyable to work with and are valued partners in the sustainability of Wisconsin cheese."



Have an idea for a WCMA social media campaign or other communication? Please contact [WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton](#).

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## Sign Up Colleagues for WCMA Newsletter

Thanks for subscribing to WCMA's weekly electronic newsletter! Please note, WCMA extends this benefit to all 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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