



# WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE  
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



## ADVOCACY



### WCMA Notes: Fight Back Against Raw Milk Bill

In recent years, strong advocacy from dairy processors, farmers, and the medical community has kept bids to legalize broad sales of raw milk in Wisconsin at bay, notes WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney in [this month's WCMA Notes column](#).

However, with the introduction of a new bill last month comes a call to action for WCMA members in Wisconsin: make your voice heard. Read more at [WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org), and use WCMA's [simple online advocacy tool](#) to contact your lawmakers today.



---

### WCMA Opposes Wisconsin Foreign Land Ownership Proposal

WCMA is voicing concern over [Wisconsin Assembly Bill 349/Senate Bill 348](#), a new legislative proposal designed to limit foreign ownership of land in the state to just 50 acres, a reduction from the current maximum of 640 acres. Certain manufacturers may be exempt from the limit, but the bill offers no exception specifically for agricultural production or uses, jeopardizing opportunities for some dairy companies, including some processors, to grow in Wisconsin. WCMA is part of a coalition of [15 agricultural advocacy groups](#) opposing the bill as currently written. WCMA will keep members informed of developments.

## SIGNATURE EVENTS



## Celebrate Industry Excellence with Friends, Colleagues at CheeseExpo

Come together with friends and colleagues at [CheeseExpo](#), set for April 16-18, for a full slate of celebrations honoring excellence in dairy processing! Visit [CheeseExpo.org](#) now until January 30 to receive 20 percent off all registrations.



Special Events: April 16, 2024 | Exhibits & Seminars: April 17-18, 2024

**REGISTER NOW**

Enjoy the fast-paced, exciting Chr. Hansen Reception & Championship Cheese Auction on Wednesday, April 17. After a busy day of education and networking, get ready to bid on gold-medal cheeses, butters, and more from the 2024 World Championship Cheese Contest - all in support of WCMA trainings, scholarships, and programs for the future of the dairy industry.

On Thursday, April 18, applaud the pioneers of the U.S. dairy processing industry at the WCMA Recognition Breakfast exclusively sponsored by dsm-firmenich. Join friends new and old to celebrate those who have been selected by their peers for their monumental contributions and lasting legacies.

That evening, join in a formal celebration of the outstanding craftsmanship of dairy manufacturers nationwide at the World Champions Reception exclusively sponsored by Ever.Ag and the World Champions Awards Banquet. Afterward, close your CheeseExpo experience on a high note with music and refreshments at the popular Afterglow Reception at the Hilton Hotel Crystal Ballroom.

Find a complete Schedule of Events and full registration details at [CheeseExpo.org](https://CheeseExpo.org). Have questions? Please contact [events@wischeesemakers.org](mailto:events@wischeesemakers.org).

# WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP CHEESE CONTEST

MARCH 5–7, 2024

## Contest Entry Savings End Friday

Just days remain to save on entry fees for the [2024 World Championship Cheese Contest](#)! WCMA's special early entry rate of just \$75 per entry expires this Friday, December 8. After that date, all submissions will cost \$90 per entry. The final entry deadline is Friday, January 26.

Complete entry rules and Contest details are available in the [2024 Official Entry Kit](#). Please contact [WCMA Contest Director Kirsten Strohmenger](#) with questions.

[SUBMIT ENTRIES](#)

INDUSTRY UPDATES



## Emmi Roth Celebrates Stoughton Ribbon Cutting



WCMA applauds member company Emmi Roth, which last week celebrated the ribbon cutting of its new corporate headquarters and cheese conversion facility in Stoughton, Wisconsin.

Members of Emmi's leadership team traveled from Switzerland to join Emmi Roth President & Managing Director and WCMA President Tim Omer, Governor Tony Evers, and industry leaders for the celebration.

The facility will create 100 new jobs, and will be one of the most sustainable dairy conversion plants in the U.S. For more, see related news coverage of the event:

- *SwissInfo*: [Emmi opens new cheese facility in the U.S.](#)
  - *WISC-TV*: [Emmi Roth opens new headquarters in Stoughton](#)
  - *Stoughton Courier Hub*: [Say cheese: Emmi Roth company headquarters opens](#)
-



## U.S. Cheese Consumption Hits All-Time High

Americans consumed 41.7 pounds of cheese per person in 2022 to set a new per capita cheese consumption record in the United States, according to [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) data](#) released last week. Consumption of all dairy products reached 653 pounds per capita, a jump of 40 pounds over the past decade. Butter consumption was reported at 6 pounds per capita, while yogurt reached nearly 14 pounds per person. USDA's full report is [available for download online](#).

---

## CWCBA Opens Scholarship Applications

The Central Wisconsin Cheesemakers and Buttermakers Association (CWCBA) is [accepting scholarship applications now](#) through February 4 for three \$1,500 awards through the Marshfield Area Community Foundation.

One scholarship will be awarded to an applicant from a cheese or butter plant member of CWCBA enrolled full-time in a program of study toward any degree, with an emphasis given to students pursuing a degree in dairy science, food science or a related degree.

The second and third scholarships will be awarded to students from a member company supplying equipment, ingredients, services, etc. who is enrolled full-time in a program of study toward any degree, with an emphasis given to students pursuing a degree in dairy science, food science, or related degree.

Financial need will be considered in awarding these scholarships. Please contact [CWCBA's Peggy Noeldner](#) with questions.

---

## Join WDATCP, DFW on Thailand Trade Mission

Wisconsin cheese companies are invited to join DATCP and Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin on a trade mission to Thailand to increase awareness of



Wisconsin cheese.

The mission will include a USDA Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) briefing, a Wisconsin cheese brand awareness seminar and product showcase, meetings with importers, retailer and food service provider site visits, and more!

Objectives include:

- Introducing Wisconsin companies and their products to Thai importers and buyers
- Generating awareness of Wisconsin artisan cheeses to retail, food service operators, specialty cheese shops, and other Thai retailers
- Increasing Wisconsin companies' awareness of the Thai market
- Providing opportunities to meet with potential Thai buyers
- Generating Wisconsin cheese awareness to Thai consumers and trade through online and offline media

Interested in participating? Contact [WDATCP staff](#).

---

## USDA Seeking Butter Bids

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has [issued a solicitation](#) for the procurement of butter to be used in domestic food distribution programs. Bids are due December 11 by 1:00 p.m. (CT). Please contact [USDA staff](#) with questions.

---

## IN THE NEWS

### Wisconsin

- *Dairy Star*: [Supporting the small family farm](#) (Featuring WCMA member Henning Cheese)
- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Clock Shadow Creamery to close store; Hill Valley Dairy to take over location](#) (Featuring WCMA members Clock Shadow Creamery and Hill Valley Dairy)
- *Wisconsin Public Radio*: [Tasting cheese for dairy research](#)
- *Business Insider*: [Why a Wisconsin county is dumping cheese brine on its roads this winter](#)

### National/International

- *The Weekly Times*: [U.S. cheese importer builds \\$100M dairy plant](#)
  - *Sky News*: ['Brutal on the nose': Shoppers warned about smelly Minger cheese on Asda's shelves this Christmas](#)
  - *Brownfield Ag News*: [Fractional changes for cheese, butter production](#)
- 

## EDUCATION



# WCMA Webinar

## Continued Education for Dairy Processors

### Explore Industry Education with WCMA, Partners in Free Webinar

Join WCMA next Tuesday, December 12 at 1:00 p.m. (CT) for our next **free, members-only webinar**, previewing the industry educational offerings available in the coming year!

Plan your 2024 professional development with presentations from the Center for Dairy Research, Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, and WCMA. Our featured guest speakers include:

- Andrea Miller, Outreach Program Manager, Center for Dairy Research
- Adam Brock; Vice President of Food Safety, Quality and Regulatory Compliance; Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- Rueben Nilsson, Dairy Pilot Plant Manager, University of Wisconsin-River Falls
- Rebekah Sweeney, Senior Director of Programs & Policy, WCMA
- Sara Schmidt, Membership Director, WCMA

Presenters will reserve time for Q&A at the end of the webinar. To submit a question in advance, please email **WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton** by Monday, December 11 at 12:00 p.m. (CT).



**Andrea Miller**  
Center for  
Dairy Research



**Adam Brock**  
Dairy Farmers  
of Wisconsin



**Rueben Nilsson**  
UW-River Falls



**Rebekah Sweeney**  
WCMA



**Sara Schmidt**  
WCMA

**RSVP TODAY**

This offering is the latest in WCMA's **monthly webinar series**. Webinar topics are driven by WCMA member feedback and cover a range of themes such as business development, communication strategies, and industry resources. Suggestions and ideas for future topics are welcome anytime!

---



# EMPLOYEE SAFETY TRAININGS

**New offerings!**



## Sign Up for New WCMA Safety Trainings

Reserve space now in WCMA's all-new safety trainings, designed to support dairy processors' efforts to keep their team members safe on the job. Two courses are available, offered virtually and in-person in a convenient one-day format.

WCMA's interactive **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.

Taught 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.

Act now to join the training **in-person** at WCMA's training center in Madison, Wisconsin next Tuesday, December 12, or **online on January 30**.

For safety education geared toward all dairy processing employees, register your team members for **Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors**. Offered six times in the coming year with **in-person and virtual options**, this new course will teach participants about their rights, employer responsibilities, and - most importantly - how to identify, abate, and avoid job-related hazards they may encounter.

The curriculum concentrates on safety strategies related to machine guarding, lockout/tag out, prevention of slips, trips, and falls, chemical controls, and control of hazardous energy - the key focus areas of the Occupational Safety & Health Administration's ongoing Local Emphasis Program for food processors.

**REGISTER NOW**

**REGISTER NOW**

Please contact **[WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#)** with your questions and ideas.

---





## WCMA Front-Line Leaders Build Stronger Teams

Many thanks to last week's class of valued WCMA member employees participating in Part C of our Front-Line Leadership training. Thanks also go to their employers Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery, KDI Cheese, Schuman Cheese, Winona Foods, and WOW Logistics for supporting them in their leadership goals.



## Register Now for 2024 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 for Winter 2023 and Spring 2024:

- Part A will focus on developing essential leadership skills.
  - [January 23](#) - **Just 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](#)
  - [April 3](#)

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

---

## Register Now for Special Discount on Vermont Cheese Council Educational Opportunities

Expand your knowledge with two new offerings from the Vermont Cheese Council (VCC) - available at a discount exclusively for WCMA members!



VCC's [Artisan Cheesemakers Winter Conference](#), set for February 15-16, 2024, will feature topics such as risk management, solutions for cheese production issues, how cheesemakers can get the most out of working with a distributor, a virtual tour with a cheese producer in Brazil, team management, and more. Registration costs \$95 through December, or \$110 after that.



VCC's six-week [Business Miniversity](#) is suitable for new (or up-and-coming) business owners/managers AND those who have run/managed businesses for a while – but never had training in these areas. The course is designed to equip participants with helpful, actionable information in 12 virtual sessions. Registration costs \$100 for the full series.

Use code **W120PCG** to receive 20 percent off your registration for either of these upcoming offerings. For more information, please contact [VCC staff](#).

---

## 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:

- December 6: [Cheesemaking Fundamentals \(Self-Study, Online\)](#) - 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

## IN MEMORIAM

### Betty Babler



WCMA mourns with the family and friends of Betty Babler, who passed away on November 24, 2023. Betty was owner/operator of the Cascade Cheese Company alongside her husband of 40 years, Keith, and was involved in the business until her passing.

Following Betty's wishes, a celebration of her life will be held in the spring of 2024. More information is available in her [obituary](#).

## MEMBERSHIP

# WELCOME



## *NEW WCMA MEMBERS!*

### Dairy Industry Suppliers



New WCMA member [Circle Incorporated](#) is a family-owned company founded in 1978. With product lines varying from the original circular roll-headers to athletic grade rubber matting, Circle supplies custom manufactured products.



New WCMA member [Dufek Manufacturing](#) is fourth generation family-owned company serving consumers and businesses with custom wooden concepts, private labeling, and industrial services.



New WCMA member [Engineered Seal Products](#) has served the food and beverage markets for 50+ years with in-house application engineering, component design, contract assembly & supply chain expertise.



New WCMA member [Raman Smart Process Solutions LTD.](#) is a dairy industry supplier.



New WCMA member [Rheolution](#) manufactures and supplies the CoaguSens™ family of instruments, specially designed to measure and control milk coagulation for the cheese and yogurt industries.

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

[Unsubscribe kstrohmenger@wischeesemakers.org](mailto:kstrohmenger@wischeesemakers.org)

[Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by [news@wischeesemakers.org](mailto:news@wischeesemakers.org) powered by



Try email marketing for free today!