



# WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE  
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



## ADVOCACY



## Connect with Governor, Lawmakers at WCMA Wisconsin Advocacy Day January 17

Sign up now to [join WCMA's open Policy Committee](#) next Tuesday, January 17 in Madison, Wisconsin for an in-person advocacy day, featuring **newly added speaker Governor Tony Evers!**

Take advantage of this unique opportunity to learn about the legislative session ahead and advocate directly to policymakers for industry priorities.

**RSVP TODAY**



After check-in and networking from 9:30-10:00 a.m., the day kicks off with a live, in-person welcome from Governor Evers. WCMA staff will lead an advocacy overview, followed by key addresses and Q&A sessions on a range of state and federal topics:

- Key Address and Q&A: Agriculture and Food Safety Policy Advisor to U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin Sydney Scott
  - Topics: 2023 Farm Bill, Federal Milk Marketing Order Reform, Dairy Labeling Regulatory Enforcement, Immigration Reform
- Key Address and Q&A: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Deputy Secretary Sarah Barry
  - Topics: Wastewater Regulation, Wisconsin State Budget
- Key Address and Q&A: Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary Randy Romanski
  - Topics: Food Safety Regulation, Agricultural Exports and Dairy Processor Grants, Wisconsin State Budget



**Sydney Scott**  
*Office of U.S. Senator  
Tammy Baldwin*



**Sarah Barry**  
*Wisconsin Department  
of Natural Resources*



**Secretary Randy Romanski**  
*Wisconsin Department of  
Agriculture, Trade and  
Consumer Protection*

Following a networking lunch at 12:00 p.m., the meeting continues with an insightful Legislative Leaders Panel featuring insights from:

- Sen. Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan), Chair of Senate Committee on Agriculture & Tourism, Member of Joint Finance Committee
- Sen. Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green), Co-Chair of Joint Finance Committee
- Rep. Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc), Member of Joint Finance Committee
- Rep. Travis Tranel (R-Cuba City), Chair of Assembly Committee on Agriculture

Attendees will receive a briefing from WCMA staff before taking a short walk to the State Capitol for a series of legislative visits with:

- Rep. Alex Dallman (R-Green Lake), Member of Joint Finance Committee
- Rep. Dave Considine (D-Baraboo), Ranking Member of Assembly Committee on Agriculture
- Sen. Cory Tomczyk (R-Mosinee), Chair of Senate Transportation Committee
- Rep. Karen Hurd (R-Fall Creek), Member of Assembly Committees on Agriculture, Transportation, and Rural Development
- Sen. Brad Pfaff (D-Onalaska), Ranking Member of Senate Committee on Agriculture and Tourism



*Senator Joan Ballweg*  
R-Markesan



*Senator Howard Marklein*  
R-Spring Green



*Representative Tony Kurtz*  
R-Wonewoc



*Representative Travis Tranel*  
R-Cuba City



*Representative Alex Dallman*  
R-Green Lake



*Representative Dave Considine*  
D-Baraboo



*Senator Cory Tomczyk*  
R-Mosinee



*Representative Karen Hurd*  
R-Fall Creek



*Senator Brad Pfaff*  
D-Onalaska

The group will adjourn at 3:00 p.m. Have questions or ideas? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

## WCMA NOTES



### The Million Dollar Question: Where?

Dairy manufacturers are pursuing a wave of greenfield cheese production and conversion plants in the last few years with price tags in the hundreds of millions. Each of these major long-term investments represents years of consideration and careful planning.

In this month's [WCMA Notes column](#), join WCMA's John Umhoefer as he captures the



strategies five manufacturers used to find the right places to break ground in Texas, Wisconsin, Kansas, Michigan, and New York.

[READ NOW](#)

## SIGNATURE EVENTS



## Boost Your Business at the United States Championship Cheese Contest

The [U.S. Championship Cheese Contest](#) offers more than access to expert technical feedback on your products and a chance at national recognition. It's also an opportunity to increase your media exposure and reach new customers across the country. [Hear from past entrants](#) about the business boost they've seen from competing - and enter by next Wednesday, January 18 at [USChampionCheese.org](#)!

A team of expert judges will evaluate all entries February 21-23 in Green Bay, Wisconsin, culminating in the exciting Championship Round and a special announcement of the 2023 U.S. Champion Cheese, livestreamed on [Facebook](#) and at [USChampionCheese.org](#)

For a list of all 118 Contest classes available in 2023, rules, shipping information, and deadlines, please consult the [2023 Contest Entry Kit](#).

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

**ENTER NOW**

## Act Now for High-Visibility Contest Sponsorships



Celebrate excellence in dairy processing as a **Partner Sponsor** of the U.S. Championship Cheese Contest!

Looking for a more cost-effective way to support the competition? Consider a **Contributor Sponsorship**.

Don't delay - these impactful opportunities expire Tuesday, January 24!

For more information, [visit our website](#) or contact [WCMA Events Manager Caitlin Peirick](#).



## Reach Thousands of New Customers with CheeseCon Advertisements

Opportunities to market your business to more than 3,000 attendees at **CheeseCon 2023**, the nation's largest gathering of dairy processors, are filling quickly. Act by January 24 at [CheeseCon.org](#) to reserve your impactful advertisement and sponsorship!

**Advertising in the CheeseCon Official Program** is an unbeatable way to showcase your company or cooperative to the entire industry – all in one place. All CheeseCon attendees are offered a copy

of the Official Program. This full-color, spiral-bound, letter-sized booklet provides key details on CheeseCon's expansive tabletop exhibit floor, world-class educational seminars, and exciting special events. A wide range of ad sizes including full-, half-, and quarter-page options are available at affordable rates to suit your advertising needs and budget.

Visit [CheeseCon.org](https://www.cheesecon.org) today to reserve your advertisement and register at the best available rates. Questions may be directed to [events@wischeesemakers.org](mailto:events@wischeesemakers.org).

**ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES**

The 2023 CheeseCon Official Program will be a spiral-bound, letter-sized (8.5 x 11 inches) full color booklet. Ads must be submitted as PDF documents at 300 dpi (see diagrams below). Don't miss your chance to advertise!

**Premium Ad Space Placement**

- ▶ Back Cover\* \$5,450
  - ▶ Inside Front Cover\* \$2,850
  - ▶ Inside Back Cover\* \$1,800
- Trim size: 8.5" x 11"  
Bleed: .125" all around  
Safe area: 7.5" x 10"

**Interior Page Ad Space Placement**

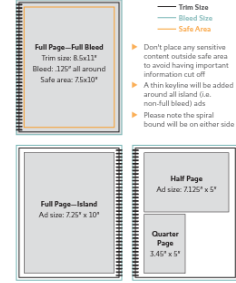
- ▶ Full Page Ad (Full Bleed or Island) \$1,450  
Ad size: 7.25" x 10"
- ▶ Half Page (Horizontal) \$800  
Ad size: 7.125" x 5"
- ▶ Quarter Page (Vertical) \$450  
Ad size: 3.45" x 5"

**Complimentary Sponsor Ad Upgrades**

- ▶ Upgrade Half Page to Full Page \$650
- ▶ Upgrade Quarter Page to Half Page \$350
- ▶ Upgrade Quarter Page to Full Page \$1,000

**Artwork Due Date**

Electronic files requested by February 7, 2023  
E-mail ad file to Caitlin Peirick at [cpeirick@wischeesemakers.org](mailto:cpeirick@wischeesemakers.org)



Advertisements available until January 24, 2023 at [CheeseCon.org](https://www.cheesecon.org).

\*Previous Advertiser Has First Right of Refusal

**PLACE YOUR AD**

**WORKFORCE**



**WCMA Launches Free Employee Onboarding Videos for Dairy Processors**

As the dairy industry navigates ongoing workforce challenges, a diverse set of recruitment and training tools is critical. WCMA is here to help with a [new, five-part series](https://www.wischeesemakers.org) of free employee onboarding videos designed for dairy manufacturers and processors - available now at [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org)!

The series was produced by WCMA with guidance from Workforce & Education

Committee members and generous industry support from partners the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance and Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin; sponsors Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery, Emmi Roth, Great Lakes Cheese, and Wapsie Valley Creamery; and contributors Specialty Cheese Company and Westby Cooperative Creamery.

*Thank you!*



These videos go beyond the basics of personal and product safety on the job, with perspectives and encouragement from industry peers to remind new employees that they are joining a diverse, welcoming work environment, full of growth opportunities.

The series is currently available in English, with Hmong and Spanish versions set to be released in February. Ranging in runtime from approximately seven to nine minutes, each video focuses on a key concept new dairy processing employees will experience during their first days on the job:

- Episode 1: Welcome to the Dairy Industry
- Episode 2: Dairy Processing Basics
- Episode 3: Culture of Excellence
- Episode 4: Safety and Sanitation Essentials
- Episode 5: Grow With Us in Dairy

These videos are available at no cost to stream, share, post, and use. They are designed to be shown to new employees within the first month of employment: either one video per day for the first week or one video per week for the first month. Each video includes a short quiz to help managers and employees test their newfound knowledge and set goals for the future.

All five videos in the series are available to view now at [WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org). Have questions, or need additional support? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](mailto:Rebekah.Sweeney@wcma.org).



## New Recruitment Video Now Available

In addition to the onboarding series, WCMA is also debuting a new free recruitment tool at [WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org) designed to help attract new employees to the U.S. dairy processing workforce. The video showcases the wide range of dynamic career opportunities available in the industry, with compelling benefits such as flexible

## IN THE NEWS

### Wisconsin

- *Point/Plover Metro Wire*: [Developing: Biery Cheese HQ plans 'consolidation'](#) (Featuring WCMA member Biery Cheese Company)
- *Morning Ag Clips*: [CDR hosts Thai cheese retailers, marketers](#)
- *Hoard's Dairyman*: [A Wisconsin county looks to limit milk trucks](#)
- *IWanttheNews*: [Henning's makes cheese served at White House](#) (Featuring WCMA member Henning Cheese)

### National/International

- *New York Times*: [French food giant Danone sued over plastic use](#)
- *Dairy Herd Management*: [Milk prices see a big boost](#)
- *Hoard's Dairyman*: [Dairy could benefit from restaurant growth](#)
- *Dairy Herd Management*: [Recession fears and inflation could cut deeper into dairy demand](#)
- *Dairy Foods*: [California Dairy Innovation Center awards six grants](#)
- *Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development*: [Six Michigan businesses selected for new Dairy Business Builder grants](#) (Featuring WCMA)

## MEMBERSHIP



### Dairy Industry Suppliers



New WCMA supplier member [KDV Label, LLC](#) is a manufacturer of custom labels: pressure sensitive, unsupported film, promotional, variable content, expanded content, and more.



New WCMA supplier member [Polipa North America, LLC](#) is the leading IML Packaging Manufacturer of Turkey, producing new generation Thin Walled injection-molded packaging.



New WCMA supplier member [Quasius Construction](#) has offered construction services and solutions throughout the Midwest since 1891, including plant and equipment maintenance, warehouse automation, and plant additions.





New WCMA supplier member **R.W. Baron Process Equipment, Inc.** is a distributor of sanitary pumps, mixers, vacuum pumps, compressors, water treatment systems, heat exchangers, and supporting engineered process equipment.



New WCMA supplier member **Select Custom Solutions** specializes in modern manufacturing and value-added services for the food, beverage, and nutritional industries.

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

## EDUCATION



# WCMA Webinar

## Strategic Social Media for Dairy Businesses

### Learn Social Media Strategies in Free WCMA Webinar January 24

Mark your calendar now for Tuesday, January 24 at 1:00 p.m. (CT) and make plans to join **WCMA's next free, members-only webinar** focused on social media strategies for dairy manufacturers and processors!



**Brittany Requejo**  
*Pine River Pre-Pack, Inc.*



**Grace Atherton**  
*Wisconsin Cheese  
Makers Association*

Learn the basics of building your following, crafting an impactful social media plan, and connecting with consumers.

Hear directly from WCMA member Pine River Pre-Pack and others on how they've leveraged social media to help drive sales and build their brands.

Finally, WCMA staff will outline ways we can help support and amplify your efforts on a variety of social media platforms.

Presenters will reserve time to field audience questions during the webinar. If you'd like to share a question in advance, please email **WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton** by Monday, January 23 at 12:00 p.m. (CT).

**RSVP TODAY**



## Register Now for 2023 WCMA Front-Line and Advanced Leadership Courses

Spaces are limited for this year's offering of WCMA's highly rated Front-Line and Advanced Leadership trainings, beginning January 31. **Act now** to reserve space for yourself or your valued team members in these popular courses!

**Front-Line Leadership** is designed to help new and experienced supervisors learn critical skills in conflict resolution, communication, stress and time management, and building a team mentality. Since 2017, over 500 trainees have graduated from this popular program. The three-part series is offered a la carte at a cost of \$135 per person, per part, and may be taken in any order:

- Part A - Essential Leadership Skills (Virtual)
  - **Tuesday, January 31 -- SOLD OUT**
  - **Tuesday, February 7 - Only 5 spaces left!**
- Part B - Boosting Staff Performance (Virtual) - **Less than 10 spaces left!**
  - **Tuesday, March 14**
  - **Tuesday, March 21**
- Part C - Cultivating a Team (Virtual) - **Less than 10 spaces left!**
  - **Tuesday, April 18**
  - **Tuesday, April 25**

Open to mid-level managers and employees transitioning to management positions, the **Advanced Leadership Series** pushes participants to take initiative in driving positive change for their companies through creative problem-solving techniques and strategies for collaboration. guest speakers from industry, group discussions, and a final project designed to help participants showcase their new knowledge. Tuition is just \$495 per person, and enrollment is limited to 20 individuals who undergo the training as a cohort.

Members with questions about WCMA's educational offerings may contact **WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney**.

**REGISTER NOW**



# WCMA SCHOLARSHIPS

## Applications Due February 7 for \$19,000 in WCMA Student Scholarships

The February 7 application deadline for **WCMA's Student Scholarships** is quickly approaching. Students pursuing degrees or careers related to the dairy processing industry, including WCMA members and their children, are encouraged to apply now at [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org) for a total of \$19,000 in scholarship funds!

Winners will be announced in March, with awards presented on Wednesday, April 5 at [CheeseCon](#) in Madison, Wisconsin.



In 2023, scholarships will be distributed to seven recipients across three scholarships:

- 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.

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](#).

**APPLY TODAY**

# 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:

- January 24: [BRCGS for Food Safety Issue 9: Conversion for Sites Short Course](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- 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
- February 28: [Dairy Plant Food Safety Workshop Hosted by Hilmar Cheese and Leprino Foods](#) - Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy
- March 7-8: [Cheesemaking Fundamentals \(In-Person\)](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- March 8: [BRCGS for Food Safety Issue 9: Conversion for Sites Short Course](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- March 21-24: [Cheese Grading, Evaluation & Judging \(In-Person\)](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- March 27: [Prerequisite Programs Course](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- March 28-29: [HACCP Training for Processors](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- March 30: [Advanced HACCP: Verification and Validation](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- April 25-27: [FSPCA Preventive Controls for Human Food \(PCQI\) Training](#) - 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

## GRANTS



**Apply for WDATCP Dairy Processor Grants by  
January 30**

Wisconsin dairy manufacturers and processors are encouraged to [apply now through January 30 for a new round of Dairy Processor Grants](#) administered by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP). The program, which aims to strengthen Wisconsin's dairy processing industry, saw its [funding doubled in the state budget](#) following successful advocacy efforts by WCMA.

In 2023, grants of up to \$50,000 each will be awarded following a competitive review process. Recipients will be required to match at least 20 percent of their grant amount. Questions may be directed to [WDATCP staff](#).

## DBIA Awards \$2.5M in Grants to 31 Midwest Dairy Businesses



The Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA), a partnership between WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research (CDR), last week [announced the 31 companies and cooperatives](#) that have been selected to receive Dairy Business Builder grants totaling nearly \$2.5 million.

Awardees include WCMA members Jisa Farmstead Cheese, Pine River Pre-Pack, Specialty Cheese Company, and Wisconsin Dairy State Cheese Company. Congratulations!

The Dairy Business Builder grant program aims to encourage small- to medium-sized dairy farmers, entrepreneurs, and processors in the Midwest to pursue innovative projects such as dairy farm diversification, on-farm processing, value-added product creation, and efforts to market dairy products for export. Reimbursement grants of up to \$100,000 each are awarded following a competitive review process.

A full list of grant winners and more information about DBIA is [available online](#).

## DBIA Delivers

*Success Stories from the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance*

### Berrybrook Organics

Marion,  
South Dakota

DBIA Grant Recipient  
2021, 2022



Since the creation of the [Dairy Business Innovation Alliance](#) in the 2018 Farm Bill, WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research have partnered to administer approximately \$7 million in grants to 88 dairy farms and processors. The Alliance now serves an 11-state

region including Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

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.

Today, we're pleased to spotlight [Berrybrook Organics](#) in Marion, South Dakota! This multi-generational, regenerative family farm produces a wide range of goods including pastured meats and certified organic eggs, commodity crops and dry goods. Thanks in part to grant funding from the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance, they were able to purchase equipment to produce and expand a line of artisanal homemade ice cream, with plans to distribute their product in regional retail outlets.

Follow along on WCMA's [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#) for more inspiring stories, and use the hashtag #DBIADelivers to share how DBIA has helped support your business!

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**WisCheeseMakers.org**  
**(608) 286-1001**



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