



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



WCMA SIGNATURE EVENTS



More Exhibits, More Connections on Sold-Out CheeseExpo Trade Show Floor

With more than 600 industry supplier and processor booths, the record-setting exhibit floor at [CheeseExpo 2022](#) is sold out, but impactful sponsorship and advertising opportunities remain available. [Watch this video](#) or click the image above to hear what makes CheeseExpo the premier event in dairy processing!

Sponsor high-visibility locations on the exhibit floor like the World Championship Cheese Displays or Thursday Coffee and Water. Looking to make a bigger splash? Join our Diamond Level as a Wednesday or Thursday Lunch sponsor and reach every CheeseExpo attendee.

Affordable **advertising opportunities** are available in the CheeseExpo 2022 Official Program. With a full-, half-, or quarter-page interior ad, you'll make a striking impression on every CheeseExpo attendee each time they open the full-color, full-size (8.5x11") booklet.

**SECURE YOUR
SPONSORSHIP**

**PLACE YOUR
ADVERTISEMENT**

CheeseExpo [attendee registration](#) is open now, with a 20 percent discount on all registrations before February 1!



Save the Date: Join World Champion Cheese Announcement Live Online

Mark your calendars now and join the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) Thursday, March 3, 2022 at 2:00 p.m. (CT) at WorldChampionCheese.org for the live announcement of the 2022 World Champion Cheese!

Following a record-breaking year in 2020 with 3,667 entries, the [2022 World Championship Cheese Contest](#) promises to be another exciting competition. The 2022 Contest will be closed to the public, but each day – March 1-3 – fans of great cheese can follow along on social media for exclusive interviews with judges and competitors, a behind-the-scenes look with industry insiders, and much more.

Entries for the 2022 competition are being accepted now until Wednesday, January 26. A full list of all 141 classes and entry requirements is [available online](#). To learn more about the business benefits of entering the Contest, [watch this video](#) or click the image above. Questions may be directed to [WCMA Events Manager Kirsten Strohenger](#).

COVID-19 UPDATES



OSHA ETS Takes Effect While Supreme Court Considers Challenges

On Monday, January 10, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) for employers with 100 or more employees **[took effect](#)**. The OSHA rule mandates that large employers require their workforce to be vaccinated against COVID-19 or undergo weekly testing, though employers need not start a testing protocol before February 9. Employers are immediately required to maintain records of their workers' vaccination status, remove those who test positive for COVID-19 from the workplace for quarantine, and require mask-wearing of all unvaccinated workers on site. OSHA officials indicated they would move slowly on enforcement, while the U.S. Supreme Court considers legal challenges.

Last Friday, January 7, Supreme Court justices **[heard expedited oral arguments](#)** regarding a stay of the ETS, but refused to rule in advance of the effective date. During those deliberations, the Court's more **[conservative members questioned](#)** whether the Biden administration has the necessary authority to issue such mandates.

A ruling may be issued at any time, and WCMA will keep members informed of relevant developments with electronic alerts. Please contact **[WCMA staff](#)** at any time with your questions.

Coronavirus Headline News

Wisconsin

- *Wisconsin State Journal*: **[Wisconsin breaks COVID-19 case record for fourth straight day; ICU patients edge down](#)**
- *WBAY-TV*: **[COVID-19 in Wisconsin: Death, hospitalization rates fall as case numbers surge](#)**

National/International

- *FOX News*: **[US daily COVID-19 cases top 1.4M, setting record](#)**
- *Washington Post*: **[U.S. breaks record with more than 145,000 COVID-19 hospitalizations](#)**
- *Wall Street Journal*: **[White House says private insurers to cover rapid COVID-19 tests](#)**



Judge Rules Gruyère a Generic Cheese Type

In a landmark victory for cheesemakers in the U.S., a federal judge **has determined** that "gruyère" is a common name. By confirming this as a generic cheese style, the decision reaffirms that all cheesemakers, including those outside France or Switzerland, can create and market products under the name. WCMA has worked with the Consortium for Common Food Names on this issue since 2018, identifying and characterizing American gruyère production.

USMCA

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA AGREEMENT

Report Rules on Canadian Dairy Quota Violations in USMCA

WCMA last week **lauded the decision** of an independent panel which affirmed that

Canada did not uphold its obligation under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) to fairly administer tariff rate quotas (TRQs) on imported U.S. dairy products. In the dispute, filed on May 25, 2021, the U.S. argued that Canada violated the USMCA by allocating import quotas almost exclusively to its own processors. On December 20, [a USMCA panel agreed](#). Under the rules of the USMCA, Canada has 45 days from the date of the final report to comply with the panel's findings.



POLICY COMMITTEE

Join WCMA Policy Committee Virtual Meeting

There's still time to [register to join](#) the next WCMA Policy Committee meeting tomorrow, Wednesday, January 12 from 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. (CT). Based on member feedback, this meeting has been moved fully online.

Special Guests:



WDATCP Secretary
Randy Romanski



State Senator
Joan Ballweg

This meeting will feature special guest speakers **Secretary Randy Romanski** of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and **State Senator Joan Ballweg**, who serves as a member of the powerful Joint Finance Committee and as Chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture.

WCMA's Policy Committee will also discuss federal and state efforts to enforce federal labeling regulations, protect common food names, and reform milk pricing and immigration policy.

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

[SIGN UP NOW](#)

Report Details Activities for New Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports

In a report to the Wisconsin State Legislature, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection has [detailed its plan](#) for a new \$5 million, five-year Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports (WIAE), championed by WCMA. The plan, which must be approved by the powerful Joint Finance Committee before funding is released, includes:

- Trade Promotion Activities
- Financial Support for Exporters
- Export Consultation and Education
- Market Promotion Assistance

Trade promotions – taking Wisconsin manufacturers abroad or bringing foreign buyers to Wisconsin – will continue using existing federal and regional resources. WIAE funds will allow WDATCP to expand the number of participants in promotions, expand the number of Wisconsin booths at foreign trade shows, and add social media to support WDATCP trade promotion. In addition, WIAE funds will allow Wisconsin to join new trade shows or develop all-new foreign buyer missions in Wisconsin.

Financial support and export education will be realized in a new Export Expansion Grant program. Wisconsin organizations and higher education institutions will be invited to individually or collaboratively develop projects, benefiting multiple companies, to be funded under this new grant. The grants are expected to range from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and have a two-year completion timeframe.

In addition, WIAE funds will allow Wisconsin to fund increased exporter participation in two existing services: ExporTech, a 12-week exporter training program at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, and WEDC's International Market Access Grant (IMAG), funds that companies use for trade promotion activities, marketing, translation and consultants.

WCMA will offer an informational webinar on WIAE to members in February; watch for registration details in next week's member newsletter.

WORKFORCE



Sponsor New WCMA Video Onboarding Series

When it's challenging to find job applicants, it's critical for dairy processors to do all they can to retain valued employees. One key component to that effort is an effective onboarding program – and WCMA is here to help.

With direction from WCMA's Workforce & Education Committee, WCMA is producing a series of five onboarding videos – offered in English, Spanish, and Hmong – focused on key messages for all new dairy processing employees. We'll overview the dairy processing industry and its essential mission, highlight opportunities for ongoing education and career growth, explain dairy processing from intake to product distribution, deliver key

food safety and sanitation messages and highlight the culture of dairy processing and its commitment to excellence, inclusivity and growth. More details are available [here](#). Videos will be available to WCMA members at no cost, and to other members of industry for a fee.

WCMA asks dairy processors and industry suppliers to [consider a sponsorship or contribution to this project](#) before January 31. Two of four sponsorships are already claimed, and WCMA thanks **Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery** and **Great Lakes Cheese** for their participation! Two sponsorship spaces still remain, as well as contribution opportunities. Be recognized in this series for your support – and for your commitment to the success of the U.S. dairy processing industry.

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

WCMA Seeks Member Input in Annual Wage & Workforce Survey

WCMA members are invited to participate now in the [2022 WCMA Wage and Workforce Survey!](#) This **free**, annual survey helps WCMA provide critical data that employers need to successfully attract and retain top talent.



New this year are questions regarding sign-on and referral bonuses, team-based incentives, and greater detail on weekend premiums. By member request, automation managers and electro-mechanical technicians have also been added to the wage data collection portion.

The full survey is available in [PDF format](#) for members who prefer to review the questions before submitting their answers.

TAKE THE SURVEY

Survey responses are due **Friday, February 11**. Individual responses are held in confidence, and participants will not be identified. Participating companies and cooperatives will receive a summary report from WCMA detailing current industry wage ranges and benefits packages, as well as comparative data on non-industry wages in their region.

Questions may be directed to [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).



Mark Your Calendar for WCMA Workforce & Education Committee Meeting

Register now to join in a virtual meeting of the WCMA Workforce and Education Committee, set for Tuesday, February 8 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. (CT). The meeting agenda will include discussion on the following topics:

- Federal COVID-19 vaccination mandate for large employers
- 2022 training opportunities for dairy processing employees
- Progress report on WCMA video onboarding series
- 2022 WCMA Job Fair at CheeseExpo

The meeting will also offer a live polling feature for participants, and members are encouraged to **submit questions** they'd like posed to the group in advance. WCMA staff will wrap the meeting with a brief overview of other workforce and education resources available to WCMA members now.

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



Four Booths Remaining 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!

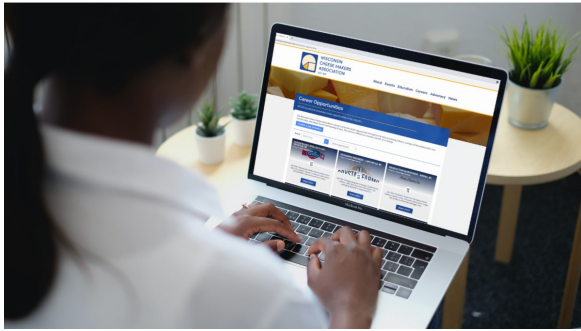
**RESERVE YOUR
BOOTH**

Only four 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!

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

View Career Opportunities on WCMA Jobs Board



Visit WCMA's [online jobs board](#) to see and share career opportunities from members Arena Cheese; Associated Milk Producers, Inc.; and Ron's Wisconsin Cheese, LLC.

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

Join WCMA Young Professionals January Outing



SIGN UP TODAY

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

The day begins at 10:00 a.m. with a tour of Nasonville Dairy in Marshfield, Wisconsin, followed by a networking lunch and bowling at nearby Rose Bowl Lanes.

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

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

IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *Only In Your State*: [This small Wisconsin town is one of the most diverse cheese destinations in the U.S.](#) (Featuring WCMA member Emmi Roth)
- *Mid-West Farm Report*: [Mid-West Farm Report podcast features Jen Pino-Gallagher on cyber risk to food processors](#) (Featuring WCMA member M3 Insurance)

National/International

- *Wine Enthusiast*: [The cheese you can only get once a year](#) (Featuring WCMA members Rogue Creamery and Uplands Cheese)
- *U.S. Dairy Export Blog*: [NFDM/SMP, cheese and lactose led the way to double-digit export growth in November](#)
- *National Milk Producers Federation*: [Dairy Defined Podcast: Price forecast positive for dairy](#)
- *Yahoo! News*: [Four reasons you're seeing empty grocery store shelves](#)



Marieke Gouda Awarded Farm to Food Bank Funding

WCMA congratulates member Marieke Gouda on [receiving \\$160,000](#) to continue its work to address food insecurity with Hunger Task Force! The partnership is the only project from Wisconsin to receive funding under the federal Farm to Food Bank program.

EDUCATION



Learn Talent Retention Strategies in WCMA Next Step Leadership Class

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 new training opportunities.

Our [Next Step Leadership](#) course 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. By member request, Next Step Leadership will be offered in a hybrid format, allowing participants to join in-person in Madison, Wisconsin, or online via Zoom.

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

REGISTER TODAY



WCMA SCHOLARSHIPS

WCMA Scholarship Applications Open Until February 16

Do you know a student who's pursuing a degree and/or career in the dairy industry? Remind them to apply by February 16 for a [WCMA student scholarship](#)!

Seven scholarships worth a total of \$19,000 will be granted in March 2022, with awards presented on April 13 during CheeseExpo in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Two students will be selected for 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 or cooperative may apply.

Three students will receive the [WCMA Cheese Industry Supplier Student Scholarship](#), also worth \$3,000 each. Any employee or child of an employee of a WCMA supplier member company may apply.

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 students pursuing technical certificates, technical diplomas, or associate degrees that may lead to a career in the dairy industry. Unlike other WCMA scholarships, applicants are not required to be connected to a WCMA member company or cooperative.

For more information or to download an application, visit WisCheeseMakers.org or contact [WCMA Business & Membership Manager Sara Schmidt](#).

Other 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 20: [Certificate in Dairy Processing - Online](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- January 26: [Internal Auditing Principles](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- February 16: [Cheesemaking Fundamentals - On Demand](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- February 21: [Prerequisite Programs](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- February 22-23: [HACCP for Processors](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- February 22-24: [Process Cheese Course - In-Person](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- February 24: [Advanced HACCP: Verification and Validation](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- February 25: [Dairy Ingredients Fundamentals - Online](#) - Center for Dairy Research

Wisconsin Cheesemaker Sees Success in Japan

A Wisconsin company has sent three shipments of cheese to Japan as a result of relationships developed on a recent virtual trade mission led by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP). WCMA **successfully advocated** for \$5 million in state funding in 2021 to help boost Wisconsin's agricultural exports through WDATCP's International Agribusiness Center. Half that amount, or \$2.5 million, will be used specifically to increase dairy exports.

Register Now for Trade Mission at SIAL America

WCMA members are invited to register for a Food and Beverage Buyers Mission at **SIAL America**, a new, USDA-endorsed food and beverage trade show taking place in Las Vegas March 22-24. Members who have questions or are interested in participating should contact **Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) staff**.

Sign Up Today for DBIA Grant Webinar



Register now to attend a **grant preparation webinar** hosted by the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA) on Thursday, January 27, 2022! With the next grant application period opening on February 1, potential applicants are encouraged to join the January webinar to better understand the program and learn how to submit a more competitive application.

The webinar will provide a wealth of useful information, including:

- DBIA Overview
- Eligibility
- Grant funding information
- Application format and components
- "Helpful hints" when writing your application
- Q&A

The DBIA, a partnership between the Center for Dairy Research and WCMA, will open its new, \$1 million Dairy Business Builder grant competition on February 1, with completed applications due March 31. 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. Small- to medium-sized dairy processors in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin can prepare their applications now by attending the January DBIA webinar, developing business plans, securing vendor quotes, and taking advantage of more DBI resources **now available online**.

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.

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 Graham Archer of Tetra Pak, Inc.!

Graham Archer Tetra Pak, Inc.

Favorite Cheese

Blue

Proudest Achievement

Securing one of the largest orders in Tetra Pak's 70-year history by collaborating with U.S. cheese associations, especially WCMA. Helping to strengthen the cheese industry is very important to me.



Why I Support WCMA

"WCMA members share a holistic dedication to their craft - from best practices in cheese production to providing education. We rely on WCMA not only for expertise, knowledge, but to serve as a voice for thousands of us across the industry."



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

WCMA Welcomes New Dairy Manufacturer Member: Stickney Hill Dairy

WCMA is pleased to welcome new dairy manufacturer member **Stickney Hill Dairy**. Led by co-owners Frankie and David Lenzmeier, Stickney Hill is a leader in the development, marketing, and sales of goat's milk products for commercial, food service and retail market segments. Learn more at StickneyDairy.com. Primary contacts for the company can be found in WCMA's [online member directory](#).



WCMA Welcomes New Supplier Members

Join WCMA as we welcome two new supplier members this week: Aquatec and JIE USA, Inc. Primary contacts for both companies can be found in WCMA's [online member directory](#).



For 130 years, WCMA has served as the voice of cheese and dairy manufacturers, processors, marketers, and suppliers to the industry. Today, WCMA represents 110 dairy processing companies and cooperatives operating across the United States and around the world, and more than 575 supplier companies. We appreciate your engagement and support.

WisCheeseMakers.org

