



# WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE  
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



## SIGNATURE EVENTS

**CHEESECON** April 4-6, 2023 | Alliant Energy Center | Madison, Wisconsin  
2023 Marketing Opportunities

**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\* \$5,400
- Inside Front Cover\* \$2,850
- Inside Back Cover\* \$1,800

Trim size: 8.5" x 11"  
Bleed: 1.25" 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](http://CheeseCon.org).

**CHEESECON** April 4-6, 2023 | Alliant Energy Center | Madison, Wisconsin  
Tabletop Exhibits: April 5, 2023

**CHEESECON** April 4-6, 2023 | Alliant Energy Center | Madison, Wisconsin  
2023 Marketing Opportunities

**US CHAMPIONSHIP CHEESE CONTEST SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

Promote your company at the nation's premier technical cheese, butter & yogurt competition! Sponsorship available until January 24, 2023 at [WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org). Contact Caitlin Peirick at [cpeirick@wischeesemakers.org](mailto:cpeirick@wischeesemakers.org) or 608-673-5544.

**Partner (\$6,250)**

**Contest Contributor (\$1,500)**

**Sponsorship Opportunity:**

- Partner to US Championship Cheese Contest

**Contributor Sponsorship Benefits:**

- Logo on US Championship Cheese Contest materials.
- Logo on prominent event sponsor page on US Championship Cheese Contest website.
- Logo on every page of the US Championship Cheese Contest website.
- Logo on US Championship Cheese Contest advertisements.
- Logo in US Champions Awards Banquet program.
- Logo in CheeseCon Official Program ad in CheeseCon Official Program.
- Logo on CheeseCon event website, in program and in event printed materials.
- Logo in Sponsor Section of mobile app.
- Logo on signage at CheeseCon.
- Logo sign in CheeseCon booth.
- Logo as Official Sponsor of the US Championship Cheese Contest with rights to use the CheeseCon logo in program related material.

**Contributor Sponsorship Opportunity:**

- Contributing Sponsor to US Championship Cheese Contest

**Contest Contributor Sponsorship Benefits:**

- Company logo on event sponsor signage at the US Championship Cheese Contest.
- Company logo on sponsorship page of US Championship Cheese Contest website.
- One free quarter page advertisement in CheeseCon Official Program.
- Sponsor color logo (small) on CheeseCon website, in the Official Program.
- Sponsor color logo in Sponsor Section of CheeseCon mobile app.
- Full color logo on signage at CheeseCon.
- Sponsor tabletop sign for your CheeseCon booth.
- Sponsor identified as Official Sponsor of the 2023 CheeseCon with rights to use the CheeseCon logo in all program related material.

**CHEESECON** April 4-6, 2023 | Alliant Energy Center | Madison, Wisconsin  
Tabletop Exhibits: April 5, 2023

## Final Day to Sponsor, Advertise at Industry's Premier Events

The deadline to reserve exceptional sponsorships and advertising spaces is **today** for the **2023 U.S. Championship Cheese Contest** and **CheeseCon 2023**. With **97% of tabletop booths sold** on our largest-ever exhibit floor, opportunities to showcase your business to the global dairy processing industry are filling quickly. Act now!

As a **Contest Partner** sponsor, you'll enjoy prominent placement of your company logo across a suite of print and digital materials, displayed at both the competition *and* the U.S. Champions Awards Banquet at CheeseCon. Looking for a lower-cost option? A limited number of sponsorships at the Contributor level are also available.

**SPONSOR NOW**

Advertise in the **CheeseCon Official Program** to put your business front-and-center as CEOs, plant managers, sales and marketing professionals, quality assurance and food safety staff, and more peruse key event details. Just **three full-page, two half-page, and two quarter-page** ad spaces are left in this full-color, spiral-bound, letter-sized booklet.

**ADVERTISE TODAY**

Questions about sponsorships and advertising may be directed to [WCMA Events Manager Caitlin Peirick](#).



## Build Workforce Connections at WCMA Job Fair at CheeseCon 2023

Good help is hard to find – but WCMA is here to support you in your search for the best and brightest. [Register today to secure a booth](#) at the WCMA Job Fair at CheeseCon, set for Tuesday, April 4 from 3:00-5:00 p.m. in Madison, Wisconsin. Space is limited and exhibitor registration closes on February 10, so don't delay!

A booth reservation fee of just \$250 includes a table with 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. Exhibiting employers will also receive a list of registered job seekers, including phone numbers and email addresses, prior to and immediately following the event.

This special event also offers an exclusive opportunity for WCMA members to connect with students participating in the Collegiate Dairy Products Evaluation Contest, which will be held at CheeseCon. Student competitors hail from 15 colleges and universities nationwide. WCMA has also invited prospective interns and employees from the University of Wisconsin System, the Wisconsin Technical College System and various high school agricultural programs to attend.

Interested exhibitors may contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#) with questions.

**RESERVE YOUR BOOTH**



## U.S. Championship Cheese Contest Features 2,249 Entries From 35 States

With less than one month remaining until the renowned [2023 United States Championship Cheese Contest](#), dairy manufacturers across the country are ready for a robust competition for the coveted title of U.S. Champion: 197 makers of cheese, butter, yogurt, and dry dairy ingredients in 35 states have submitted 2,249 products for evaluation.

All entries will be evaluated February 21-23 at Resch Expo in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Judging will be open to the public during the Preliminary Rounds from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 21 and Wednesday, February 22. Entrants may view their scores in [MyEntries](#) at the end of each day of competition.

Gold, silver, and bronze medals will be awarded to the highest-scoring entries in each class. The Championship and Final Rounds of judging will take place on Thursday, February 23, culminating in the exciting announcement of the 2023 U.S. Champion, livestreamed at [USChampionCheese.org](#).

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**INDUSTRY UPDATES**



*Technology students at the LIFT Center in Abilene, Texas enjoy Great Lakes Cheese Company's Cheese 101 experience alongside dairy industry guests. Students produced cheese live at the event, learned about the dairy industry and the chemistry of cheese making, and wrapped up an energetic afternoon with dairy-themed games and challenges.*

## Great Lakes Cheese Hosts Opening Events

Congratulations to WCMA member Great Lakes Cheese Company, which last week celebrated the opening of its new facility in Abilene, Texas with special events for its team and the community, led by President and CEO Dan Zagzebski. The 280,000-square-foot cheese processing plant will provide 200 family-supporting career opportunities.

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# USDA Issues New Organic Requirements

In an effort to reduce fraud, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) **last week increased its oversight** of foods labeled organic through new requirements, set to take effect in March. The new rule requires USDA's National Organic Program certification for all imported organic foods, increases certifications of more businesses in the supply chain and boosts authority for inspections, record-keeping, traceability and fraud prevention practices. Companies covered under the rule will have a one-year window to comply with the new requirements.

## EDUCATION



# WCMA Webinar

## Strategic Social Media for Dairy Businesses

### Space Available in Today's WCMA Webinar

Join WCMA staff and special guest speakers from Organic Valley and Pine River Pre-Pack **today at 1:00 p.m. (CT)** for a **free, members-only webinar** focused on social media strategies for dairy businesses!

We'll cover the basics of choosing your platform(s), building a following, crafting an impactful social media plan, creating a meaningful brand through your social content, connecting with consumers to boost sales, and ways WCMA is here to help support and amplify your efforts.



**Tracy Budworth**  
*Organic Valley/CROPP  
Cooperative*



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



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

Presenters will also reserve time to field questions from members. To submit a question in advance, please email **WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton**.

**JOIN WEBINAR**



## Act Now for 2023 WCMA Leadership Trainings

**Claim your spot now** in the spring offerings of WCMA's highly rated leadership courses! The first installment of the popular Front-Line Leadership series is **already sold out**, so don't delay.

**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) - **SOLD OUT!**
  - **Tuesday, January 31**
  - **Tuesday, February 7**
- Part B - Boosting Staff Performance (Virtual) - **Only four spaces left!**
  - **Tuesday, March 14**
  - **Tuesday, March 21**
- Part C - Cultivating a Team (Virtual) - **Only five spaces left!**
  - **Tuesday, April 18**
  - **Tuesday, April 25**

Have questions? Please contact **WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy** **Rebekah Sweeney**.

**REGISTER NOW**



# WCMA SCHOLARSHIPS

**Two Weeks Left for WCMA Student Scholarships**

Just two weeks remain to [apply for WCMA's annual Student Scholarships](#)! Students pursuing degrees or careers related to the dairy industry should visit [WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org) by February 7 to submit their application.

In 2023, seven awards are available 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. Winners will be announced in March, with awards presented on Wednesday, April 5 at [CheeseCon](#) in Madison, Wisconsin.

Questions may be directed to [WCMA Business & Membership Manager Sara Schmidt](#).

**APPLY NOW**



## **WCMA Webinar**

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### **Writing Your Best Grant Proposal**

### **Save the Date for February Member Webinar Focused on Grants**

Register now to join [WCMA's next free, members-only webinar](#) Tuesday, February 14 at 1:00 p.m. (CT) focused on writing your best grant proposal. Special guest speakers from industry will join grant writing experts to share helpful tips for finding grants and preparing a top-notch application that stands out from the pack. WCMA members will offer insights from their experiences, followed by an overview of the grant information and financial resources offered by WCMA.

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, February 13 at 12:00 p.m. (CT).

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.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



## Make Plans Now to Join 10th Annual Joint Industry Meeting with Wisconsin DNR

Mark your calendar for March 16 and [register now](#) for the popular annual gathering of dairy industry environmental staff and regulators from Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources, hosted by WCMA and Midwest Food Products Association.

Join in-person in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin or live online for discussions covering hot topics in environmental regulation and WPDES permitting, with joint presentations by agency staff and industry experts. On-site registration and networking begins at 9:30 a.m. (CT), with the meeting beginning at 10:00 a.m. for all participants and concluding at 2:30 p.m. This meeting provides continuing education credits for certified wastewater operators.

Registration is \$45 for in-person attendance and \$25 for online participation. All WCMA members are welcome to attend, but space is limited, so sign up today! For more information, contact [WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer](#).

## REGISTER NOW

## 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:

- 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 \(PCQH\) 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
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## IN THE NEWS

### Wisconsin

- *WGBA-TV*: [Recognizing Wisconsin's cheesemakers on National Cheese Lovers Day](#) (Featuring WCMA member Union Star Cheese Factory)
- *UpNorthNews*: [\\$209 a pound?! The story behind the special Wisconsin cheese back on sale](#) (Featuring WCMA member Hook's Cheese Company)
- *TastingTable*: [What type of cheese are Wisconsin cheese curds?](#) (Featuring Bob Wills of WCMA members Cedar Grove Cheese and Clock Shadow Creamery)
- *Sheboygan Press*: [Sartori Cheese in Plymouth is growing with aim for world's best cheese](#) (Featuring WCMA member Sartori Company)

### National/International

- *Insider*: [How food giant Danone plans to cut planet-warming methane emissions by 30 percent this decade](#)
  - *Southern Farm Network*: [Three years of record dairy export volume](#)
  - *Dairy Herd Management*: [Class III prices see major moves](#)
  - *Politico*: [Abbott under criminal investigation over baby formula crisis](#)
  - *Dairy Herd Management*: [USDA announces additional assistance for dairy farmers](#)
  - *MSN*: [Iowa Republicans want to ban SNAP recipients from buying meat, white bread, and American cheese](#)
  - *WPTZ-TV*: [Vermont cheese makers celebrate on National Cheese Lover's Day](#) (Featuring WCMA member Cabot Creamery Cooperative)
  - *Bon Appetit*: [American cheese deserves your respect](#)
- 

## GRANTS



## WCMA Offers Export Expansion Grants

Dairy exporters in Wisconsin can [apply now for funding](#) available through WCMA to help grow their international sales. Successful applicants will be awarded grants of up to \$15,000 each on a first-come, first-served basis to support certain activities associated with strengthening their presence in international markets:

- Social media and marketing campaigns
- Shipping and logistics costs for buyer samples
- Costs related to in-store demonstrations, retail sampling, and merchandising

Successful applicants who sign on to accept funding are required to take advantage of free dairy export consultative services through WCMA. These consulting hours, provided by MCT Dairies, offer customized coaching to help new and experienced exporters evaluate their product line and identify potential global customers, assist in creating and executing their export plan, evaluate and refine their export business model, and identify areas for improvement.

The support is provided by a [grant secured by WCMA](#) through the Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports (WIAE) and expands an existing WCMA dairy export program that includes free consultations and targeted workshops.

In addition to financial support, WCMA will host two export workshops in 2023. The first workshop, planned for spring, will provide new and experienced dairy exporters with strategies and resources to make the most of their presence at international trade shows. In the fall, another workshop will focus on marketing and branding dairy products in foreign markets. Dates, speakers, and registration information for both workshops will be available at a later date.

Questions about grant opportunities may be directed to [WCMA Grants & Business Programs Director Danica Nilsestuen](#).

[DOWNLOAD APPLICATION](#)

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## Apply by Monday for Dairy Processor Grants

Wisconsin dairy manufacturers and processors are encouraged to [apply now through Monday, January 30](#) for a new round of Dairy Processor Grants Dairy 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 Delivers

*Success Stories from the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance*

### Stensland Creamery

Larchwood,  
Iowa

DBIA Grant Recipient  
2022



## #DBIADelivers Spotlights Grant Recipients: Stensland Creamery

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.

This week in #DBIADelivers, we're highlighting [Stensland Creamery](#). This family-run creamery operated on Stensland Family Farms in Iowa plans to use their grant award from the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance to purchase equipment to expand their popular ice cream products, establish an outlet, and reach summer tourists!

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!

## MEMBERSHIP



### Dairy Industry Suppliers



New WCMA supplier member [International Food Products Corporation](#) is a national supplier of specialty ingredients and custom ingredient systems, with 15 warehouses across the United States.



New WCMA supplier member [Jasper Engineering & Equipment Co.](#) supports customers across 10 states in industries such as oil and gas, grain and biofuels, pharmaceutical and medical technology, power and municipal water treatment, food and dairy, chemical and oilseed processing.



New WCMA supplier member [Polyplex](#) offers thin and thick PET film in a range of thickness and surface properties covering a spectrum of applications, among other films and capabilities.

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

## Share WCMA News with Colleagues

Thanks for subscribing to WCMA's weekly e-newsletter! This benefit is available to all WCMA member employees. [Let us know](#) if we should add your colleagues to our list, or if you'd like to share feedback on our communications.

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



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