

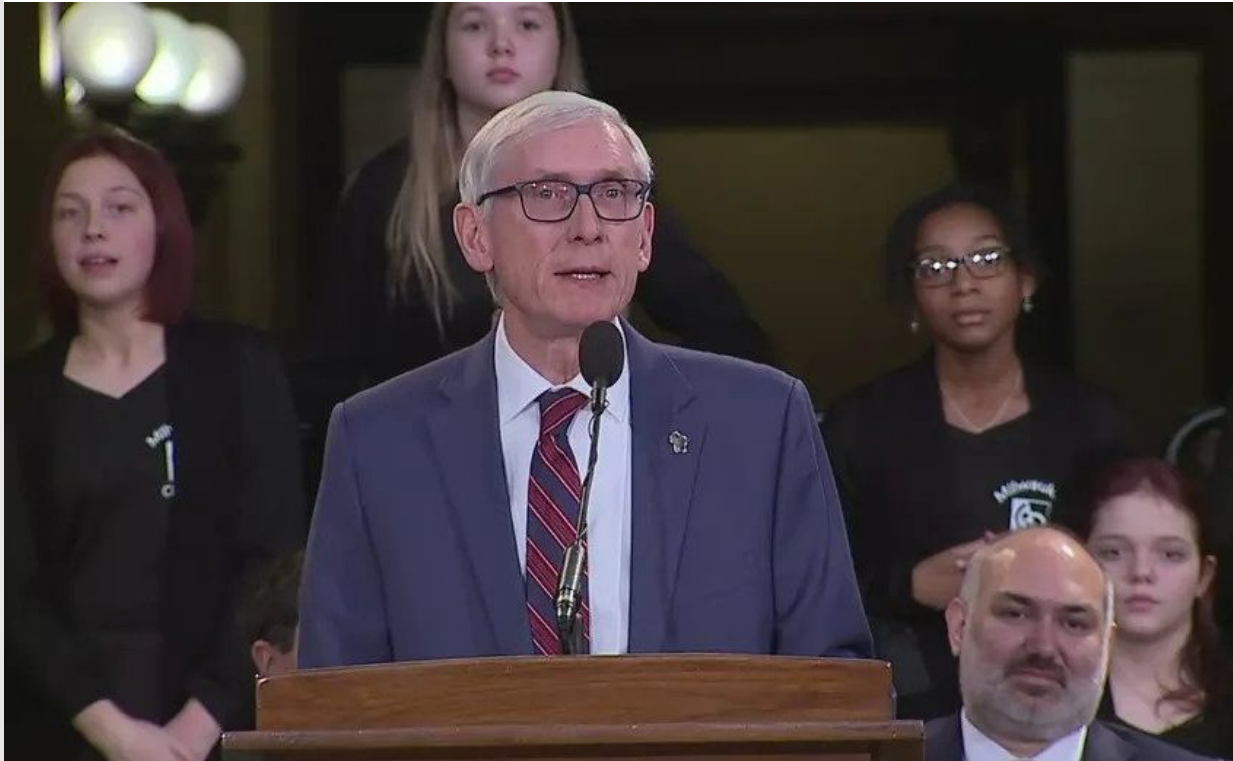


# WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE  
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



## ADVOCACY



### Evers Administration Begins Second Term

Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers was sworn in today for a second term in office alongside Lieutenant Governor Sara Rodriguez, Wisconsin's constitutional officers, and members of the Wisconsin Legislature. [In his inaugural address, Evers advocated](#) for better workforce attraction and retention tools, universal access to high-speed broadband, more affordable housing options in rural communities, and expanded access to healthcare.

Many members of Evers' cabinet are expected to remain in their positions, including Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) Secretary Randy Romanski and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Secretary and CEO Missy Hughes.

Among those [newly appointed to the Evers Administration](#) is Department of Natural Resources Secretary-designee Adam Payne (pictured). A native of Plymouth, Wisconsin, Payne most recently served as Sheboygan County Administrator for over two decades. Prior to his position as county administrator, he was the executive director of the



Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association and served five years at WDATCP.



## Join WCMA Policy Committee at Wisconsin Advocacy Day January 17

Register now to join the WCMA Policy Committee in starting 2023 with an [engaging day of advocacy](#) at the Wisconsin State Capitol on Tuesday, January 17. Members may participate in-person at the Concourse Hotel in Madison or virtually via Zoom.

WCMA will welcome several key legislators as featured speakers, including Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary Randy Romanski; Joint Finance Committee Co-Chair and lead author of dairy labeling legislation Senator Howard Marklein, incoming Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair Representative Travis Tranel, and Joint Finance Committee member and lead author of agricultural export legislation Representative Tony Kurtz.

Additional speakers and legislative meetings are being finalized. To share questions and ideas, please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

**RSVP TODAY**



## WCMA Applauds \$23M in Federal Funding for Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives

WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research (CDR) [recently applauded the Biden Administration and members of Congress](#) for directing \$23 million in federal funding to Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives across the country, including an expected \$7.67 million for the [Dairy Business Innovation Alliance \(DBIA\)](#) in the Midwest. The monies were awarded as part of the federal omnibus spending package approved in the U.S. Senate and House in late December.

Administered by WCMA and CDR, the DBIA has provided technical support, education, and approximately \$7 million in grants to dairy farmers and processors in 11 Midwestern states since its inception in 2018.

## SIGNATURE EVENTS



## Enter U.S. Championship Cheese Contest Today

Entries are being accepted now through January 18 for the 2023 [United States Championship Cheese Contest](#). Take advantage of this unique opportunity to join dairy manufacturers nationwide in [celebrating the craftsmanship, innovation, and pride](#) of

the U.S. dairy industry!

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 livestreamed announcement of the 2023 U.S. Champion Cheese.

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](#).

**SUBMIT ENTRIES**



## Grow Your Business at CheeseCon

**CHEESECON**  
*Global Ideas for Dairy Processors*

Act by January 18 to take advantage of special early bird pricing on all registrations for [CheeseCon](#), set for April 4-6 in Madison, Wisconsin!

As the nation's largest gathering of dairy processors, CheeseCon is a must for thousands of industry professionals including CEOs, dairy plant managers, human resources professionals, marketers, and more. Don't miss your opportunity to meet with trusted suppliers on our [largest-ever exhibit floor](#), attend [world-class educational seminars](#), connect with peers through valuable [networking opportunities](#), and join exciting [celebrations of industry excellence](#).

Visit [CheeseCon.org](#) today to reserve your space at the dairy processing industry's premier event! Questions may be directed to [events@wischeesemakers.org](mailto:events@wischeesemakers.org).

**REGISTER TODAY**

**MEMBERSHIP**

# WELCOME



## NEW WCMA MEMBERS!

### Dairy Industry Suppliers



New WCMA supplier member **[Blue Compass Compliance](#)** provides small to mid-size cheesemakers and warehouses with assistance through their SQF Implementation process and food safety/regulatory consulting where needed.



New WCMA supplier member **[Louisiana Pepper Exchange](#)** is one of the largest importers of Pepper Mash and Pepper Used, and manufactures and co-packs pepper-based sauces.



New WCMA supplier member **[Midwest Mechanical Solutions](#)** specializes in engineered solutions for sustainable design and efficient HVAC systems.



New WCMA supplier member **[SaltCo](#)** specializes in the delivery and monitoring of solar salt for over 7,000 industrial and commercial customers in seven states.

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

### IN THE NEWS

#### Wisconsin

- *Only In Your State:* **[This one-of-a-kind goat farm in Wisconsin serves up fresh homemade cheese to die for](#)** (Featuring WCMA member Mosaic Meadows - LaClare Family Creamery)
- *Dairy Herd Management:* **[Fire at AMPI Wisconsin cheese processing and packaging plant](#)** (Featuring WCMA member Associated Milk Producers Inc.)

#### National/International

- *Dairy Foods:* **[Butterfly acquires Milk Specialties Global](#)** (Featuring WCMA member Milk Specialties Global)
- *U.S. Dairy Exporter Blog:* **[2022 Global dairy business year-in-review](#)** (Featuring WCMA members Baker Cheese, Bel Brands USA, BelGioioso Cheese, Dairy Farmers of America, Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery, Milk Moovement, Sargento Foods, Sartori Company, and Valley Queen Cheese)

- *Hoard's Dairyman*: [U.S. cheese exports may pass 1 billion pounds](#)
- *Agri-Pulse*: [Infant formula import tariffs return at start of the year](#)
- *CBS News*: [Food banks struggle to meet demands as inflation raises the cost of goods](#)
- *Washington Post*: [Good news about cheese - it's much healthier than you thought](#)
- *Compass Vermont*: [Cabot is now offering cheesy skins](#) (Featuring WCMA member Cabot Creamery Cooperative)

## EDUCATION



# WCMA Webinar

## Strategic Social Media for Dairy Businesses

### RSVP for Free WCMA Webinar Focused on Social Media Strategies

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).

**SIGN UP NOW**



## WCMA Leadership Courses Filling Quickly

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) - ***Only 5 spots remaining!***
  - **[Tuesday, January 31](#)** or **[Tuesday, February 7](#)**
- Part B - Boosting Staff Performance (Virtual) - ***Only 10 spots remaining!***
  - **[Tuesday, March 14](#)** or **[Tuesday, March 21](#)**
- Part C - Cultivating a Team (Virtual) - ***Only 10 spots remaining!***
  - **[Tuesday, April 18](#)** or **[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 TODAY**



## Apply for WCMA Student Scholarships by February 7



### WCMA SCHOLARSHIPS

The February 7 application deadline for [WCMA's Student Scholarships](https://www.wischeesemakers.org/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/Scholarships](https://www.wischeesemakers.org/scholarships).

In 2023, a total of \$19,000 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.

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

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 NOW**



## Save the Date for March 16 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:

- 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 Now for New WCMA Collaborative Market Access Grants

New and experienced Wisconsin dairy exporters, regardless of their WCMA membership status, can [apply now](#) for funding through WCMA's new Collaborative Market Access Grant program to help bring their world-class products to the global marketplace at several upcoming trade shows.

By completing a [simple, one-page application](#), companies and cooperatives are eligible for reimbursement grants of up to \$15,000 each to be awarded through a non-competitive process. A 30 percent grant match is required. Costs incurred before a company or cooperative applies are not eligible for reimbursement.

Once awarded, grant funds may be used in connection with any of the following industry trade shows in 2023:

- [Gulfood](#), February 20-24
- [SIAL America](#), March 28-30
- [Food&HotelAsia](#), April 25-28
- [SIAL Canada](#), May 9-11

- [Food & Hospitality China](#), May 10-12
- [Anuga](#), October 7-11
- [Food&HotelVietnam](#), November 21-23

Funding may be used for the following trade show expenses:

- Registration and booth expenses for an international trade show/exhibit
- Registration for international conferences/meetings where the company is presenting and having business meetings to increase its international exports
- Shipping charges to and from the show for booth, display, samples, literature and/or equipment
- In-country interpreter services during an approved trip
- Costs associated with foreign-language translation of brochures and supporting materials at a trade show
- Design services, printing, marketing and advertising associated with trade show participation

Completed applications and questions may be directed to [WCMA Grants & Business Programs Director Danica Nilsestuen](#).

[DOWNLOAD APPLICATION](#)

## DBIA Delivers

*Success Stories from the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance*

### Taste and See Creamery

Boyceville,  
Wisconsin

DBIA Grant Recipient  
2020



Since the creation of the [Dairy Business Innovation Alliance \(DBIA\)](#) in the 2018 Farm Bill, WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research have partnered to administer over \$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 [Taste and See Creamery](#). This Wisconsin business will use their Dairy Business Innovation Alliance grant monies to purchase a vat pasteurizer for the new on-farm creamery it is building on its grass-fed grazing dairy farm. Taste and See Creamery also plans to host tour groups!

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!

Wisconsin Cheese Makers Assn. | 5117 West Terrace Drive, Suite 402, MADISON, WI 53718

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