



# WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE  
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



## WCMA SIGNATURE EVENTS



## World Championship Cheese Contest Seeks Volunteers for 2022 Event

Sign up now to support the 2022 World Championship Cheese Contest, set for March 1-3 in Madison, Wisconsin! As the January 26 entry deadline approaches, WCMA seeks cheese industry employees to help with check-in in February, assist judges during the competition in March, and manage the Championship Cheese Cooler display at CheeseExpo in April.

Affectionately known as The B-Team, Contest volunteers play a critical role in making this world-renowned event run smoothly. Volunteering also offers the chance to witness the expert evaluation up close and connect with friends and colleagues in the cheese industry. All volunteers will receive an official B-Team baseball cap and pin in appreciation of their efforts. To help ensure a safe working environment, all 2022 Contest volunteers and judges must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

[APPLY TO VOLUNTEER](#)



In addition to volunteer applications, WCMA is accepting Contest entries now until **Wednesday, January 26**.

Don't miss the opportunity to have your best cheese, butter, yogurt, and dry dairy ingredients evaluated by our world-class team of expert judges - and win the prestigious title of World Champion Cheese! Submit your entries today using our secure [MyEntries](#) online system.

[ENTER NOW](#)

Have questions about the World Championship Cheese Contest? Please contact [WCMA Events Manager Kirsten Strohmenger](#).

## ADVOCACY



# POLICY COMMITTEE

## Join WCMA Policy Committee January 12

From Washington, D.C. to Wisconsin, WCMA is an impactful advocate for dairy processors and their supplier partners. In 2021, we helped deliver millions of dollars in pandemic aid and business development grants to dairy processors, along with favorable tax policies and regulatory changes, \$5 million to boost Wisconsin agricultural exports, and \$8 million for industry research and education.

**Now, we invite you to join our advocacy efforts!** [Register today](#) to join in the next WCMA Policy Committee meeting, set for next Wednesday, January 12 from 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. (CT). Based on member feedback, this meeting will be 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.

**SIGN UP NOW**

## COVID-19 UPDATES

### Coronavirus Headline News

#### Wisconsin

- *Wisconsin State Journal*: [Dane County reports 4,166 new COVID-19 cases; Wisconsin passes 1 million mark](#)
- *Wisconsin Public Radio*: [COVID-19 surge, omicron variant forcing changes for Wisconsin businesses and events](#)
- *Wisconsin Public Radio*: [Wisconsin hospitals are overwhelmed with unvaccinated COVID-19 patients. Some clinics are closing to help meet demand elsewhere.](#)

#### National/International

- *The Hill*: [CDC: Omicron now 95 percent of new U.S. COVID-19 cases](#)
- *Bloomberg*: [U.S. logs record 1 million virus cases with data delay](#)
- *CNN*: [COVID-19 hospitalizations match the Delta peak and trend toward the all-time high](#)
- *The Detroit News*: [CDC lowers recommendation for time between Pfizer COVID vaccine and booster to five months](#)
- *WBNS-TV*: [Reports: Biden to double purchase of Pfizer COVID-19 pills, U.S. will buy 20 million](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS



# WCMA Webinar

## Achieve Cost Savings Through Energy Efficiencies

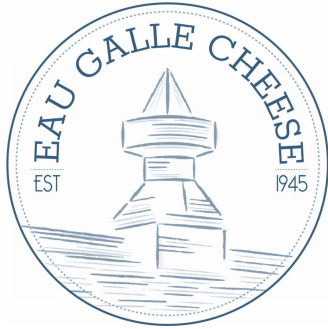
### Space Available in WCMA January Webinar

Make plans today to join WCMA on Tuesday, January 11 from 1:00-2:00 p.m. (CT) for a [free, members-only webinar](#) focused on cost savings that dairy processors can realize via energy efficiency - and the resources available to help get projects moving.



Mark Stover, Operations Manager for the [Focus on Energy](#) program in Wisconsin will detail the incentives available to manufacturers to upgrade existing facilities – or start new construction projects.

WCMA members Sargento, Sartori Company, Great Lakes Cheese Company,



Meister Cheese Company and Eau Galle Cheese have worked with Focus on Energy in recent years to enhance energy efficiencies. We'll also welcome Eau Galle Cheese's Steve Bechel and Dan Sabelko to share their experiences.

Following formal presentations, WCMA staff will facilitate a question-and-answer session with presenters. Members who prefer to submit questions anonymously may send them to WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney at [rsweeney@wischeesemakers.org](mailto:rsweeney@wischeesemakers.org) by close of business on Monday, January 10.

This offering is the latest in WCMA's [monthly webinar series](#). Webinar topics are driven by WCMA member feedback and will cover a range of themes such as business development, communication strategies, and industry resources.

**REGISTER NOW**

## Join WCMA Young Professionals January 21



**SIGN UP TODAY**

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

We'll start with a tour of Nasonville Dairy in Marshfield, Wisconsin, followed by a networking lunch at nearby Rose Bowl Lanes Bowling Alley.

Registration includes both lunch and activities, and costs \$30 per person. **Only seven spaces 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

- *Wisconsin State Journal*: ['Untapped market': Wisconsin seeks to boost agricultural exports by nearly \\$1 billion](#) (Featuring WCMA member Shullsburg Creamery and WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer)
- *DairyReporter*: [Wisconsin reveals top cheese trends in 2022](#)
- *WGBA-TV*: [Plymouth rings in the New Year with 15th annual Sartori Big Cheese Drop](#) (Featuring WCMA member Sartori Company)

### National/International

- *U.S. Dairy Exporter Blog*: [USDEC's global dairy business year-in-review](#)
- *Food Business News*: [Dairy sales up despite competition from plant-based spinoffs](#)
- *Feedstuffs*: [Restaurant trends to watch in 2022](#)
- *Cowsmopolitan*: [Dairy prices projected to rise to \\$20 milk for 2022](#)
- *Hoard's Dairyman*: [Will slowed milk production continue in 2022?](#)

- *Feedstuffs*: [Smithfield Foods joins the Farm Powered Strategic Alliance](#) (Featuring WCMA member Dairy Farmers of America)
- *The Economist*: [Letters to the editor: Cheese for the season](#) (Featuring WCMA member Nelson-Jameson)

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## EDUCATION



# 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](https://www.wischeesemakers.org) or contact [WCMA Business & Membership Manager Sara Schmidt](#).

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## Sign Up for 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 a fresh line-up of our popular leadership trainings.

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**

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## Additional 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

## INDUSTRY UPDATES

### USDA Seeks String Cheese

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has issued a solicitation for [string cheese](#) to be used in federal food assistance programs. Bids are due next Tuesday, January 11, at 1:00 p.m. (CT). Questions can be directed to [USDA staff](#).

### Applications Due Friday for Wisconsin Dairy Processor Grants



WCMA members operating in Wisconsin can apply now for [Dairy Processor Grants](#) of up to \$50,000, available via the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP). **Thanks to WCMA's lobbying efforts, the available funding for this program has been doubled to \$400,000 for 2022!** Applications are due this Friday, January 7, with successful applicants to be announced in February.

Eligible applicants must operate a licensed dairy processing plant in Wisconsin that is engaged in pasteurizing, processing, or manufacturing milk or dairy products. Awards can be used to address a wide range of dairy business needs, such as food safety, staff training, plant expansion or modernization, and professional consulting services. Projects must increase capacity or production, and processors are required to provide a match of 20 percent of the grant amount.

Applications must be received by [WDATCP staff](#) by 5:00 p.m. (CT) on Friday, January 7, 2022. For assistance with your application, please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

**APPLY TODAY**



## DBIA Offers Business Builder Grant Resources

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.

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**WORKFORCE**





## Reserve Booth Space 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 five 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](#).

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## Share Job Openings 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

## MEMBERSHIP

### 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 Bruce Workman of Edelweiss Creamery!



#### **Bruce Workman Edelweiss Creamery**

##### **Favorite Cheese**

Gruyère or Butterkäse

##### **Proudest Achievement**

Achieving my first Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker certification (of 12!), and building a viable business that I can pass on to the next generation.

##### **Why I Support WCMA**

"I've been honored that my peers have chosen me to serve on the WCMA Board for three terms. I love the ability to connect with a variety of my colleagues in the industry that share similar issues."



Have an idea for a WCMA social media campaign or other communication? Please contact **WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton**.

# WCMA Welcomes New Supplier Member

Join WCMA as we welcome a new supplier members this week: [R&R Insurance](#). Primary contacts for the company 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 U.S. and around the world, and more than 575 supplier companies. Thanks for your engagement and support.

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[WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org)

