



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



SIGNATURE EVENTS



Opening Keynote and Additional Seminars Enhance CheeseCon

Exciting additions to the [CheeseCon education line-up](#) are bringing industry CEOs and top experts to take on implementing sustainability measures at the dairy processor level, and U.S. Dairy Export Council has joined the industry's largest meeting of the year to discuss the international dairy landscape and new research to move cheese.

Each morning at CheeseCon, after high-energy opening events, attendees will have four concurrent education options. [Check out the enhanced schedule](#) of events and send your team: April 4-6 at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, Wisconsin.

The Opening Keynote Panel exclusively sponsored by KSS/RELCO is now ready to kick off Wednesday, April 5 with dairy's most crucial issue. "Sustainability Now: Implementing, not Discussing, Sustainable Practices in Dairy" features leaders from Leprino Foods, Harbor Environmental and Nestle S.A. describing the imperative to develop and measure sustainability targets to meet consumer expectations and buyers' demands.

A new concurrent session Wednesday morning is the follow-up partner to the Opening Keynote. This Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy technical session will present

“Implementing Sustainable Practices Now,” featuring experts from Harbor Environmental, Foremost Farms, Leprino Foods and Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy. These sustainability experts will discuss the tools that have been custom built for U.S. dairy processors to understand and measure greenhouse gas emissions across their operations and how your competitors are measuring and reporting on sustainability metrics on-farm and in-plant.

A new Thursday morning concurrent session joins an already strong lineup of education seminars. U.S. Dairy Export Council has built “Market Outlook and Opportunities for Cheese Exports.” USDEC experts Megan Sheets and William Loux join with Wisconsin-based resource partners to share the outlook for dairy exports as well as new market research, sales support, grant support and additional tools to advance growth of U.S. dairy sales overseas.

Thursday afternoon adds a new take on a popular workshop at CheeseCon. The 1:30 p.m. workshop “Learning the Art of Technical Cheese Grading” features Jim Mueller, Chief Judge from the U.S. Championship Cheese Contest, and other expert cheese evaluators, offering an informative, hands-on exploration of defect evaluation in commodity and specialty cheeses.

The [CheeseCon education lineup](#) is packed with Center for Dairy Research cheese and whey seminars, food safety, milk pricing, specialty cheese production and now sustainability, dairy exporting and cheese evaluation. [Sign up by March 1](#) to get the early-bird 10 percent discount and we’ll see you there!

REGISTER NOW



Join Us Online February 23 for Live Announcement of 2023 U.S. Champion Cheese

Mark your calendar and join WCMA and dairy manufacturers nationwide next Thursday, February 23 at 2:00 p.m. (CT) for the virtual announcement of the winner of the [2023 United States Championship Cheese Contest®](#)!

Top 20 winners will be invited to join the event via Zoom, and all are welcome to watch the

announcement live at USChampionCheese.org or on [Facebook](#).

Contest entrants and members of the public are also invited to watch Preliminary Round judging on Tuesday, February 21 and Wednesday, February 22 from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at Resch Expo in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Samples will be available!

SAVE THE DATE



B-Team Prepares Entries for Competition



WCMA sincerely thanks the members of the B-Team for their tireless efforts to receive and organize incoming [U.S. Championship Cheese Contest](#) entries. Named in honor of the late Contest Chairman Brian Eggebrecht, these outstanding volunteers are busy receiving and organizing the 2,249 dairy product entries that will be evaluated by a team of expert judges next week.

Thanks also go to [Gold Contest Logistics Partner Sponsor](#) and WCMA member WOW Logistics for generously providing warehouse space at their Little Chute facility!

INDUSTRY UPDATES



U.S. Breaks Dairy Export Records in 2022

United States dairy exports again broke records in volume and value in 2022 for the third consecutive year, [according to the U.S. Dairy Export Council](#). By volume, dairy exports increased five percent on a milk solids equivalent basis to 2.4 million metric tons. Overall export value jumped 25 percent to \$9.6 billion - exceeding \$9 billion for the first time ever.

Cheese exports alone grew 12 percent to nearly 1 billion metric tons, showing gains across multiple continents with Mexico in the lead. International sales of butterfat rose 43 percent with triple-digit increases to Canada and Mexico. Whey exports showed growth in the last seven months of the year, finishing 2022 with significant increases to China, Canada, and South America.

ADVOCACY



WCMA Supports Confirmation of Wisconsin Agency Leaders

In letters issued to members of the Wisconsin State Senate this week, WCMA urged swift confirmation of [Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Secretary-designee Missy Hughes](#), [Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary-designee Randy Romanski](#), and [Department of Transportation Secretary-designee Craig Thompson](#). These agency heads, in their previous term of service, have demonstrated a spirit of partnership with Wisconsin dairy processors, and WCMA applauds Governor Tony Evers' decision to reappoint them in this new term.

To engage in WCMA's advocacy work, please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).



Attend 10th Annual Joint Industry Meeting with Wisconsin DNR



[Register now](#) to join WCMA, Midwest Food Products Association, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources on March 16 for the opportunity to connect with dairy industry environmental staff and regulators.

All WCMA members are welcome to attend, but space is limited, so sign up today!

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. For more information, contact [WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer](#).

[RSVP NOW](#)

Wisconsin

- *Portage Daily Register*: [Curd nerds: South-central Wisconsin dairy manufacturers to compete in Championship Cheese Contest](#) (Featuring WCMA)
- *WKOW-TV*: [31 local dairy manufacturers competing in this year's U.S. Championship of Cheese](#)
- *WSAW-TV*: [Central Wisconsin dairy producers announced to compete in U.S. Cheese Championships](#)

National/International

- *Reuters*: [U.S. agriculture trade chief demands Canada broaden dairy quota access](#)
- *KGO-TV*: [PG&E capturing methane from California dairies as new source for natural renewable energy](#)
- *KFYR-TV*: [North Dakota House votes on definition of milk](#)
- *Dairy Foods*: [Prairie Farms honors former CEO Ed Mullins](#) (Featuring WCMA member Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.)
- *Dairy Foods*: [Land O'Lakes airs Super Bowl ad](#) (Featuring WCMA member Land O'Lakes)
- *KIMT-TV*: [Two Rochester area dairy processors to compete in the 2023 U.S. Cheese Contest](#) (Featuring WCMA)
- *KROC Radio*: [Southeast Minnesota cheesemakers are competing for coveted cheese title](#)

WORKFORCE



Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association Health & Safety Group

Join WCMA Health & Safety Group March 1

Register now to join the next meeting of WCMA's Health & Safety Group on Wednesday, March 1 from 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. (CT)! Join us in person in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, or online from anywhere in the world. In-person attendees will enjoy a networking lunch. All WCMA members - both dairy processor and supplier members - are welcome.

This meeting will focus on lockout/tagout best practices; a new machine guarding risk assessment tool; the development of a workplace safety culture, including a peer panel on practical applications; updates on OSHA's food processor LEP and increased enforcement measures; and discussion of new training opportunities for safety officers. Featured speakers include:

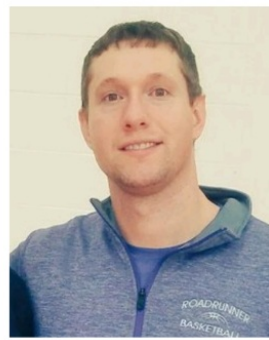
- Dan Trocke, WisCon Consultant
- John Brengosz, R&R Insurance Loss Control Specialist
- Zach Thayer, Emmi Roth
- Mark Bonovetz, BelGioioso Cheese



Dan Trocke
WisCon



John Brengosz
R&R Insurance



Zach Thayer
Emmi Roth



Mark Bonovetz
BelGioioso Cheese

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

RSVP TODAY

WisCon Offers Free OSHA Webinar Series

Registration is now open for a [free, virtual training series](#) focused on the Occupational Health and Safety Administration's (OSHA) National and Regional Emphasis Programs. The monthly sessions are hosted by [WisCon](#) and will be led by occupational health and safety experts from the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene. All sessions will be held from 9:30-11:30 a.m. (CT).

Each training will offer a deep dive on a different topic related to an OSHA standard, National Emphasis Program, or Regional Emphasis Program:

- March 16: [Hazard Communication Standard](#)
- April 20: [Noise and Hearing Conservation](#)
- May 18: [Hexavalent Chromium](#)
- June 18: [Heat Stress](#)

Space is limited, so act now. Please contact [WisCon staff](#) with questions.



WCMA WAGE & WORKFORCE SURVEY

Participate in WCMA Wage & Workforce Survey

WCMA invites members to participate now through Wednesday, March 1 in the [2023 WCMA Wage & Workforce Survey](#).

This free, annual online survey helps WCMA provide critical data employers need to successfully attract and retain top talent. Members are encouraged to review the survey questions in [PDF format](#) first, as responses may not be saved in the online form.

All responses will remain confidential and anonymous. Survey respondents will receive a summary report from WCMA in March containing blinded and aggregated data. Some broad, topline data (such as overall industry wage growth year-to-year) may also be shared for the purposes of industry advocacy.

Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#) with any questions.

[TAKE SURVEY](#)



RSVP for Thursday Meeting of WCMA Workforce & Education Committee

Make plans to join WCMA's active [Workforce and Education Committee](#) for its next

quarterly meeting, set for Thursday, February 16 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. This free meeting, open to all WCMA members will be held virtually.

Our meeting will highlight training resources for Spanish speaking dairy processing employees, including offerings from the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, Cornell University, the Center for Dairy Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, as well as a new video onboarding series from WCMA. We'll also work together to identify what resources are still needed to best serve and support Spanish speakers in our industry.

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

[REGISTER NOW](#)



Limited Space Remaining at WCMA Job Fair at CheeseCon

[Act now to reserve your booth](#) at the WCMA Job Fair at CheeseCon, set for Tuesday, April 4 from 3:00-5:00 p.m. in Madison, Wisconsin. The deadline to reserve a booth has been extended to **this Friday, February 17** and just **five spaces are left**, so don't delay! Current exhibitors include:

- Associated Milk Producers Inc.
- Custom Fabricating & Repair
- DSM Food Specialties
- Ecolab
- Emmi Roth
- Foremost Farms USA
- Grassland Dairy Products
- Great Lakes Cheese
- IFF
- Land O'Lakes Inc.
- Leprino Foods
- Masters Gallery Foods
- Milk Specialties Global

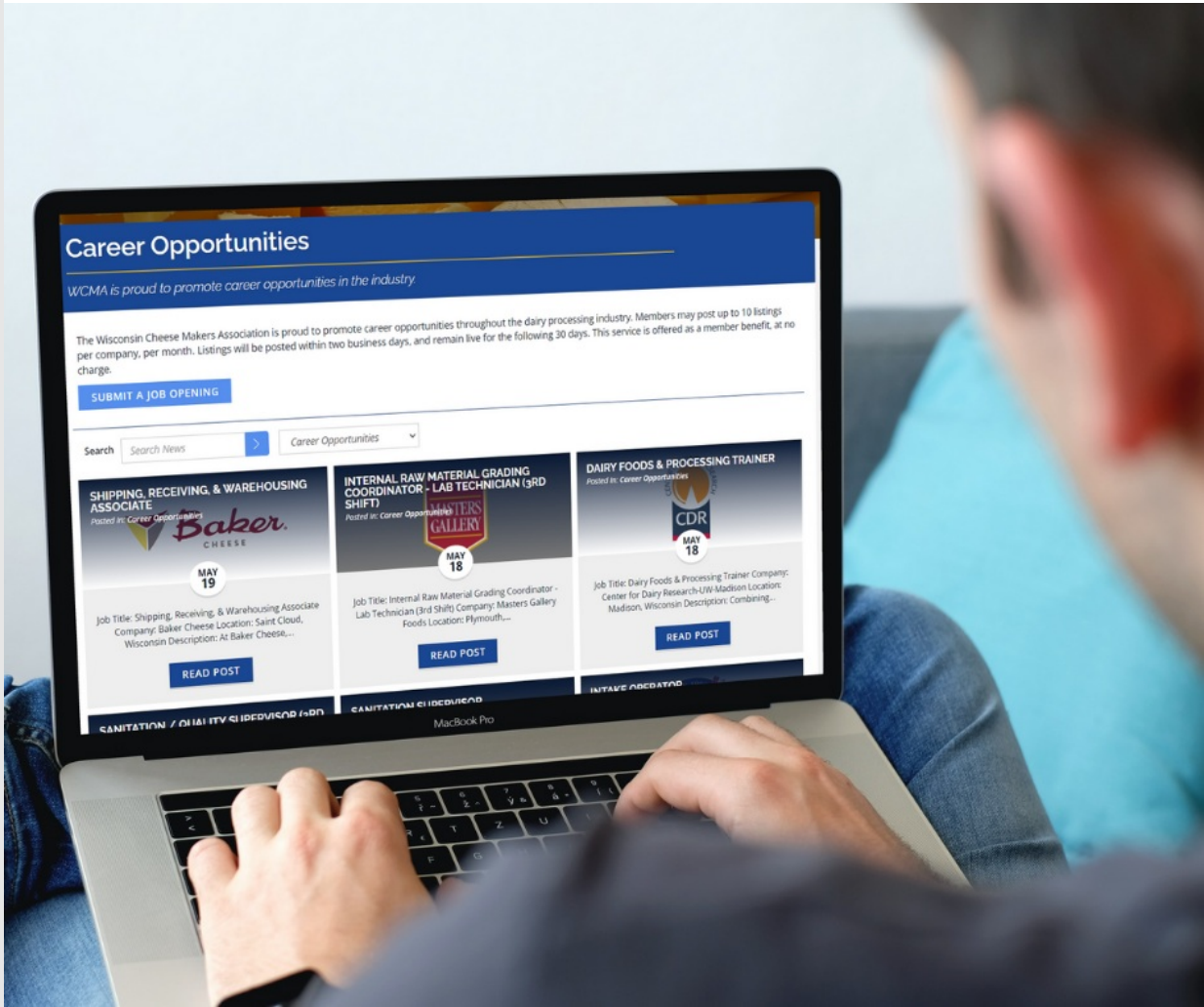
- Nelson-Jameson, Inc.
- Pro Cleaning Solutions USA
- RELCO, A Koch Separation Solutions Company
- Saputo Inc.
- Tetra Pak
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Winona Foods

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 BOOTH



Build Your Team with Free WCMA Jobs Board

Looking for motivated individuals to fill your open positions? Visit WCMA's [online jobs board](#) to post up to 10 career opportunities per company or cooperative, per month - free! This week features postings from the Center for Dairy Research and members Foremost Farms USA, Lactalis American Group, Masters Gallery Foods, and Tetra Pak.

Please contact [WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton](#) with questions.

SHARE OPENINGS

MEMBERSHIP



WCMA Board of Directors Seeks Nominees for Supplier Member Seat

WCMA Supplier Members are invited to nominate themselves, or another Supplier Member, for the ballot to select a Supplier Member Representative to the WCMA Board of Directors. This seat on the Board of Directors is an opportunity to join the Board for a two-year term beginning on July 1, 2023. This call for nominees will remain open through February 27, 2023. Nominees must be the designated key contact from a [WCMA supplier member company](#).

This is an open Board seat – no incumbent – because Chr. Hansen’s Mike Neu has graciously completed six years on the Board (three, two-year terms) and has reached our term limit. The nominees we receive from our Supplier community will be contacted for their interest in serving. Those interested will be placed on a ballot handed to the WCMA Board of Directors on April 4, 2023. The Board will vote on a single, new Supplier Representative. That appointed Supplier Representative will serve from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025 and can seek to run for further terms. Note that the Board of Directors meets four times each year, in April, June, September and December.

Select your nominee from the [WCMA Supplier Member company list](#) and email your choice to [WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer](#) by end of day on Monday, February 27. Thank you!

WELCOME



NEW WCMA MEMBERS!

Dairy Industry Suppliers



New WCMA supplier member **World Water Works** is a wastewater treatment equipment and complete system supplier to the food and beverage, manufacturing, mining, paper, and oil and gas industries.

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

EDUCATION



Act Now for WCMA Leadership Trainings

A fresh new line-up of **WCMA's popular leadership trainings** is available now for spring and fall 2023! These courses are limited to 25 participants each and spaces fill quickly, so register now.

WCMA's **Next Step Leadership Training** offers established industry leaders an

opportunity to reconnect with their peers and to refresh and remind themselves of the essentials, while providing a deeper dive on a key topic. On May 30, this one-day session will focus on diversity and inclusion strategies to build and strengthen teams. Next Step Leadership costs just \$135 per person and will be offered virtually in 2023, allowing participants to join live online from anywhere in the world.

Our highly-rated Front-Line Leadership course 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. Our winter/spring Front-Line Leadership classes are nearly sold out, so act now!

- ~~January 31:~~ [Part A - Essential Leadership Skills](#) - SOLD OUT
- ~~March 14:~~ [Part B - Boosting Staff Performance](#) - SOLD OUT
- April 18: [Part C - Cultivating a Team](#) - 1 seat remaining

- February 7: [Part A - Essential Leadership Skills](#) - SOLD OUT
- March 21: [Part B - Boosting Staff Performance](#) - 4 seats remaining
- April 25: [Part C - Cultivating a Team](#) - 5 seats remaining

For those looking ahead to the fall, a **new line-up of both in-person and virtual** Front-Line Leadership offerings is now available!

- Fall 2023 - Virtual Tracks:
 - September 6: [Part A - Essential Leadership Skills](#)
 - October 11: [Part B - Boosting Staff Performance](#)
 - November 20: [Part C - Cultivating a Team](#)

 - September 26: [Part A - Essential Leadership Skills](#)
 - October 24: [Part B - Boosting Staff Performance](#)
 - November 29: [Part C - Cultivating a Team](#)
- Fall 2023 - In-Person Track:
 - September 11: [Part A - Essential Leadership Skills](#)
 - October 17: [Part B - Boosting Staff Performance](#)
 - November 28: [Part C - Cultivating a Team](#)

Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#) with questions or additional training needs.

SIGN UP 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:

- February 15: [Internal Auditing Principles](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- 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 21-23: [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
 - [Good Manufacturing Practices in Food Safety](#) - 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

DBIA Delivers

Success Stories from the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance

Renard's Cheese

Algoma,
Wisconsin

DBIA Grant Recipient
2022



#DBIADelivers Spotlights Grant Recipients: Renard's Cheese

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 pleased to showcase WCMA member [Renard's Cheese](#). With financial support from their DBIA grant, this family-owned and operated cheesemaking business in Door County, Wisconsin plans to automate their labeling process, improving workflow and boosting sales.

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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