



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



ADVOCACY



Governor Evers Signs Ag Export Funding Bill at Sartori Company



Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) **today applauded** Governor Tony Evers for signing Senate Bill 827 into law as Act 207. The legislation, authored by Senator Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan) and Representative Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc), repurposes unused federal monies to boost funding in 2022 and 2023 for the new Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports (WIAE) within the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

The WIAE aims to increase Wisconsin's agricultural exports – including cheese, yogurt, butter, and other dairy products – by 25 percent over the next five years. Governor Evers took today's action to strengthen funding for the initiative at Sartori Company's cheese caves in Plymouth, Wisconsin, which touts itself as the Cheese Capital of the World.

Pictured from left are Jeff Schwager, CEO, Sartori Company; Governor Tony Evers; and John Umhoefer, Executive Director, WCMA

WCMA has been a strong advocate for boosting global marketing opportunities since Governor Evers first proposed the creation of a dairy export program in his 2020 State of the State Address and his 2021-2023 biennial budget proposal. WCMA members including Chr. Hansen, Nasonville Dairy, Nelson-Jameson, and Specialty Cheese Company have been heavily involved in support of the WIAE throughout the legislative process. Thank you for your dedication and continued action!



Senator Baldwin Visits Cedar Grove Cheese



Pictured from left: Tom Guerin, Research Program Manager, Center for Dairy Research; John Umhoefer, Executive Director, WCMA; U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin; and Bob Wills, President, Cedar Grove Cheese.

WCMA and Bob Wills of Cedar Grove Cheese welcomed U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin to the specialty cheese factory in Plain, Wisconsin Saturday. Senator Baldwin toured the facility and learned plans of Cedar Grove's upcoming sustainability project, funded in part by a grant from the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance, run by WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research. Andy Hatch of WCMA member company Uplands Cheese also participated in the visit. For more, see the related news coverage from [WKOW-TV](#).

Senator Baldwin championed the creation of the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance and three similar organizations across the country, and recently secured \$80 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for continued work. The Senator expressed her firm commitment to this business-building program and to helping the Wisconsin dairy industry continue to thrive.



Raise Your Paddles for Dairy Industry Scholarships at CheeseExpo 2022



Register now to attend [CheeseExpo 2022](#) and prepare to bid on the world's best cheeses at the exciting Chr. Hansen Reception & Championship Cheese Auction!

Proceeds from this popular event go to support dairy processing scholarships and educational programs provided by the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA).

On Wednesday, April 13, following a full day of informative seminars and new discoveries on the exhibit floor, CheeseExpo attendees are invited to enjoy the high-energy Chr. Hansen Reception. There, the Championship Cheese Auction kicks off with the newest winners of [WCMA's student scholarships](#): seven promising individuals advancing their education toward careers in the dairy processing industry.

Then, the excitement continues as WCMA leads a fast-paced auction featuring top-tier cheeses from the 2022 World Championship Cheese Contest. View the [complete bid sheet](#), grab a bidding paddle, and prepare for a friendly competition with fellow dairy processors and suppliers while raising funds to ensure a vibrant future for the industry!

[REGISTER NOW](#)



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 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, 2022. This call for nominees will remain open through March 25. Nominees must be the designated key contact from a [WCMA supplier member company](#).

This is an open Board seat – no incumbent – because Tetra Pak has graciously completed a full six years on the Board (three, two-year terms). The final ballot will be placed before the WCMA Board of Directors on April 12, 2022 and the Board will vote on a single, new Supplier representative.

Select your nominee from the WCMA supplier member company list above and email your choice to WCMA's [John Umhoefer](#) by March 25. Thank you for throwing your hat in the ring for this opportunity to join the WCMA Board of Directors!

EDUCATION

WCMA Supports Future Dairy Processing Leaders with \$19,000 in Scholarships



**WCMA
SCHOLARSHIPS**

Seven current and future dairy industry professionals have been selected to receive a total of \$19,000 in [WCMA Student Scholarships](#) in 2022, WCMA [announced yesterday](#).

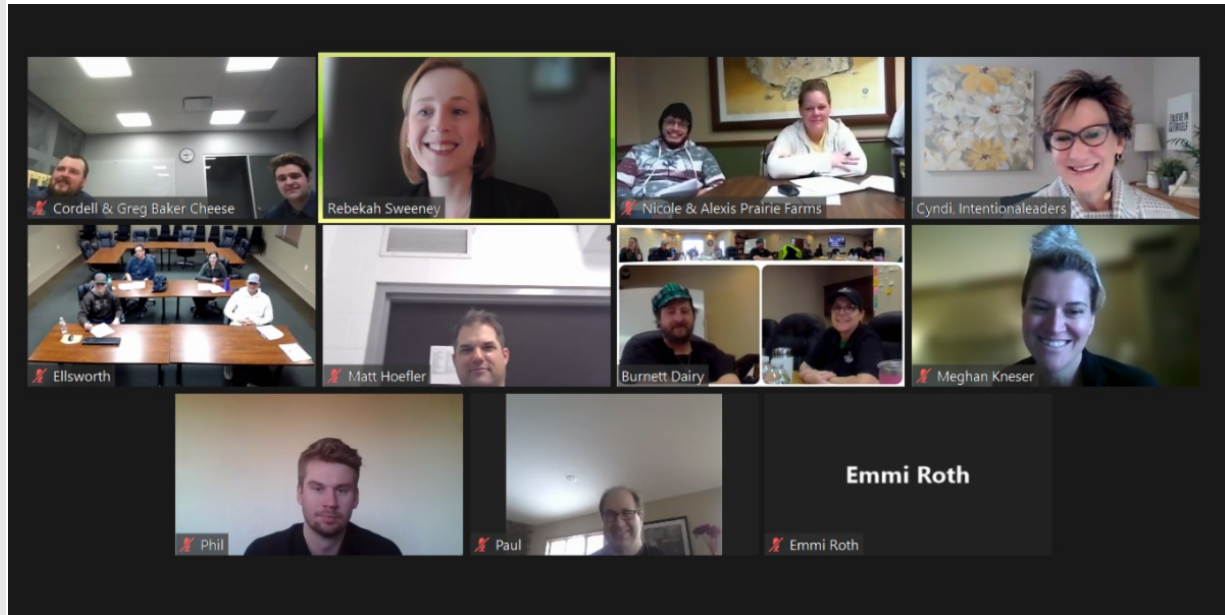
Dairy processors and their family members are eligible for the WCMA Myron P. “Mike” Dean Cheese Industry Student Scholarship. Over 25 years, WCMA has awarded these \$3,000 scholarships to 44 students. Winners of the 2022 Mike Dean Cheese Industry Student Scholarships are **Bailee Aisenbrey** of Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery and **Jamie Feldmann** of Sartori Company.

Since 1999, suppliers to the dairy industry and their family members have earned the WCMA Supplier Student Scholarship. In total, 57 of these scholarships have been awarded over 22 years. The 58th, 59th, and 60th recipients of the WCMA Cheese Industry Supplier Student Scholarship, receiving \$3,000 each, are **Jenna Jakel** of Loos Machine & Automation, **Stephanie Kraeme** of IFF, and **Jack Pluta** of Excel Engineering.

Since 2021, WCMA has also selected two students to receive the Brian Eggebrecht Student Scholarship supporting skilled trades in the dairy industry, worth \$2,000 each.

This award, 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. The winners of the 2022 Brian Eggebrecht Student Scholarship are **Bryce Gustafson** and **Xiapor Lor**, both of Masters Gallery Foods.

Funds for WCMA's scholarship program come from the annual Championship Cheese Auction, where gold medal cheeses from WCMA's Championship Cheese Contests are sold to the highest bidders. The next auction will be held during [CheeseExpo](#), scheduled for April 12-14, 2022 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. More information and registration details are available at [CheeseExpo.org](#).



WCMA Front-Line Leadership Class Talks Staff Performance

Participants in WCMA's Front-Line Leadership Part B class last week enjoyed a discussion on boosting staff performance on their teams. Kudos to WCMA members Baker Cheese, Burnett Dairy Cooperative, Emmi Roth, Great Lakes Cheese Company, Prairie Farms Dairy, and Sartori Company for supporting continued employee learning and growth!

More information on WCMA's educational programming is available [online](#). Have questions? Please contact [Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).



WCMA Webinar

Grants for Growth: How to Find and Apply for Federal and State Funding

Save the Date for WCMA April Webinar Focused on Maximizing Grant Opportunities

Mark your calendar for WCMA's [next free, member-only webinar](#)! Join us Tuesday, April 19 at 1:00 p.m. (CT) for practical tips on finding and applying for federal and state grant funding. Additional details will be shared in the coming weeks.

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. Have an idea for a future webinar topic? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

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:

- March 29-31: [Food Defense and FSPCA Vulnerability Assessment Training](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- April 20: [Advanced Preventive Controls - In Person](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- April 25-29: [World of Cheese from Pasture to Plate](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- May 2-4: [FSPCA Preventive Controls for Human Food \(PCQH\) Training](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- May 9-13: [Advanced Cheese Technology - In Person](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- May 18: [Cheesemaking Fundamentals - Online, Self-Study](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- June 14-16: [Advanced Buttermaking - In Person](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- June 20-24: [Buttermakers License Apprenticeship - In Person](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- Rolling Admission: [Online HACCP Training](#) - North Carolina State University
- Rolling Admission: [Environmental Monitoring in the Dairy Industry](#) - North Carolina State University
- Rolling Admission: [Preventive Controls for Dairy Processors](#) - North Carolina State University
- Rolling Admission: [Food Safety Basics For Artisan Cheesemakers](#) - North Carolina State University

INDUSTRY UPDATES

Submit Dairy Business Builder Grant Applications by March 31



Submit an application today for a [new, \\$1 million round](#) of Dairy Business Builder Grants administered by the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance! All applications are due by March 31 at 5:00 p.m. (CT).

Small- to medium-sized dairy farmers, processors, and other in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin are eligible to apply. Grants of up to \$50,000 will be awarded through a competitive process.

Eligible projects will include dairy farm diversification, on-farm processing, the creation of value-added dairy products, and efforts to market dairy products for export.

The application form is available on the [DBIA website](#), as well as a webinar offering information on the program, an overview of the application process, and tips for a competitive application.

The DBIA is a partnership between WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research, 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.

Questions about DBIA or the Dairy Business Builder grant can be directed to [DBIA staff](#).

APPLY NOW

Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council Seeks Applicants for 2022-2023 Cohort

Students who will be high school seniors during the 2022-2023 school year are encouraged to apply for the [Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council](#), sponsored by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP). Members participate in virtual monthly sessions, listening to presentations, engaging in discussions, and networking with professionals across the agriculture industry.

Questions about the Council may be directed to [WDATCP staff](#).

Apply by April 1 for Export Grants



Wisconsin-based dairy companies interested in exporting their products should apply by April 1 for International Market Access Grants (IMAGs) through the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). These grants are newly expanded with funds designated solely for agribusinesses, thanks to the [Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports](#), a program WCMA has successfully championed since its introduction in May 2021.

IMAG applicants must be an established agribusiness that is new to exporting or expanding into new markets, operating in Wisconsin for at least one year, and manufacturing, processing, assembling, or distributing a product that has the potential to be exported. Eligible project expenses include costs associated with trade shows and ventures, marketing, promotions, consulting services, and export education. Matching funds are required at 30 percent of the grant award.

Companies that have not completed WEDC's [ExporTech](#) training program may receive IMAG funding up to three times, at a maximum of \$10,000 per grant. ExporTech graduates may receive IMAG funding up to six times with a maximum of \$25,000 per grant.

Questions about the IMAG program can be directed to [WEDC staff](#).

IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *Roadtrippers:* [Eat cheese like a local at these eight stops along the Wisconsin](#)

Cheese Trail (Featuring WCMA members Carr Valley Cheese, Clock Shadow Creamery, Old Country Cheese, Pasture Pride Cheese, and Westby Cooperative Creamery)

- *Minneapolis Star Tribune*: **Wisconsin's Organic Valley dairy co-op focused on carbon "insetting"** (Featuring WCMA member CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley)

National/International

- *WBTS-TV*: **Got Milk? After supplier hit by cyberattack, a NH school district is short**
- *Dairy Herd Management*: **Behind the wheel: Milk haulers are in short supply**
- *VT Digger*: **Organic Valley offers 'lifeboat' for many organic farmers, but national trends still threaten Northeast** (Featuring WCMA member CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley)

MEMBERSHIP



WCMA Technology Committee Hosts Ninth Annual Joint Industry Meeting



Many thanks to all who joined the **WCMA Technology Committee**, the Midwest Food Products Association, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for last week's ninth annual Joint Industry Meeting. Dairy and food industry professionals heard the latest updates on environmental research, state and federal standards, and more.

Together We Grow: WCMA Celebrates Member Employee Growth and Advancement

WCMA members know that growth involves more than product sales. A focus on the potential, satisfaction, and development of team members helps build a foundation for long-term success. That's why WCMA is pleased to celebrate the many opportunities for

collaborative employee advancement in dairy processing through our newest social media campaign: Together We Grow.



Together WE GROW

This week, we're pleased to highlight **George Crave** (pictured at left with cheesemaker **Brian Crave**), President of WCMA member **Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese**.

"Through WCMA's resources, events, and membership, numerous Crave family members and key employees like Brian have gained the necessary tools, networks, and support to find essential roles in both management and production of our award-winning cheeses," George shares.

Follow along on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#) each week for more inspiring stories of growth from WCMA members!

WELCOME



NEW WCMA MEMBERS!

Dairy Manufacturers, Processors, & Marketers

New WCMA dairy processor member [Ingredient Exchange](#) is an ingredient and finished goods

Dairy Industry Suppliers



New WCMA supplier member [CSL USA Inc.](#) provides Cultures Supporting Life (CSL) for food, health, and nutritional products.



New WCMA supplier member [Hansen-Rice, Inc.](#) delivers nationwide services to plan, design, build and maintain capital projects across multiple industries.



New WCMA supplier member [Idemitsu Chemicals U.S.A. Corporation](#) offers engineered plastics and performance chemicals for a variety of industries.



New WCMA supplier member [Irving Polishing and Manufacturing Company, Inc.](#) specializes in the fabricating, welding, and polishing of stainless steel and other metals.



New WCMA supplier member [John M. Ellsworth Co., Inc.](#) is a distributor of sanitary equipment used in food processing.



New WCMA supplier member [Nor-Am Cold Storage](#) operates a network of public refrigerated warehouses and offers ambient storage capabilities, co-packing, kitting, protein boxing, exporting/importing, and order fulfillment.



New WCMA supplier member [ZwitterCo](#) offers designed for water treatment, precision separation, and product recovery in a wide range of industrial and agricultural processes.

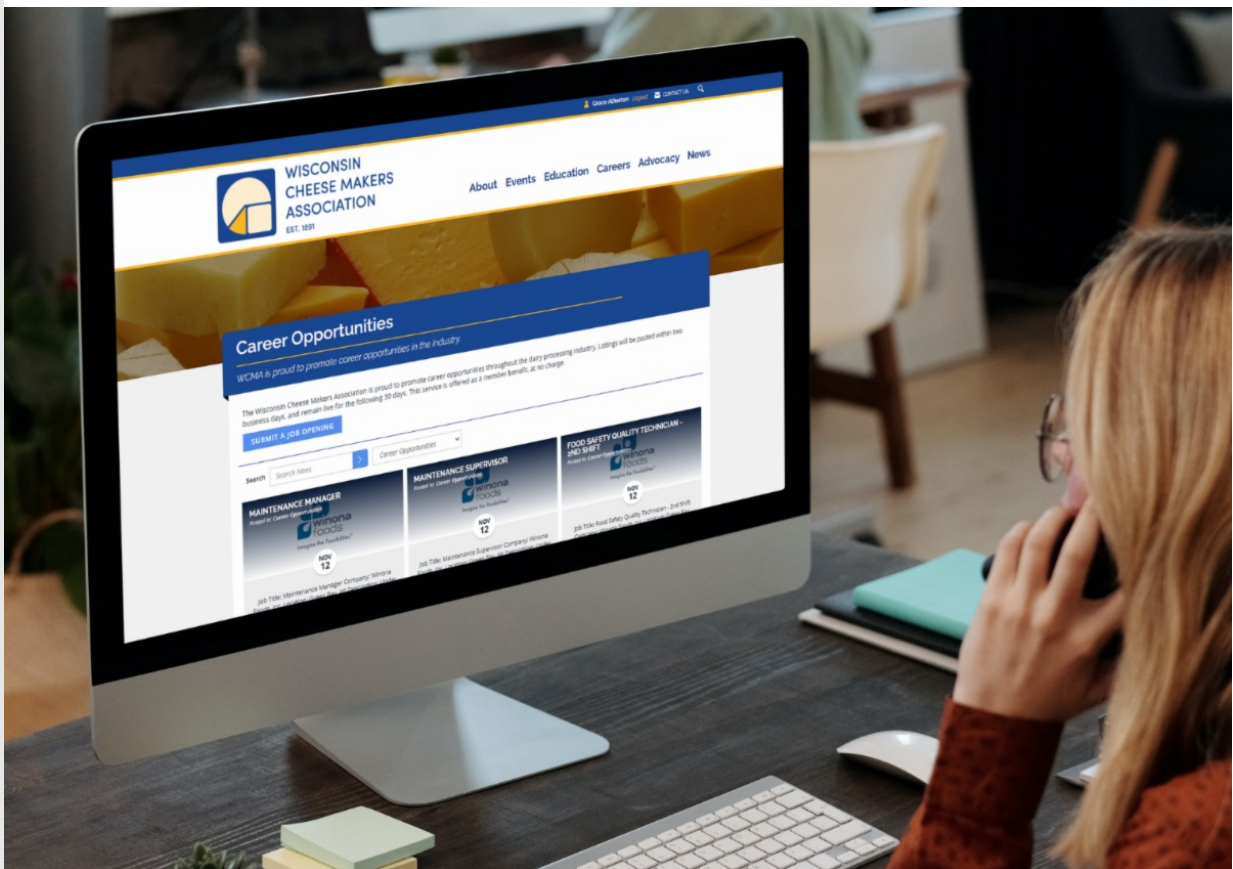
Visit WCMA's [online member directory](#) for more information.



Workforce Strategies Spotlight: Great Lakes Cheese Welcomes Refugee Workers

Kudos to WCMA member Great Lakes Cheese, which was recently **featured locally** for its unique approach to hiring refugees. In addition to proactive recruiting efforts, the company offers multicultural spaces, prayer rooms, transportation services, and alternative break schedules to accommodate its diverse workforce.

Have an idea to share with your dairy processing industry colleagues in human resources and workforce engagement? WCMA would love to help you amplify it! Contact **WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney** to be featured.



View, Share Career Opportunities on WCMA Jobs Board

Visit WCMA's [online jobs board](#) to view job openings from dairy manufacturer, processor, marketer, and supplier members. Have an opportunity at your company or cooperative? WCMA members can [post openings](#) on the Jobs Board anytime - it's free and easy!

POST OPENINGS

WisCheeseMakers.org

