



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



ADVOCACY



As FDA Disappoints, Congress and Industry Act



The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's new draft guidance allowing plant-based products to be labeled "milk" is a "shot across the bow of animal agriculture," writes WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer in [this month's WCMA Notes column](#).

Read more about the contradictory nature of the guidance - and a legislative solution in the works - at WisCheeseMakers.org.

WCMA will submit comments to FDA opposing this guidance. Members may also [submit their own comments online](#) or via mail by April 24 to:

Dockets Management
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

For assistance submitting comments, please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).



Urge Legislative Support for DAIRY PRIDE Act

U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisconsin) and a bipartisan, bicameral group of lawmakers led by Senators Jim Risch (R-Idaho), Susan Collins (R-Maine), and Peter Welch (D-Vermont) have [reintroduced the DAIRY PRIDE Act](#), which would compel FDA to enforce existing regulations, defining dairy products as made from the milk of dairy animals.

Encourage your members of Congress to sign on to this legislation with WCMA's new, easy-to-use advocacy tool. Just [click here](#) and enter your name and address to send a message to your elected officials. For assistance, please contact [Rebekah Sweeney](#).



Gruyere Naming Decision Upheld

A U.S. appeals court [ruled Friday that "gruyère" is a common cheese name](#), upholding a federal judge's ruling in late 2021 and a more recent decision by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. By once again confirming this as a generic cheese style, the decision reaffirms that all cheesemakers, including those outside France or Switzerland, can create and market products under the name.

WCMA has worked with the Consortium for Common Food Names on this issue since 2018, identifying and characterizing American gruyère production.



Connect with Regulators at 10th Annual Joint Industry Meeting

More than 50 industry colleagues and government staff are signed up for [10th annual Joint Industry Meeting](#) on environmental issues hosted by WCMA, Midwest Food Products Association, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). [Register today!](#)

The hybrid meeting, set for Thursday, March 16, online and live in Sun Prairie, WI, offers educational updates from regulators and industry experts, and a day of networking with colleagues in dairy processing and food processing and state regulatory partners.

Our informative, engaging program promises discussions on top environmental issues including:

- Phosphorus multi-discharger variance reauthorization by EPA,
- PFAS regulation and standards,
- WPDES permitting,
- Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) Tests,
- Land Application Siting and Permitting,
- Fertilizer Opportunities for Industrial Sludge, and more

Featured speakers include experts from WDNR, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, and industry.

All WCMA members are welcome to join in-person or online. Registration for in-person attendees costs just \$45, which includes a catered lunch. On-site check-in begins at 9:30 a.m. (CT). Virtual attendees may join the meeting at a reduced rate of \$25 and will receive a Zoom link to join the programming beginning at 10:00 a.m. (CT).

Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer](#).

[REGISTER NOW](#)



Make Allowance Survey Responses Due April 14

The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association Board of Directors, in collaboration with International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), will petition the U.S. Department of Agriculture later this month for a national rulemaking process and public hearing to reform federal milk marketing orders, with a focus on adjusting make allowances. WCMA will recommend that a hearing accept up-to-date economic analysis regarding cost of production of cheddar, butter, nonfat dry milk and dry whey to update make allowances in milk price formulas.

WCMA and IDFA have commissioned Dr. Mark Stephenson, University of Wisconsin-Madison, to update his most recent cost of processing study to capture manufacturing data from 2021-2022. Dr. Stephenson has updated his cost of processing survey, and can now collect cost information from any company or cooperative that manufactures cheddar cheese, dry whey, nonfat dry milk and butter as all or part of their production. Dr. Stephenson will treat all submitted data confidentially and protect it from disclosure, and only blinded and aggregated data will be shared with USDA.

WCMA urges all members producing these key commodities to submit their data to Dr. Stephenson using [this link](#). Instructions for completing the survey are [available online](#). Broad, national participation from dairy manufacturers large and small will enhance the value of this data. Please check with your team to ensure that the appropriate person on your staff is tasked with filling out the survey. **All responses must be received by Friday, April 14, 2023.**

TAKE THE SURVEY

SIGNATURE EVENTS



Celebrate dairy's next generation
Register now! [CheeseCon.org](https://www.cheesecon.org)



Connect with Emerging Dairy Leaders at CheeseCon 2023

Don't miss out on ample opportunities to build your business with emerging dairy processing leaders at [CheeseCon 2023](https://www.cheesecon.org), set for April 4-6 in Madison, Wisconsin! Whether your dairy processing career is just beginning or you're looking to strengthen your company's foundation for the future, CheeseCon is your one-stop shop for all the connections and information you need.

- Young professionals can [purchase a ticket](#) for a special networking reception hosted by WCMA on Tuesday, April 4 from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at Coopers Tavern in the heart of downtown Madison.
- On Wednesday, April 5 at 12:30 p.m., meet rising stars in the dairy industry as WCMA shines a spotlight on recent graduates of our leadership trainings. These highly rated programs are tailored for dairy processing employees at various levels, ranging from front-line supervisors to mid-level managers.
- Take a moment on Wednesday between 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. to look in on the Collegiate Dairy Products Evaluation Contest. For more than 100 years, this competition has helped undergraduate students from schools across the country showcase their training, achieve recognition among their peers, and connect with the global dairy processing industry.

These exciting opportunities and much more await you at CheeseCon, so don't wait - [reserve your spot now!](#)

REGISTER TODAY

WORKFORCE



WCMA Webinar

Resources for Effective Recruitment

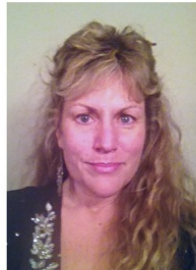
Join Free WCMA Webinar Next Week for Recruitment Resources

Join WCMA next Tuesday, March 14 at 1:00 p.m. (CT) for a [free, members-only webinar](#) focused on boosting your recruitment efforts! Learn about state and community resources available to dairy processors in Wisconsin and beyond. Our featured speakers include:

- Becca Collins, Program Manager, Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin
- Julie Enloe, OneStop Operator, Employment and Training Association
- Chang Yang, Communication Specialist, Great Lakes Cheese - Wausau
- Paul Herold, Plant Manager, Great Lakes Cheese - Wausau
- Rebekah Sweeney, Senior Director of Programs & Policy, WCMA



Becca Collins
Workforce Development
Board of South Central WI



Julie Enloe
Employment and
Training Association



Chang Yang
Great Lakes
Cheese Company



Paul Herold
Great Lakes
Cheese Company



Rebekah Sweeney
Wisconsin Cheese
Makers Association

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, March 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.

Have questions or ideas for future webinars? Please contact [Grace Atherton](#).

RSVP TODAY



Members Connect on Key Topics at WCMA Health & Safety Group Meeting



WCMA sincerely thanks the members of our Health & Safety Group for their active participation in last week's meeting. Special thanks also go to presenters Dan Trocke of WisCon and John Brengosz of R&R Insurance, and industry panelists Mark Bonovetz of BelGioioso Cheese, Zach Thayer of Emmi Roth, and George Jerome of Schreiber Foods. We greatly appreciate their time, expertise, and partnership.

WCMA's Health & Safety Group is dedicated to developing resources to help members assess and improve their health and safety policies, prepare for future inspections, and connect with their peers in industry. The [next hybrid meeting](#) of this engaged group is scheduled for Wednesday, June 7.

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

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.



Attract New Talent with Free Video from WCMA

Expand your recruitment tools and attract fresh talent with a new video produced by WCMA - available now for free at [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org)!

Designed to appeal to job seekers in any field, "[Join the U.S. Dairy Processing Industry](#)" highlights the multitude of rewarding careers offered by dairy manufacturers and processors across the country. The video is free to share, download, and use in your company or cooperative's recruitment efforts.

[WATCH VIDEO](#)

This video, and WCMA's [new five-part series of free onboarding videos](#) for dairy processing employees, is produced thanks to generous industry support from partners the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance and Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin; sponsors Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery, Emmi Roth, Great Lakes Cheese, and Wapsie Valley Creamery; and contributors Specialty Cheese Company and Westby Cooperative Creamery.



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

IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *WisBusiness*: [Talking Trade with Rebekah Sweeney, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association](#) (Featuring WCMA)
- *Wisconsin Public Radio*: [Wisconsin food, forestry producers export record amount in 2022](#)

National/International

- Dairy Foods: [CheeseCon set to take place in Wisconsin](#) (Featuring WCMA)
- Hoard's Dairyman: [Dairy's "top five" doubled up the other 45](#)
- Dairy Foods: [Minnesota cheese processor strengthens its market stake](#) (Featuring WCMA member First District Association)
- KIWA Radio: [Cheese made in Sanborn named best cheddar in the United States](#) (Featuring WCMA member Associated Milk Producers Inc.)
- WTVF Radio: [Whole milk: A good source of bipartisanship?](#)



"Going for Gold" Highlights Pine River Pre-Pack

Get an inside look at the six-decade history of the world's most awarded cheese spread! WCMA member Pine River Pre-Pack was [recently featured on the cover](#) of this month's issue of *Insight on Business* magazine. Congratulations to Phil and Mary Lindemann and the entire Pine River team on their success!

MEMBERSHIP

WELCOME



NEW WCMA MEMBERS!

Dairy Manufacturers, Processors, and Marketers



New WCMA dairy manufacturer member [Old Europe Cheese](#) has produced artisan specialty cheeses under the Reny Picot brand in Benton Harbor, Michigan since 1987.

Dairy Industry Suppliers



New WCMA supplier member [Berndorf Band Group](#) is a leading full-service supplier of steel belts and belt systems.



New WCMA supplier member [Bostik](#) creates adhesives solutions for a broad range of markets such as construction, packaging, high-tech, hygiene products, DIY and more



New WCMA supplier member **CIH** is a technology-based risk management firm that provides education and customized price risk management services to businesses affected by volatility in the agriculture commodities markets.



New WCMA supplier member **Coperion K-Tron Salina Inc.** is a manufacturer of high quality pneumatic conveying and feeding systems and components.



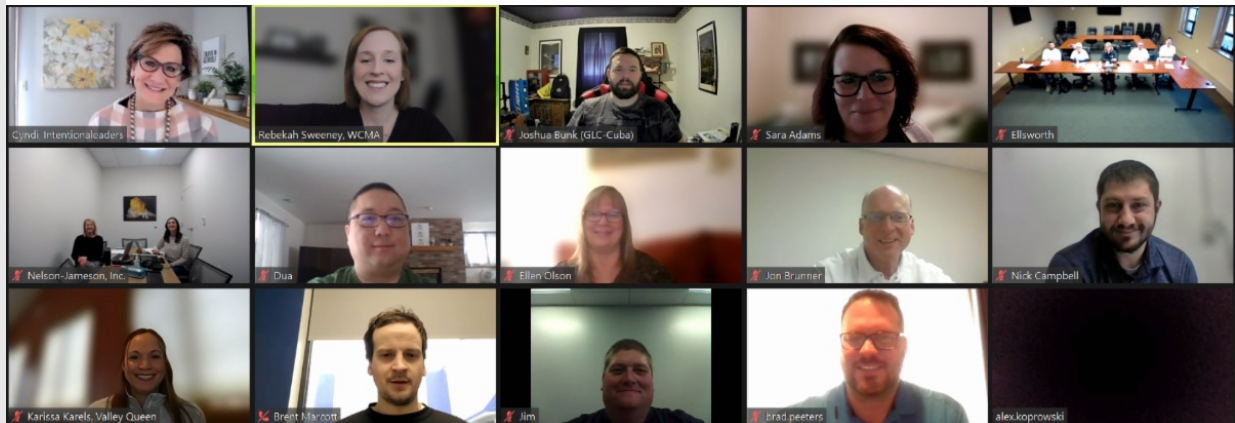
New WCMA supplier member **Hydro-Thermal** provides direct steam injection heating systems, enabling precise heating of water and process fluids, including water heating, CIP systems, hose stations, starch cooking, pasteurization, through complex in-line food cooking.



New WCMA supplier member **The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company** offers national construction management, general contracting, and design-build services for projects including new construction, expansions/renovations, food or beverage, warehouse and/or distribution, and dry or perishable.

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

EDUCATION



WCMA Next Step Leadership Offers Fresh Look at Diversity, Inclusion Strategies

Registration is open now for the next installment of WCMA's engaging **Next Step Leadership Training**! Each year, this concise program 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.

Set for May 30, our one-day virtual session will focus on diversity and inclusion strategies to build and strengthen teams. Session objectives include:

- Exploring the complexity of diversity and inclusion changes
- Understanding how our mind affects our actions
- Defining best practices for leveraging diversity and fostering an inclusive workplace.
- Learning about psychological safety and its importance to diversity and inclusion,

Next Step Leadership costs just \$135 per person. Space is limited, so sign up now!

REGISTER TODAY

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

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:

- March 8: [BRCGS for Food Safety Issue 9: Conversion for Sites Short Course](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- March 21-23: [Cheese Grading & Evaluation \(In-Person\)](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- March 24: [Cheese Judging \(In-Person\)](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- March 30: [Advanced HACCP: Verification and Validation](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- April 12: [Buttermaking Fundamentals \(Self-Study\)](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- April 12: [Cheesemaking Fundamentals \(Self-Study\)](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- April 20: [Certificate in Dairy Processing \(Online, Live\)](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- April 25-27: [FSPCA Preventive Controls for Human Food \(PCQI\) Training](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- May 2-4: [Advanced Cheesemaking: American-Style Varieties](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- May 11-12: [HACCP Certification \(In-Person\)](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- May 23-25: [Processed Cheese \(In-Person\)](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- Rolling Admission: [Online HACCP Training](#) - North Carolina State University
- Rolling Admission: [Good Manufacturing Practices in Food Safety](#) - 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

GRANTS

Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin Grant Application Period Closes March 31



The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection is now accepting applications for [Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin](#) grants of up to \$50,000. applications are due through Friday, March 31 at 5:00 p.m. (CT).

VIEW DETAILS

This program is designed to reduce the marketing, distribution, and processing hurdles that impede the expansion of sales of Wisconsin's food products locally. Grant applicants must provide a cash or in-kind match of 50 percent to receive this state support. Complete details, and informative webinar, and the application form are [available online](#).



Apply by April 13 for DBIA Grants

A new round of [Dairy Business Builder grants](#) administered by the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA) is now open for small- to medium-sized dairy farmers, manufacturers, and processors in 11 Midwestern states. Businesses in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin may apply for the funding, which is administered by the Center for Dairy Research (CDR) and WCMA.

The [reimbursement grants of up to \\$100,000 each](#) aim to support recipients in diversifying on-farm activity, creating value-added products, enhancing dairy byproducts, and creating or enhancing dairy export programs. Applications are due by **5:00 p.m. (CT) on April 13**. Successful applicants will be notified by May 19.

APPLY NOW

DBiA Delivers

Success Stories from the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance

Cinnamon Ridge Farms

Donahue, Iowa

DBIA Grant Recipient
2021, 2022



#DBIADelivers Spotlights Grant Recipients: Cinnamon Ridge

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 spotlight [Cinnamon Ridge](#), a family owned Iowa dairy farm making artisan cheese from milk produced by their Jersey cows. Thanks to Dairy Business Builder Grants in 2021 and 2022, the business is purchasing new equipment and embarking on a cheese aging project to meet and grow demand for their cheeses.

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!

WisCheeseMakers.org
(608) 286-1001



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