

WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



SIGNATURE EVENTS



Championship Cheese Auction Shatters Records for Second Consecutive Year

An exuberant crowd of dairy processors, marketers, and suppliers **raised an impressive \$339,835 for dairy education** at the 2023 Chr. Hansen Championship Cheese Auction, held at CheeseCon last week in Madison, Wisconsin. The funds support industry training programs and **scholarships offered by WCMA**, as well as the World and U.S. Championship Cheese Contests and university dairy training centers.

WCMA sincerely thanks all the winning bidders for their enthusiastic support: Kelley Supply, Inc.; Complete Filtration Resources; DSM Food Specialties; Dairy Products Marketing; Nelson-Jameson; Masters Gallery Foods; TC Transcontinental; G&R Foods; Hydrite; Advanced Process Technologies Inc.; Loos Machine & Automation; Great Lakes Cheese; T.C. Jacoby; Chr. Hansen; ALPMA; Marquez Brothers International; RELCO, a Koch Separation Solutions Company; Custom Fabricating & Repair; ProActive Solutions USA; Dairy Connection, Inc.; Sugar River Cold Storage; Darlington Dairy Supply; the Marvin & Debra Cherney Family Foundation; Novak's Cheese; Wisconsin Aging & Grading Cheese; Atlantic Grain; Cybertrol Engineering; and Cheese Market News.



Successful CheeseCon 2023 Concludes



More than 2,700 cheese industry professionals explored over 320 tabletop exhibits, learned from the industry's brightest minds, and celebrated excellence in dairy processing, last week at [CheeseCon 2023](#) in Madison, Wisconsin. Thanks to all who made time to join this signature WCMA event, and to [our sponsors](#) for their generous support!

"Like" the [official CheeseCon Facebook page](#) to be notified when a full photo library is available.

Mark your calendar now for next year's CheeseExpo, April 16-18, 2024 at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee. Then, CheeseCon returns to Madison April 15-17, 2025. Don't miss these opportunities to reconnect with the dairy processing community!

ADVOCACY



WCMA Action Alert: Urge Legislative Approval of WI Agricultural Road Improvement Program

Each day, over 88 million pounds of raw milk moves across Wisconsin's rural roads - roads that, all too often, are in disrepair. A recent ConsumerAffairs survey ranked Wisconsin roads among the worst in the nation - a reality that costs agricultural businesses via wear-and-tear on their vehicles. With a \$7 billion state budget surplus, now is the time for Wisconsin to invest in its rural infrastructure.



Join WCMA and a [coalition of Wisconsin agricultural advocates](#) in urging state legislators to support the \$150 million Agricultural Road Improvement Program (ARIP).

Taking part in this effort is easy: just [fill out this simple online form](#) with your name and street address.

**CONTACT YOUR
LEGISLATORS**

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



Saputo Hosts Wisconsin Legislators



WCMA and member company Saputo Cheese USA yesterday welcomed Wisconsin State Representatives Evan Goyke and Tony Kurtz (pictured above from left to right) to Reedsburg for a tour of Saputo's whey drying facility.

WCMA thanks the lawmakers for their time, interest, and for their consistent partnership in the effort to strengthen and grow Wisconsin's dairy processing industry.

Interested in hosting your elected leaders for a visit? Contact [WCMA staff](#) to get started.

Complete Make Allowance Survey by Friday

Dairy manufacturers and processors have through this Friday, April 14 to [complete a confidential Cost of Processing survey](#) to inform industry efforts to update make allowances in federal milk marketing orders.

In partnership with the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), WCMA has commissioned Dr. Stephenson, former Director of Dairy Policy Analyses at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, to update a 2018 survey he conducted for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). As part of a [recent petition to update make allowances](#), WCMA is asking that the agency take into account the blinded, aggregated data collected in Dr. Stephenson's new survey as it considers adjustments to the outdated make allowance structure.

Members with questions about the survey may contact [Dr. Mark Stephenson](#).



Contact CCFN on Singapore Parmesan Issues

Parmesan exporters are having their product removed from supermarket shelves in Singapore and are being delisted from supplier logs, the Consortium for Common Food Names (CCFN) has learned. According to CCFN, the actions stem from a recent court decision to ban any non-Italian parmesan from being sold in the market.

Dairy exporters currently selling parmesan in Singapore are encouraged to [contact CCFN to share relevant information](#), including if you have been notified of product removals, length of time you have been selling the product in the market, and export volume.

USDA Awards Fluid Milk Contracts

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently awarded [over \\$1.75 million in fluid milk contracts](#) to vendors including WCMA members Dairy Farmers of America and Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.

All open USDA dairy product solicitations are [available online](#), along with information about how to [become an approved vendor](#).

Submit Dairy Export Survey Responses

With the support of the Dairy Innovation Hub and the [Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports](#), researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison are conducting a research study on the current degree of participation by Wisconsin dairy companies in export markets and the most important barriers to entering or expanding presence in dairy export markets.

To address these issues, UW-Madison's Dr. Chuck Nicholson and Dr. Mark Stephenson have developed an [online survey](#) that asks about companies' current involvement—or lack thereof - in dairy product export markets and the opportunities and challenges associated with it. Sharing companies' experiences with dairy export markets will provide information helpful to the development of future programs to support the expansion of Wisconsin's dairy product exports.

The survey should take 10-20 minutes to complete. All information provided will be held in the strictest confidence and will not be made available or reported to any individual or organization other than the researchers. No individual company data will be reported in any form, only aggregated survey results.

Any questions or concerns can be directed to [Dr. Nicholson](#) and [Dr. Stephenson](#).

IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *University of Wisconsin-Madison*: [UW-Madison celebrates completion of new and improved Babcock Hall](#) (Featuring WCMA)
- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Author is based in Brooklyn, but her heart is with Wisconsin cheese](#) (Featuring WCMA members Hook's Cheese Company, Roelli Cheese Company, Sartori Company, and Uplands Cheese)
- *USA TODAY*: [Ten best specialty food festivals](#) (Featuring WCMA member Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery)

National/International

- *Brownfield Ag News*: [Dairy exports show minimal growth in February](#)
- *Reuters*: [U.S. trade chief Tai defends pursuit of non-traditional trade deals](#)
- *Dairy Processing*: [Sustainability involves cooperation between processors, suppliers](#) (Featuring WCMA and members Hilmar Cheese Company, Land O'Lakes, and Leprino Foods)
- *Deseret News*: [From the 'Got Milk?' generation to the 'Not Milk' generation](#)
- *Dairy Herd Management*: [WIC participants highly concerned with USDA's proposal to cut back dairy](#)
- *Los Angeles Times*: [Southern California ports reopen](#)

MEMBERSHIP



Join WCMA Annual Member Meeting May 24

Save the date for [WCMA's 2023 Annual Member Meeting](#), set for Wednesday, May 24 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin.

Check-in and networking will begin at 11:30 a.m., followed by a luncheon at noon. After

lunch, members will applaud legislative leaders and hear updates on WCMA's activities and plans for the coming fiscal year. Attendance for this in-person event costs just \$75, and all WCMA members are welcome to attend.

Members are also invited to sponsor this annual gathering. Sponsorships of \$500 offer the following benefits:

- One free meeting registration
- Recognition during the WCMA Annual Meeting
- Your organization's full-color logo on the WCMA Annual Meeting event webpage
- Signage with your organization's full-color logo at the WCMA Annual Meeting Logo and recognition in all advanced meeting notices

The deadline for sponsoring this meeting is Wednesday, May 3.

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

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

WELCOME

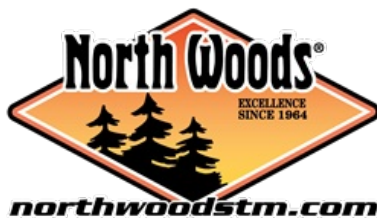


NEW WCMA MEMBERS!

Dairy Industry Suppliers



New WCMA supplier member [Eagle Performance Plastics](#) is a supplier of custom-machined and fabricated parts serving OEMs nationally and internationally.



New WCMA supplier member [North Woods](#) specializes in biodegradable solutions, food processing cleaning, maintenance products, ozone organic sanitizing, air purification, packaging, and equipment.



New WCMA supplier member [Republic Refrigeration](#) offers design, installation, and maintenance solutions to food processing and distribution industries across North America.



New WCMA supplier member [UNIBLOC Hygienic Technologies](#) provides the food and beverage and other industries with precision-engineered sanitary positive displacement and AODD pumps.

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



Join Dairy Food Safety Alliance for May 2 Hybrid Meeting

Register now to join the [next hybrid meeting of the Dairy Food Safety Alliance](#), set for Tuesday, May 2. Enjoy practical presentations on the latest in food safety regulations and research, as well as a tour of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's (WDATCP) Bureau of Laboratory Services.

The [Alliance](#) is a partnership between the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA), the Center for Dairy Research, and Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin. Alliance meetings offer useful updates on timely food safety topics - and opportunities for participants to reconnect with their peers and colleagues.

In-person attendees will gather in Madison at 10 a.m. (CT) for a tour of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's (WDATCP) Bureau of Laboratory Services, limited to the first 20 registrants. **Just one space remains available on the tour**, so don't delay!

After a networking lunch, all attendees will enjoy informational presentations from 12:00-3:00 p.m. (CT), including:

- Food Safety Regulatory Updates: Laura Traas, WDATCP
- Bridging the Gap - Effectively Communicating Food Safety Risk: Jen Pino-Gallagher and Ben DuCharme, M3 Insurance
- Peer Perspectives Panel: Corporate Buy-In to Food Safety Culture: Jeff McSherry, Emmi Roth (Additional speakers invited)
- Electronic HTST Pilot Program Report: Bob Wills, Cedar Grove Cheese and Rick Jarrell, Watlow
- Other Updates & Current Events: Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, Center for Dairy Research, and WCMA

Registration costs just \$45 per in-person attendee, and \$30 per virtual attendee. In-person

attendees must register by April 24.

Have questions about the Dairy Food Safety Alliance? Please contact [WCMA's Kirsten Strohmenger](#).

REGISTER TODAY



WCMA Webinar

Retail Demos: Put Your Best Product Forward

Free WCMA Webinar to Highlight Retail Demos

Register today for [WCMA's next free, members-only webinar](#) next Tuesday, April 18 at 1:00 p.m. (CT) offering strategies for effective dairy product demonstrations. Learn the importance of a great retail demo and gain top tips on how to boost sales by showcasing your products directly to consumers. Here's a look at our agenda:

- Introduction to Retail Demos and Why a Great Demo Matters
 - Speaker: Tim Multerer, Vice President - Dairy Company Communications, Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- Do's, Don'ts, and Expert Tips
 - Speaker: Shannon Berry, Cheese Specialist, Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin



Tim Multerer
Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin



Shannon Berry
Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin

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](mailto:Grace.Atherton@wcma.com) by Monday, April 17 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 ideas or suggestions for future webinars? Please contact [Grace Atherton](#).

RESERVE SPACE



WCMA Export Workgroup Meeting
May 23
10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. (CT)
Join online or in-person!

 WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION

REGISTER NOW:
WisCheeseMakers.org

Save the Date for Export Workgroup Meeting Focused on Trade Shows

Make plans now to join [WCMA's Export Workgroup in-person or online for its spring meeting](#) focused on building an effective presence at trade shows, set for Tuesday, May 23 from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. (CT).

Attendees will gain insights on current dairy export projections and learn more about the elements involved in a successful trade show visit, including: how to select a show, the financial investment involved in attending, what to expect when you arrive, pre- and post-show marketing, effective follow-up, and more. Here's a preview of our expert guest speakers, with more to be announced:

- U.S. Dairy Export Council
- Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- Sam Allison, Director of Global Sales, Sartori Cheese
- Ryan Wucherer, Global Director of Sales and Supply Chain, MCT Dairies
- Shirley Acedo; Economic Development Consultant; Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

Presenters will reserve time for Q&A during the meeting. In-person attendees will also enjoy a networking lunch.

WCMA welcomes all dairy manufacturers and processors to take part in this event, regardless of their membership status with the Association. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer

Protection.

Have questions or suggestions? Please contact [WCMA Grants & Business Programs Director Danica Nilsestuen](#).

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

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

Register 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, and innovation

At just \$135 per person, Next Step Leadership is a low-cost, highly effective way to engage your team members in practical, productive conversations about important topics.

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

[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:

- April 20-June 29: [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
-



\$100K DBIA Grant Applications Due Thursday

Applications are due **this Thursday, April 13 at 5:00 p.m. (CT)** for a new round of **Dairy Business Builder grants** from the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA). The application process is quick and easy, so don't wait - apply now!

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. The funding is administered by the Center for Dairy Research and WCMA and is available to businesses in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

Have questions about DBIA? Please contact **WCMA Grants & Business Programs Director Danica Nilsestuen**.

APPLY TODAY

DBIA Delivers

Success Stories from the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance

Prairie Sky Ranch

Soldiers Grove,
Wisconsin

DBIA Grant Recipient
2022



DBIA Delivers: Prairie Sky Ranch

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 DBIA Delivers, we're pleased to spotlight [Prairie Sky Ranch](#) of Soldiers Grove, Wisconsin. With financial support from a Dairy Business Builder grant, the Prairie Sky team is developing Prairie Heritage Yak Dairy – the first yak dairy of its kind in the U.S., and the only yak cheese produced outside of the Himalayas - in partnership with the World Heritage Yak Conservancy.

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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