



# WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE  
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



## ADVOCACY



## WCMA Advocates for Dairy Industry Investments in Wisconsin State Budget



As Wisconsin lawmakers advance in the state budget-writing process, WCMA is advocating for dairy industry priorities.

In meetings with Joint Finance Committee members last week, WCMA staff lobbied for \$1.6 million in funding for the popular dairy processor grant program at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, which is currently funded at just \$200,000 per year.

WCMA is pushing for increased investments in the Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports; \$7.8 million per year for the Dairy Innovation Hub, supporting industry research and training; and \$20 million for a food security initiative, enabling hunger relief organizations to purchase locally-produced dairy, meat, and vegetables.

Together with other agricultural advocates, WCMA is also lobbying for a \$150 million investment in rural road improvements, as well as investments in rural broadband access and rural workforce development programs.

With key budget committee votes approaching next week, WCMA encourages Wisconsin-based members to



## WCMA Member Action Alert

take action now to make their voices heard in support of dairy industry priorities.

New this year, WCMA is offering a simple online form to help you advocate directly. Simply [click on this link](#) and enter your name and address to send a message to your lawmakers, letting them know you support investments in dairy processing.

**TAKE ACTION**

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

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## Organic Valley, Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery Leaders Reappointed to WDATCP Board



**Miranda Leis**  
*CROPP Cooperative/  
Organic Valley*



**Paul Bauer**  
*Ellsworth Cooperative  
Creamery*

WCMA congratulates members Miranda Leis of CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley and Paul Bauer of Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery, who were [reappointed by Governor Tony Evers](#) to six-year terms on the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) Board last week. Leis currently serves as Senior Director of Dairy Handling and Supply for CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley, and as Vice Chair of the WDATCP Board. Bauer has served as Ellsworth's CEO since 2008, and was also [recently selected to rejoin the WCMA Board of Directors](#) beginning in July.

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## WCMA Supports Bill to Create Federal Dairy Nutrition Incentive Program

WCMA has signed on to support the [Dairy Nutrition Incentive Program Act of 2023](#), introduced in Congress last week by U.S. Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Roger Marshall (R-KS). The legislation aims to increase consumption of nutritious milk and dairy products by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants. The Dairy Nutrition Incentive Program builds on milk incentives authorized in the 2018 Farm Bill by expanding the definition of “qualifying products” to include all milk varieties, as well as cheese, yogurt and other cultured dairy products. WCMA will keep members informed of developments as the legislation progresses.

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**WCMA NOTES**

# Consensus Builds for Make Allowance Updates



With the nation's key dairy industry groups united on the need for changes, the process to update make allowances in federal milk marketing orders (FMMOs) continues forward, as regulators seek additional information. Dairy processors have a limited-time opportunity to respond to those requests and shape the future of FMMOs, says WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer in this month's WCMA Notes column.

[Read more at WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wis cheesemakers.org) about how your company or cooperative can help inform make allowance updates - and [complete the confidential Cost of Processing Survey](#) by Friday, May 12.

## EDUCATION

A promotional graphic for the WCMA Export Workgroup Meeting. The background features a collage of images: a trade show booth, a bowl of cheese curds, a glass of milk, and a world map. The text is overlaid on the left side, and a registration call-to-action is in a yellow box on the bottom right.

**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](https://www.wis cheesemakers.org)

## Learn Top-Notch Trade Show Strategies at May 23 WCMA Export Workshop

Join WCMA's Export Workgroup for its next hybrid meeting on Tuesday, May 23, featuring a workshop focused on strategies to prepare and execute an effective trade show presence. All dairy manufacturers and processors are welcome to attend, regardless of their membership status with WCMA.

The WCMA Export Workgroup meeting features presentations from dairy export leaders Sartori Cheese and MCT Dairies offering a look at their trade show efforts, including how to research markets and 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.

Participants will also hear the latest in dairy export projections from the U.S. Dairy Export Council, and learn about resources available through Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, Food

Export Midwest, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC).

Presenters will reserve time for Q&A during the meeting. In-person attendees will also enjoy a networking lunch. This program is supported in part by a WEDC grant.

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

**REGISTER NOW**



## Join Peers and Colleagues in WCMA Next Step Leadership Course

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 Tuesday, 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 upcoming courses hosted by WCMA members and partners:

- May 23-25: [Processed Cheese \(In-Person\)](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- May 23-24: [Dairy Plant Food Safety Workshop Hosted by Glanbia Nutritionals](#)

**& Agropur** - Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy

- May 24: [Labeling Regulations for Dairy Products Short Course](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- June 6-8: [Buttermaking Comprehensive \(In-Person\)](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- June 13-16: [World of Cheese from Pasture to Plate](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- June 27: [Supplier Auditing Principles](#) - Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- Rolling Admission:
  - [Introduction to Food Safety Principles \(English and Spanish\)](#) - Cornell University
  - [Artisan Dairy Food Safety Coaching](#) - Cornell University
  - [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

## SIGNATURE EVENTS



**Eric Vorpahl**  
Masters Gallery Foods

## WCMA Golf Outing & Trap Shoot Registration Opens Next Tuesday, May 16



Just one week remains until registration opens for the popular [WCMA Golf Outing and Trap Shoot](#), set for July 19 in Central Wisconsin! Dairy manufacturers, processors, and suppliers can sign up beginning Tuesday, May 16 at 10:00 a.m. (CT).

Space is limited to just 576 golfers and 100 trapshooters, and spots sell quickly, so mark your calendar and don't miss this opportunity to participate in the industry's favorite event of the summer!

All registrants must be logged into their WCMA account in order to sign up, so be sure to [check your login at WisCheeseMakers.org](#) today.

Complete information, including full registration options, a schedule, and Frequently Asked Questions, is [available online now](#).

**CHECK LOGIN**

## Sponsor by May 12 and Skip the Registration Rush

Take advantage of [high-visibility, affordable marketing opportunities](#) at the 2023 WCMA Golf Outing & Trap Shoot!

**New this year, WCMA will hold up to 12 golfer spots for companies that sign up as Premier Dinner or Golf Cart Sponsors by Friday, May 12.** Secure one of these key sponsorships and skip the rush on registration day.

**SECURE SPONSORSHIP**

# Thank you!



**Premier Dinner Sponsor**

WCMA thanks Exclusive Sponsors BMO Harris Bank and Amcor, and Premier Dinner Sponsor Kuhlman Incorporated, for their generous support.

Join these [top level sponsors](#) today. Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Events Manager Caitlin Peirick](#).



# Reconnect and Look Ahead at WCMA Annual Member Meeting May 24



Hear timely industry updates, network with friends and peers, and get a preview of WCMA's upcoming activities at the Association's **2023 Annual Member Meeting**, Wednesday, May 24 in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin.

Check-in and networking begins at 11:30 a.m., followed by a catered luncheon at 12:00 p.m. Our program kicks off at 12:30 with a salute to federal and state legislative leaders, along with updates on WCMA's impactful advocacy efforts. We'll also offer a deep dive into WCMA's programs and plans for the coming fiscal year.

Attendance for this in-person event costs just \$75, including lunch. All WCMA members are welcome to attend.

**REGISTER NOW**

## Annual Meeting Sponsorships Available for a Limited Time

Show your support for WCMA and market your company or cooperative to fellow members as a sponsor of the WCMA Annual Meeting. **Sponsorships of \$500** are **only available until Friday, May 12** and offer a host of benefits:

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



Many thanks to supplier member **Blackhawk Bank** for becoming the first generous sponsor of the 2023 Annual Meeting. Join Blackhawk as a sponsor today!

**BECOME A SPONSOR**

## INDUSTRY UPDATES

### Wisconsin Dairy Exporters Invited to Join Midwest Buyers Mission

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) and Food Export Midwest invite Wisconsin dairy manufacturers and processors interested in exporting their products to **join a Midwest Buyers Mission**, set for July 26 in Madison, Wisconsin.

During the mission, participants will have the opportunity to



meet with international buyers from South America, Asia, Canada, and the Caribbean. The mission will include one-on-one meetings with buyers to gain product feedback, discuss business opportunities, and initiate future sales.

Registration for this mission costs \$325 when received by Monday, May 15, or \$400 after May 15. Interested companies may review [buyer profiles](#) before registering. Questions may be directed to [WDATCP staff](#).

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## Register for Dairy Innovation Hub Symposium

Registration is now open for the [2023 Dairy Symposium, hosted by the Dairy Innovation Hub](#). Set for May 18 at the Pyle Center on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus, the Dairy Symposium showcases the Hub's latest research and is free to all attendees.

Attendees will hear thought-provoking plenary discussions, research talks from each of the Hub's four priority areas and poster presentations from Hub-funded projects. Select sessions will be available online on-demand after the event via the Hub's [YouTube channel](#).

Championed by WCMA and other state dairy groups, the Dairy Innovation Hub harnesses research and development at three UW campuses to support Wisconsin's dairy farmers and processors in their mission to produce nutritious dairy foods in an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable manner. Since its launch in 2019, the Hub has funded more than 130 projects and 15 faculty positions across its three campuses.

Questions about the Dairy Symposium may be directed to [Dairy Innovation Hub staff](#).

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## WCMA Members Secure USDA Contracts

WCMA members Dairy Farmers of America, Masters Gallery Foods, and Winona Foods have been awarded contracts with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide



[over 109,000 pounds of cheddar cheese](#), the department announced last week.

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

## IN THE NEWS

### Wisconsin

- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Wisconsin cheesemaker gets a new master certification: curds](#) (Featuring WCMA member LaGrander's Hillside Dairy)
- *WISC-TV*: [In the 608: Hook's Cheese Co. to cut into 20-year-cheddar](#)

### National/International

- *U.S. Dairy Exporter Blog*: [U.S. dairy exports dip for first time in a year](#)
- *Reuters*: [World food prices rise for first time in a year, U.N. food agency says](#)
- *Food Safety News*: [Raw milk bill makes desk of Iowa Governor](#)
- *Dairy Foods*: [Northeastern Dairy Product Innovation Competition finalists named](#)
- *The Oregonian/Oregonian Live*: [Rogue Creamery adds Oregon wine to a gold medal-winning cheese](#) (Featuring WCMA member Savencia Cheese USA - Rogue Creamery)
- *Forbes*: [Tillamook's road to becoming a top shelf CPG brand](#)



### Pine River Pre-Pack Celebrates 60th Anniversary

Congratulations to WCMA member Pine River Pre-Pack on its 60th year in business! WCMA's John Umhoefer joined the Pine River team Saturday for a celebration showcasing the company's history and recognizing its devoted employees. For more photos and information, visit [Pine River's Facebook page](#).

## GRANTS

## Decatur Dairy

Brodhead, WI

DBIA Grant Recipient  
2022



### DBIA Delivers: Decatur Dairy

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.

Next in our weekly #DBIADelivers series is [Decatur Dairy](#) and the Decatur Swiss Cheese Co-op. These organizations have a unique partnership in which the farmer cooperative provides milk and the dairy makes the cheese and markets the products. The 56 farms currently in the co-op are eager to expand the amount of milk they supply for cheesemaking. Grant funding from the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance will support expansion of the Decatur Dairy cheese plant, which will result in increased production and provide a strengthened market for the co-op farmers and create opportunities for new farms to join. Visit [DecaturDairy.com](http://DecaturDairy.com) to learn more!

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!

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## MEMBERSHIP



*Pictured (L to R): CWCBA Life Member and former Grassland Dairy Products President Dallas Wuehrich, current Grassland Dairy Products President Trevor Wuehrich, WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer, WCMA President and Eau Galle Cheese President & CEO Steve Bechel*

## Central Wisconsin Dairy Processors Gather

WCMA was pleased to take part last week in the Annual Meeting of the Central Wisconsin Cheesemakers and Buttermakers Association (CWCBA), hosted in Marshfield, Wisconsin. Attendees reviewed the CWCBA's recent and upcoming activities and honored John Buhlman of Eau Galle Cheese with the CWCBA Life Membership Award.

# WELCOME



*NEW WCMA MEMBERS!*

## Dairy Industry Suppliers



New WCMA supplier member **Brabazon Pump Company** distributes and services industrial equipment focusing on air compressors, air treatment, pumps, vacuums, blowers and nitrogen generation.

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

# Sign Up Colleagues for WCMA Newsletter

Thanks for subscribing to WCMA's weekly e-newsletter! This benefit is available to all WCMA member employees at no extra cost. [Let us know](#) if we should add your colleagues to our list, or if you'd like to share feedback on our communications.

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**WisCheeseMakers.org**  
**(608) 286-1001**



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