



# WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE  
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



## ADVOCACY

### WCMA Thanks USDA, Baldwin for \$20.2M Investment in Dairy Business Initiatives

WCMA applauded the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Thursday, July 1 [announcement of \\$20.2 million in support](#) for Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives (DBII), championed by U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisconsin). This USDA announcement is the third round of funding for DBII, first approved in the 2018 Farm Bill, with the first three rounds totaling a \$40 million federal investment in dairy industry innovation.

WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research (CDR) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison partner in running one of the DBII programs, called the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA). It offers direct-to-business grants, free workshops and consultative services, as well as industry research for dairy farmers and processors in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota and Wisconsin.



In a [WCMA release](#), Sen. Baldwin said, "Wisconsin's dairy businesses are a key driver of our state's economy and with all the challenges they face, I'm working to do everything I can to help. This federal funding from USDA for the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives will help Wisconsin dairy businesses grow their business, modernize their dairy plants and reach new markets. It's critical that farmers, cheesemakers and dairy processors have tools to innovate and develop new Made in Wisconsin dairy products to build a brighter future for our dairy farms and drive our rural economy forward."

Complete information on Dairy Business Innovation Alliance resources, including existing grant opportunities and recent recipients, is [available online](#).

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### FDA Signals New Labeling Guidance on Plant-Based Dairy Imitators Coming by June 2022

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [last week signaled](#) it will weigh in on the labeling of plant-based dairy imitators, with new draft industry guidance to be issued by June 2022. The FDA announcement comes just two weeks after WCMA-backed bills advanced in Wisconsin to [ban the use of dairy terms](#) on the labels of imitation products. WCMA has long championed the enforcement of existing FDA standards of identity for consumer clarity in the marketplace, and will continue to advocate in the interest of its dairy manufacturers and processors through the FDA drafting process.

FDA officials also noted they will be issuing [voluntary sodium reduction goals](#) for the makers of plant-based dairy imitators within the next 12 months.

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## Kind, Gallagher Introduce Plan to Establish Dairy Pricing & Policy Commission

U.S. Congressmen Ron Kind (D-Wisconsin) and Mike Gallagher (R-Wisconsin) introduced legislation on Wednesday, June 30 to [create a Dairy Pricing and Policy Commission](#) consisting of dairy farmers, dairy processors and industry experts to recommend measures to boost dairy exports, improve supply chain coordination and consider Federal Milk Marketing Order reforms. [This proposal](#) has been referred to the House Committee on Agriculture, and WCMA will keep members informed of any related developments.

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## Wisconsin Lawmakers Approve State Budget, Evers Considers Veto Options

On Wednesday, June 30, Wisconsin's Republican-controlled Legislature sent Governor Tony Evers a \$87 billion state budget that uses a pandemic-related \$4.4 billion revenue boost to cut taxes by more than \$3 billion.

### Tax Cuts

The proposal would bring down Wisconsin's income tax rate from 6.27 percent to 5.3 percent for income between about \$24,000 and \$263,000 a year for individuals, or between \$32,000 and \$351,000 for married filers. The non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau reported that the plan will see an individual making between \$40,000 and \$50,000 saving approximately \$115 in tax year 2022, while someone making between \$125,000 and \$150,000 would see \$999 in savings.

The budget also applies \$202 million in state funds to pay for the elimination of the personal property tax, which businesses pay on equipment and machinery - a proposal that has received bipartisan support. Property tax cuts of \$650 million mean relief of approximately [\\$100 per year](#) for the owner of a typical Wisconsin home, worth just under \$200,000.

### WCMA Priorities

Agriculture also emerged as a bipartisan priority in this budget cycle, with the bill including:

- \$5 million over the next five years for a new agricultural exports program, with half of all allocated funds earmarked to support increased dairy sales abroad;
- A boost of \$200,000 per year for dairy processors grants, bringing total annual funds for the program to \$400,000;

- Sustained funding for the Dairy Innovation Hub;
- Sustained funding for the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection; and
- \$125 million to expand rural broadband access.

### What's Next

Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers is now considering his action on the budget. He has the option to sign the package into law, line-item veto parts of it, or to veto it in its entirety. While the budget sent to him by the Legislature includes just one-tenth of the funding Evers had proposed for public schools, it meets the federal threshold for Wisconsin to receive \$2.2 billion in federal school aid - a key factor for Evers.

WCMA will continue to advocate for member priorities and to keep members informed of relevant developments in the state budget process. Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

## INDUSTRY UPDATES

### FDA Issues Report on PFAS in Food

Last week, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [issued a report](#) on its recent studies on detectable levels of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the food supply. While the FDA tested a [broad range of foods](#), including dairy products, only a few seafood samples - cod and tilapia - had detectable levels of PFAS. FDA officials plan to conduct a more extensive study focused on seafood.

### Industry Impact Grant Abstracts Due July 16

Abstracts are due July 16 for Dairy Business Innovation Alliance [Industry Impact grants](#) of between \$50,000 to \$250,000. DBIA plans to distribute a total of \$1 million in this grant cycle.

Successful applications will focus on projects designed to create new revenue streams, develop uses for dairy ingredients/products, or solve broad challenges for the dairy industry. Project examples are provided in a ["Helpful Hints" document](#) available online.

Matching funds are not required but welcome. Applicants do not have to be dairy processors but must collaborate with a dairy business on the project in order to demonstrate industry interest and resource capabilities. Dairy processor applicants must be located or have plants/locations within the DBIA five-state region of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. DBIA is requesting applicants' project abstracts by July 15, with full proposals due in September.

WCMA members with questions may contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs and Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).



## IN THE NEWS

### Wisconsin

- *WITI-TV*: [Cedar Valley cheese has been around for more than 70 years](#)



(Featuring WCMA member Cedar Valley Cheese)

### National/International

- *Wisconsin Public Radio:* [Organic producers: Return of animal welfare rules will level playing field for smallest farms](#) (Featuring WCMA member CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley)
- *News Release:* [Schuman Cheese celebrates 75 years](#) (Featuring WCMA member Schuman Cheese)
- *Dairy Herd Management:* [Prairie Farms Cooperative closing all Alabama facilities, four in Georgia](#) (Featuring WCMA member Prairie Farms)
- *The Fence Post:* [USDA to review 'Product of USA' label following FTC vote](#)
- *USTR News Release:* [USMCA trade ministers to meet in Mexico City](#)
- *Tri-City Herald:* [Darigold to build \\$500 million Tri-Cities \(Washington\) plant, creating 1,200 jobs](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS



## WCMA Issues Course Assignments, Participant List for Golf Outing & Trap Shoot July 21

WCMA today issued [course assignments and a full list of participants](#) for its sold-out Golf Outing and Trap Shoot, set for July 21 in Central Wisconsin.

WCMA will host golfers for a scramble tournament at four courses: Lake Arrowhead's Lakes and Pines Courses, Bull's Eye Country Club and the Castle Course at Northern Bay Resort, all in Central Wisconsin near Nekoosa. This scramble tournament will begin at 10:00 a.m. at Northern Bay and Bullseye Courses and 11:00 a.m. at the Lake Arrowhead courses. Golfers will enjoy the BMO Harris Bank lunch at their assigned course starting at 9:30 a.m. or at the turn.



New this year, trapshooters will start their day at 11:00 a.m. at the Wisconsin Trapshoot Association Homegrounds facility for the BMO Harris Bank lunch and will then begin shooting at 12 noon.

After golf and trap shooting, all attendees will meet at the Lake Arrowhead clubhouse to enjoy the Amcor Social Hour and a buffet dinner.

Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Events Manager Kirsten Strohmenger](#).



## WCMA Young Professionals to Host Member Networking Event at Brewers Game August 26

Save the date! All WCMA member employees are invited to join the WCMA Young Professionals at American Family Field in Milwaukee, Wisconsin for an afternoon of fun and networking on Thursday, August 26. Our group will gather at the Miller Lite Landing as the Milwaukee Brewers take on the Cincinnati Reds, beginning at 1:10 p.m.

Registration information and additional details will be available soon! Have questions now? Please contact [WCMA Events Manager Kirsten Strohmenger](#).

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## Register Now for WCMA Technology Committee Field Day at LaGrander's on August 26

The WCMA Technology Committee will hold a **field day** on Thursday, August 26 to view the state-of-the-art wastewater processing system at LaGrander's Hillside Dairy near Stanley, Wisconsin. This WCMA committee, open to all members, focuses on environmental and processing issues on behalf of the WCMA Board of Directors and industry.

The field day will begin with sign-in at 11:30 a.m. and host a noon lunch and discussion of current environmental issues in Wisconsin. At 1:30 p.m., attendees will travel a short distance (one minute by car) to the wastewater system with tours led by the LaGrander team. The LaGrander system features pretreatment of wastewater, aerobic digestion with enhanced bio P removal, and membrane filtration of the effluent for final discharge in the North Fork of the Eau Claire River.

**Register now** to join in this member event. The registration fee of \$25 offsets meeting costs for the host.

**REGISTER NOW**

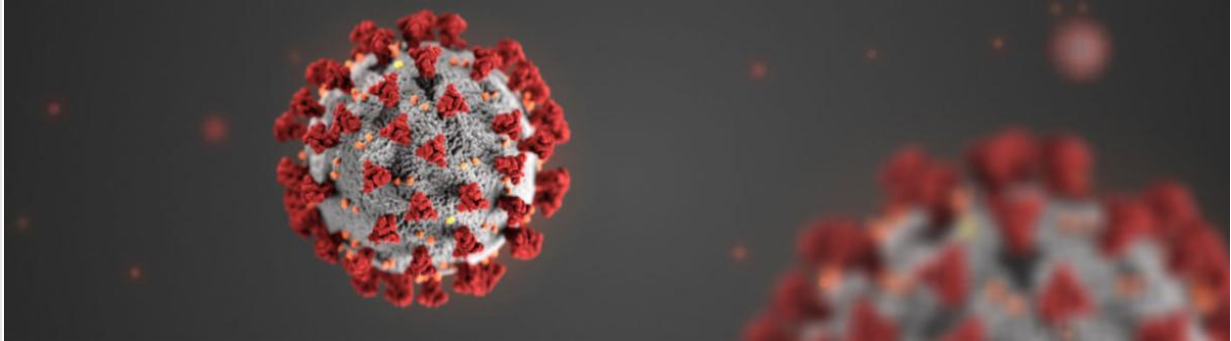
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**Register Now to Join WDATCP for Saudi Arabia**

# Mission, Middle East Trade Show in November

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) invites WCMA members to register now to join in a trade mission to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and an exhibition at the VIV Middle East agriculture trade show in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in November. Reservations must be made by July 31, and those interested in additional information should contact [WDATCP staff](#).

## COVID-19 UPDATES



### Evers Vetoes Early End to Extra Aid for Jobless

On Wednesday, June 30, Wisconsin Governor Tony [Evers vetoed Assembly Bill 336](#), legislation designed to end the state's participation in a federal unemployment enhancement program offering an additional \$300 per week. WCMA and other business advocacy groups had lobbied for Evers' approval, but from the bill's introduction Evers had consistently messaged that he would reject the plan. Federal unemployment booster payments are currently set to end on September 6.

## WCMA Salutes Critical and Essential Employees



WCMA continues to salute its members' essential and critical workforce. This week, WCMA is recognizing Plant Manager Ben Miller, who works for Foremost Farms USA in its Richland Center facility. Thank you, Ben, for your dedication to the mission of making delicious, nutritious dairy foods!

Watch for WCMA salutes in Tuesday e-newsletters, our printed [membership directory](#), and on our Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn pages. Have an employee or team you'd like us to celebrate? Just contact [WCMA staff](#).

## Coronavirus Headline News

### Wisconsin

- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Wisconsin's average COVID-19 cases continue to flatten as vaccinations inch forward](#)

### National/International



- *Associated Press*: [U.S. hiring accelerated in June as workers earned higher pay](#)
- *Los Angeles Times*: [Biden presses vaccination campaign as Delta coronavirus variant spread](#)
- *Politico*: [BioNTech/Pfizer vaccine less effective at preventing Delta coronavirus cases](#)
- *Forbes*: [This is how Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack plans to take on food security in a post-COVID world](#)

## MEMBERSHIP



**Steve Bechel**  
Eau Galle Cheese



**Tom Dahmen**  
V&V Supremo Foods



**Kyle Jensen**  
Hilmar Cheese Co.



**Chris Roelli**  
Roelli Cheese

## WCMA Welcomes New President, Directors and Thanks Retiring Board Members

On July 1, WCMA welcomed its new President, Steve Bechel of Eau Galle Cheese, and its new Board members Tom Dahmen of V&V Supremo Foods-Chula Vista Cheese, Kyle Jensen of Hilmar Cheese Company and Chris Roelli of Roelli Cheese.

Joining Bechel as WCMA Officers are Doug Wilke of Valley Queen Cheese Factory, serving as First Vice President; Mike Sipple of Agropur Inc., serving as Second Vice President; Mike Neu of Chr. Hansen, returning to his post as Treasurer; and Chris Renard of Renard's Cheese, serving as Secretary.

The 2021-22 Board of Directors also includes:

- Graham Archer of Tetra Pak, Inc.
- Brian Baker of Baker Cheese
- Linda Lee of Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc. – Cheese Division
- Craig Filkouski of Great Lakes Cheese Company
- Jeff Gentine of Masters Gallery Foods
- Gary Gosda of Schuman Cheese – Lake Country Dairy
- Richard Guggisberg of Guggisberg Cheese
- Mike Hinrichsen of Associated Milk Producers, Inc.
- Randy LaGrander of LaGrander's Hillside Dairy
- Tim Omer of Emmi Roth USA
- Paul Scharfman of Specialty Cheese Company
- Bruce Workman of Edelweiss Creamery
- Tayt Wuethrich of Grassland Dairy Products, Inc.

WCMA staff and members thank these individuals and their organizations for their commitment to serving industry needs. We also our express appreciation to Dave Buholzer of Klondike Cheese Company, Greg Siegenthaler of Grande Cheese Company and Mark Witke of Zimmerman Cheese, who last week retired from the Board after serving the maximum term of six years. Hear from these leaders in [our new video](#).



Thank you!



WISCONSIN  
CHEESE MAKERS  
ASSOCIATION  
EST. 1988

Board of Directors

## Please Renew Your WCMA Membership

WCMA relies on active, engaged members like you to support our work to grow the dairy processing industry and we invite you to [renew your Association membership](#) in July.

Check your email inbox for a message from WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer sent last week offering complete details on renewal action - and the benefits WCMA membership offers. We also invite you to learn what WCMA members from Agropur, Associated Milk Producers, Inc., Chr. Hansen, Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese, Hilmar Cheese Company, Tetra Pak, and Uplands Cheese have to say about [The Value of WCMA Membership](#).



If you have any questions about the renewal process, please contact [WCMA Business and Membership Manager Sara Schmidt](#). Thank you for your continued support!

EDUCATION



## Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy Announces Upcoming Food Safety Workshops

The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy this week announced new in-person and virtual food safety training opportunities, which WCMA is pleased to promote.

### **Dairy Plant Food Safety Workshop**

On August 18 and 19 in Madison, Wisconsin, WCMA member Grande Cheese Company will host the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy's [Dairy Plant Food Safety Workshop](#). Participants will learn best practices and practical approaches for pathogen control through short lectures and hands-on small group exercises on environmental monitoring, sanitary design, SSOP writing, and challenging case study exercises. While the workshop covers both wet and dry product operations, this session will specifically focus on dry powder operations. [Register now](#) to reserve space in this program.

### **Supplier Food Safety Management Workshop**

Designed for dairy companies and their suppliers, the **Supplier Food Safety Management Workshop** helps companies identify, quantify, and mitigate risks from ingredients, packaging, equipment, and services. In addition, it provides a science-based template to develop your Supply-Chain Program and Supply Chain preventive controls aligned with FSMA, with elements including: identifying potential hazards, assessing if systems are in place to control identified hazards, and assessing supplier performance/FDA compliance history. This course will be held November 2, 2021 in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, and registration is expected to [open soon](#).

### **Artisan/Farmstead Cheesemaker Food Safety Training**

The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy is partnering with North Carolina State University to offer **Food Safety for Artisan/Farmstead Cheesemakers** and **Food Safety Basics for Artisan Ice Cream Makers**. These basic food safety courses are delivered in an interactive module format with information including the importance of food safety, food safety hazards, preventive controls, regulatory considerations, and product/environmental monitoring. While the courses were designed for artisan cheesemakers and ice cream makers, they will be valuable to all small/medium dairy processors. Each course allows students to take one or more interactive module at a time, resume in the same spot if interrupted, and earn a "Certificate of Completion" after finishing all modules. Registration is [available online](#).

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## Register Now for WCMA Leadership Courses

WCMA's Fall/Winter 2021 leadership trainings are filling quickly, and we encourage you to [register now](#) to join us!

WCMA [Front-Line Leadership Training](#) returns in September with hybrid offerings, allowing students to join classes in person in Madison, Wisconsin, or online from anywhere in the world. The courses in this training track can be taken à la carte and in any order.

- Part A, focused on exploring the essential skills to own your role as a supervisor, will be held September 7.
- Part B centers on positively impacting staff performance, and will be held on October 4.
- Part C breaks down the key ingredients for cultivating a team, and will be held on November 8.

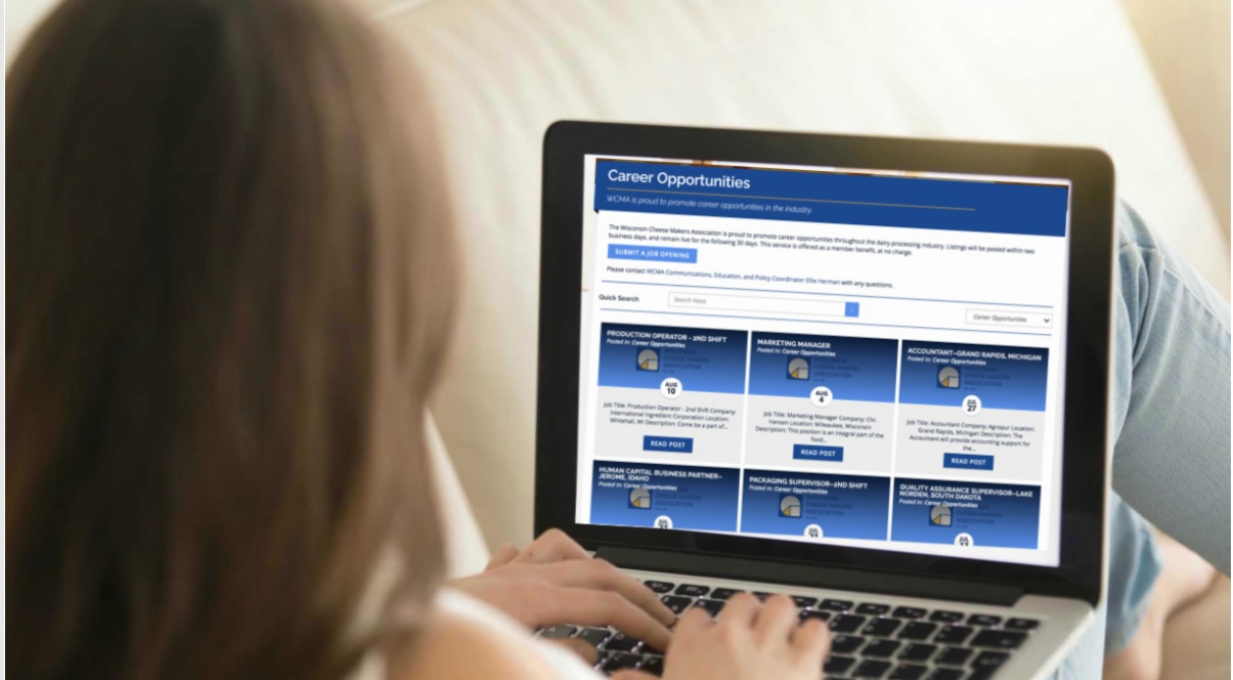
Tuition is \$135 and includes materials and instruction, as well as lunch for those attending in person. Enrollment is limited to 22 individuals per class.

The [WCMA Advanced Leadership Series](#) will also be offered to students in a hybrid format, allowing them to join in three sessions either in Madison, Wisconsin, or online. Those enrolling participate in the entire series as a cohort to better facilitate relationships.

- Session 1 is set for September 16 and will encourage participants to take initiative in driving change and generating positive results for their company.
- Session 2 will be held November 15 and focuses on the application of a creative and collaborative problem-solving process.
- Session 3 wraps the series on January 18, 2022, detailing the tools and strategies leaders can use to foster collaboration and resolve workplace conflict.

This series also features guest speakers from industry detailing their leadership successes and challenges, and requires participants to complete real-world projects that implement their new knowledge. The cost for the entire series, including materials, instruction, and meals, is \$495 per participant. Enrollment is limited to 20 individuals.

For more information – including reviews and testimonials from past participants – and to register now, visit [WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org).



## View Career Opportunities on WCMA Jobs Board

WCMA's [online jobs board](#) is now featuring 23 industry career opportunities from member companies Agropur, Inc., Fromagex, Winona Foods and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

All WCMA members are invited to [post openings](#). It's free and easy! Have questions? Please contact [WCMA staff](#).

[ADD JOB OPPORTUNITIES](#)

## COMMUNICATIONS

### Sign Up Colleagues for WCMA E-Newsletters

Thanks for subscribing to WCMA's weekly electronic newsletter! Please note, WCMA extends this benefit to all member employees. Let us know if we should [add your colleagues](#) to our mailing list, or if you'd like to share feedback on our communications.

[WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org)

