



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



COVID-19 UPDATES

Register Now for Free WCMA Webinar on Delta Variant Outbreak Strategies

Register now to join a [free COVID-19 webinar](#) available exclusively to WCMA members this coming **Thursday, August 26 from 1:00-1:30 p.m. (CT)**



Chief Medical Officer Dr. Jonathan Meiman of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (WDHS) Occupational Health Program will join WCMA staff for a presentation and questions from WCMA members.

Dr. Meiman will share the latest statistics on the spread of the Delta variant in Wisconsin, and the risk this now poses in food processing facilities. He will also outline three actions employers nationwide could take to guard against a broad outbreak, including:

- Universal masking policies
- Required vaccination
- Required COVID-19 testing

WCMA will reserve time at the end of the webinar for Dr. Meiman to answer member questions, with staff presenting pre-submitted questions anonymously. Please **send your questions by 12:00 p.m. (CT) on Wednesday, August 25 to [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).**

REGISTER NOW

FDA Grants Full Approval to Pfizer Vaccine; Booster Shots Available September 20

On Monday, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [issued full approval](#) to the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccines developed by Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccine remain under emergency use authorization.

The approval comes after U.S. health officials [announced](#) that a third dose of the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines will be made available beginning in September. Regulators are [currently evaluating](#) a follow-up shot for those who received the one-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Trials are also underway studying COVID-19 vaccines



New Polling Shows U.S. Workers Lean in Favor of Workplace Vaccine Mandates

A recent [Gallup tracking survey](#) indicates a slight majority of American workers – approximately 52 percent – now favor COVID-19 vaccination mandates instituted by their employers. The latest numbers come from a July 19-26 survey, and shows an increase in the percentage of employees who strongly favor or favor vaccine requirements from 46 percent in May. Over this period, the percentage opposed or strongly opposed has held steady, while the percentage neutral has declined five points to 10 percent.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has [stated that it is legal](#) under federal law for companies to require their workers to get the COVID-19 vaccine, with exceptions related to other health complications and religious beliefs.

Wisconsin to Offer \$100 Vaccination Incentive

Wisconsin residents who receive their first COVID-19 vaccine dose now through Labor Day are [eligible for a \\$100 Visa gift card](#), Governor Tony Evers announced this week. The state joins others including California, Illinois, Minnesota, and New York, which held "vaccine lotteries" earlier this year in which residents could enter to win prizes such as cash, scholarships, or state parks passes.

USDA Announces New Pandemic Market Assistance, Improvements to Dairy Margin Coverage Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will provide about [\\$350 million in pandemic](#)

[assistance payments](#) to dairy farmers who received a lower value for their products due to market abnormalities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the agency announced last Thursday. The targeted assistance is part of a \$6 billion pandemic assistance package [announced in March](#). Other provisions include \$400 million for a new Dairy Donation Program to address food insecurity and mitigate food waste and loss; and \$580 million for Supplemental Dairy Margin Coverage for small and medium farms.

In addition to the pandemic assistance, USDA announced [permanent improvements](#) to the Dairy Margin Coverage program, such as updating the feed cost formula to better reflect the actual cost dairy farmers pay for high quality alfalfa. Additional details are expected to be released in the coming weeks as regulations are published.



Evers Directs \$50M to Wisconsin Agriculture

Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers announced plans last week to [allocate \\$50 million](#) of the state's federal American Rescue Plan (ARPA) dollars to provide direct payments to agricultural producers. Farmers will apply for the payments through the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (WDOR) beginning this fall, the governor's office said.

With this investment, Evers has directed over \$100 million toward supporting the state's farmers as they respond to the impacts of COVID-19. WCMA applauds Governor Evers' commitment to supporting Wisconsin farmers and their families, who are a valued and important part of our food supply chain.

Coronavirus Headline News

Wisconsin

- *WBAY*: [Six million COVID-19 vaccines doled out in Wisconsin](#)
- *Racine Journal Times*: [Wisconsin requires all state employees to report COVID-19 vaccination status](#)
- *La Crosse Tribune*: [State health data show unvaccinated almost four times as likely to be hospitalized with COVID-19](#)
- *Yahoo News*: [Wisconsin food stamp enrollment, spending up 30 percent over pre-coronavirus levels](#)

National/International

- *Reuters*: [Fauci: With full vaccine approval, U.S. could control COVID by spring 2022](#)
- *CNN*: [Top health officials anticipate vaccine will be available for kids under 12 by end of the year](#)

- CBS News: [Eight in 10 economists say employers should require vaccine](#)
- Market Watch: [Employers face a dilemma: keeping workers safe with vaccine mandates — and holding onto their employees](#)

INDUSTRY UPDATES

USDA Updates Model Used to Calculate Federal Food Assistance Benefits

Beginning this fall, participants of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will see an [increase in their benefits](#), enabling more than 42 million Americans to purchase more dairy products and other nutritious foods. The increase is the result of an effort by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to modernize the Thrifty Food Plan, a tool used by the agency to calculate maximum SNAP benefits.



Register Today for Free DBIA Business Webinars

The Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA), a partnership between the Center for Dairy Research (CDR) and WCMA, is hosting a [series of free webinars](#) titled "Let's Keep Your Business Going," designed to help dairy processors strengthen their businesses. The next session, "Developing Business Strategies," will cover the components of a growth strategy and teach participants a process for developing their own strategies.

Here's a complete listing of upcoming webinars in the series:

- Keeping Your Business Safe – Understanding and Using Risk Management Principles: September 14, 1:30 p.m. (CT)
- Setting Up/Improving Manufacturing Processes: September 28, 1:30 p.m. (CT)
- Fine Tuning Your Marketing Strategy to Fit Consumer's Buying Preferences: October 12, 1:30 p.m. (CT)
- Social Media Marketing: October 26, 1:30 pm. (CT)
- Developing E-Commerce Functionality for Your Small Business: November 9, 1:30 p.m. (CT)
- Developing an Export Program: November 23, 1:30 p.m. (CT)

To register or request a recording of a prior webinar, visit the [DBIA website](#). These webinars are open to all dairy processors, manufacturers, farmers, and suppliers.

Submit Organic Advisory Council Nominations to WDATCP by September 17

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) is [accepting nominations](#) for the Organic Advisory Council until September 17, 2021. Seats are available in each of the following categories: organic farmer, organic certification industry, and at-large. Members serve three-year terms, and the council meets quarterly. New members are expected to start their term at the October 2021 Organic Advisory Council meeting

Have questions about the Organic Advisory Council? Please contact [WDATCP staff](#).



USDA Awards Cheddar, Swiss Contracts to WCMA Members

USDA has [awarded contracts](#) for over 2 million pounds of Cheddar and Swiss cheese for use in federal food assistance programs. Among the awardees are WCMA members Great Lakes Cheese and Winona Foods.

IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *Wisconsin State Farmer*: [Milk prices headed downward for August, rebound expected in September](#)
- *Hoard's Dairyman*: [Mark Crave: Center for Dairy Research drives cheese innovation](#)

National/International

- *U.S. Dairy Export Council*: [International Demand Analysis: Southeast Asia, Mexico join China in driving dairy demand](#)
- *USDA Radio Newslines*: DMI's Paul Ziemninsky discusses role of innovation in driving cheese demand: [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), [Part 3](#)
- *Fortune*: [Grocery prices continue to rise—and there's no end in sight](#)
- *VT Digger*: [Danone, owner of Horizon Organic, to terminate contracts with Vermont farmers](#)
- *WWNY*: [Great Lakes Cheese & HP Hood win awards at state fair](#) Featuring WCMA member Great Lakes Cheese

UPCOMING EVENTS



Join WCMA Technology Committee Thursday at LaGrander's Hillside Dairy

Join the WMCA Technology Committee for an educational **Field Day** this Thursday, August 26. Register now for this unique opportunity to explore cutting-edge environmental technology and connect with your peers and partners!

The Field Day program begins with a lunch-and-learn session focused on current environmental issues and regulations in Wisconsin, featuring experts across industry and government. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) will award two hours of ongoing education credits for wastewater operators who participate in this meeting.

Topics and speakers at lunch include:

- **Taylor Fritsch**, attorney at Michael Best, discussing the Wisconsin Supreme Court Decision regarding high capacity well permitting; PFAS and food manufacture; and the upcoming Wisconsin Water Quality Clearinghouse to trade phosphorus credits.
- **Dean Sommer**, cheese technologist, UW Center for Dairy Research, outlining a new CDR Wastewater Workshop proposed for this fall.
- **Emily James**, Permitting and Compliance Manager at The Probst Group, discussing WDNR Landspreading Site Approvals and Land Management Plans as well as fertilizer designation for waste treatment cake sludge.

Following lunch, the committee will tour a state-of-the-art wastewater processing system at LaGrander's Hillside Dairy near Stanley, Wisconsin. 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 Eau Claire River.

Registration is \$25, which covers the cost of lunch and meeting expenses. Please contact **WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer** with any questions.

REGISTER NOW



Sign Up for WCMA Young Professionals Milwaukee Outing August 26

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

Registration for this special event is just \$30, and includes both the price of admission and \$10 to use at the Miller Lite Landing concessions booth. Members may purchase tickets for guests, but don't wait: only seven tickets are left. Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Events Manager Kirsten Strohmer](#).

[REGISTER NOW](#)

DAIRY FOOD SAFETY ALLIANCE



Sign Up to Attend Dairy Food Safety Alliance Meeting on September 9

[Sign up today](#) to join the Dairy Food Safety Alliance on Thursday, September 9 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. (CT) for practical presentations on the latest in food safety research and regulatory practices, as well as a chance to reconnect with your peers in dairy processing. The Alliance, a partnership between the Center for Dairy Research (CDR), Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin (DFW), and WCMA, will offer registrants two ways to participate: in-person at the Holiday Inn at the American Center in Madison, Wisconsin or virtually (link to be provided).

The meeting will feature speakers from state and federal regulatory agencies, along with industry experts. Presentations will detail ongoing food safety research projects, including a study on the use of hydrogen peroxide in brine, opportunities for timer-sealer certification in Wisconsin, the new federal Food Safety Blueprint, and updated Preventive Controls guidance and resources.

Participation in Dairy Food Safety Alliance meetings is open to all dairy manufacturers, processors, and related suppliers. Registrants are asked to pay a \$35 fee to attend, which includes the cost of a catered lunch. Questions may be directed to [WCMA Events Manager Kirsten Strohmenger](#).

REGISTER NOW

EDUCATION



UW-River Falls Training Spotlight: Cheesemaker's Short Course

Wisconsin's dairy industry is ever-changing, and dairy processors are at the forefront of innovation. WCMA partner UW-River Falls offers opportunities for new and experienced dairy processors to expand their knowledge and work toward licensing.

The university's five-day [Cheesemaker's Short Course](#) offers instruction on basic dairy chemistry and composition, milk microbiology, starter cultures and the manufacture of a variety of cheeses. The course is suitable for the beginning cheesemaker or anyone interested in gaining more knowledge in cheese making technology. Completion of this course will give the student six month's credit toward their apprenticeship requirement for the Wisconsin cheesemakers license. Topics will include basic cheesemaking process, milk composition, microbiology, dairy cultures, regulations, sanitation, and more.

The next offering of the Cheesemaker's Short Course runs from September 27-October 1. Registration costs \$950 per student, and the course will be capped at 30 students. Questions? Please contact [UW-River Falls staff](#).



Samantha Hammel

Quality Assurance Manager, Pine River Dairy

Invest in Your Managers with WCMA's Advanced Leadership Series

Recent research from Gallup shows that **48 percent** of America's working population is actively looking for new job opportunities, and U.S. employee engagement fell to 20 percent in 2020. The good news? The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) is here to help you build a stronger team through stronger management practices.

WCMA's **Advanced Leadership Series** is designed specifically for mid-level managers and employees transitioning into management positions. This fall, the training will be offered in a hybrid format, allowing students to join in three sessions in-person in Madison, Wisconsin or online. Participants will complete the entire series as a cohort to facilitate relationship-building.

- 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 Advanced Leadership Series, including materials, instruction, and meals, is \$495 per participant. Enrollment is limited to 20 individuals, and only seven spaces remain available.

To see reviews and testimonials from past participants and to register for a training, visit [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org). Have questions? please email [WCMA Senior Director of Programs and Policy Rebekah Sweeney](mailto:rebekah.sweeney@wischeesemakers.org).

More Industry Training Opportunities

WCMA is proud to share opportunities for industry-specific training and enrichment. Here's a look at some upcoming trainings hosted by our partners:

- September 14: [Cheesemaking 101: What a Licensed Cheesemaker Should Know](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- September 15: [Food Fraud Workshop](#) | Center for Dairy Research

- September 16-17: [Pasteurization Short Course](#) | UW-River Falls
- September 22: [Unlocking Dairy Ingredients Webinar](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- September 27-28: [HACCP for Processors Short Course](#) | Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- September 28: [Buttermaking Fundamentals Online - On Demand](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- September 27-October 1: [Cheesemaker's Short Course](#) | UW-River Falls
- September 29: [SQF Quality Systems for Manufacturing](#) | Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- October 12: [Cheesemaking 101: What a Licensed Cheesemaker Should Know - On-Demand](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- October 12: [Food Safety Workshop \(HACCP\) Online - On Demand](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- October 19: [Process Cheese Course - On Demand](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- October 20: [Dairy Ingredients Fundamentals](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- October 27-29: [Master Short Course Series: Understanding and Controlling Defects in Cheese](#) | Center for Dairy Research

RECOGNITION



Nominations Due August 25 for WCMA Recognition Awards

Dairy industry professionals have until close of business tomorrow, August 25 to [nominate their peers](#) to be considered for formal recognition in 2022 for their outstanding contributions to the dairy processing industry. Please submit nominations online by close of business on Wednesday, August 25 for the following awards:

The [WCMA Cheese Industry Champion Award](#) is given to industry leaders who, through their everyday business decisions, have created tremendous opportunity for others and spurred industry growth. People to be considered are the CEOs, Directors, Presidents, and Vice Presidents of their companies who may not have cheesemaking obligations but lead and direct resources. In 2021, John Jeter of Hilmar Cheese Company and Don Menzner of Marathon Cheese Corporation were honored with this award.

The [WCMA Distinguished Service Award](#) recognizes supplier partner members who have played a significant role in building the success of the United States dairy industry, contributing innovations in dairy manufacturing. In 2021, this award went to Craig Linz of Tetra Pak Inc. and Jerry Lippert of Nelson-Jameson, Inc.

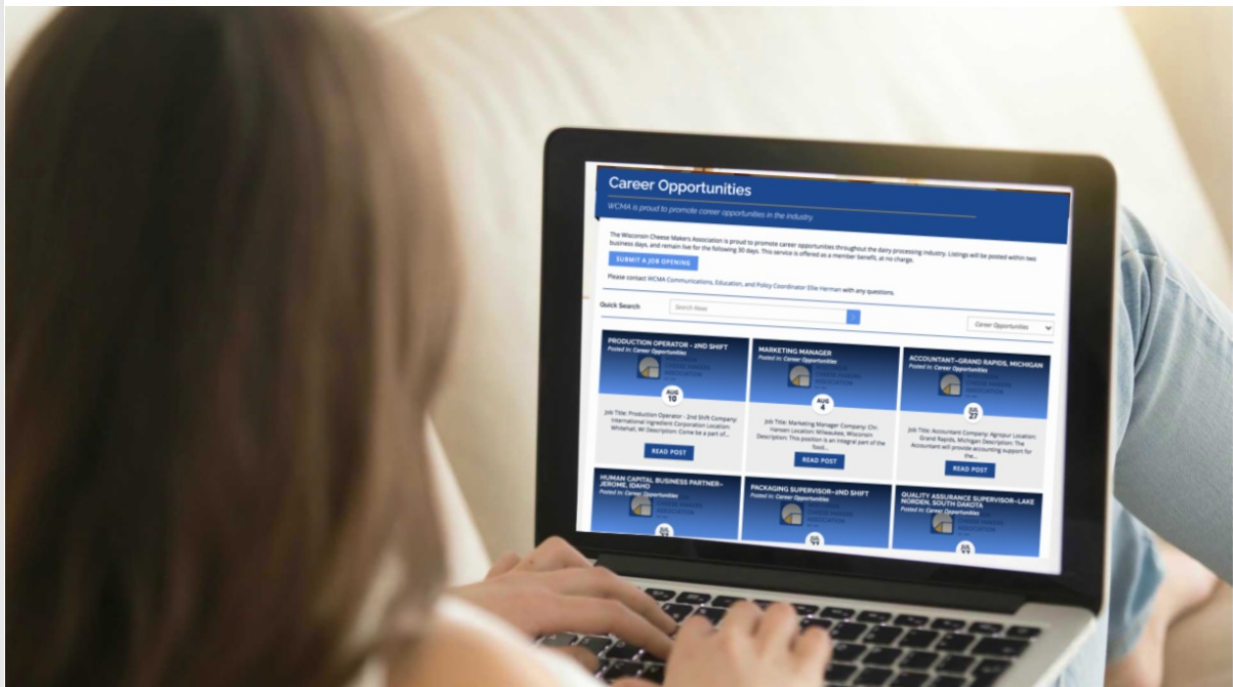
The [WCMA Vanguard Award](#) is reserved for cheesemakers or cheese manufacturing employees who are considered groundbreakers for their innovations in day-to-day dairy operations. In 2021, this award was presented to Steve Buholzer of Klondike Cheese Company and Ray Palubicki of Outagamie Producers Cooperative - Alto Dairy.

The [WCMA Babcock Award](#) recognizes the contributions of those in education or affiliate organizations to partner with cheesemakers in the pursuit of dairy industry innovation and excellence. In 2021, WCMA honored Dr. Bob Cropp of the University of Wisconsin – Madison and Marianne Smukowski of the Center for Dairy Research with this award.

All nominations will be considered by the members of the WCMA Recognition Committee in September with final awards determinations made by the WCMA Board of Directors in December. Awards will be presented at CheeseExpo 2022, set for April 12-14 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Questions? Contact [WCMA Events Manager Caitlin Peirick](#).

WORKFORCE



View Career Opportunities on WCMA Jobs Board

WCMA's [online jobs board](#) is now featuring industry career opportunities from member companies Baker Cheese, Winona Foods, Springside Cheese, Arena Cheese, and more. All WCMA members are invited to [post openings](#). It's free and easy!

[ADD JOB OPPORTUNITIES](#)

MEMBERSHIP

WCMA Welcomes New Members

WCMA warmly welcomes three new supplier members this week: [Hygiena](#), [Kwik Bond Polymers](#), and [Rolling Hills Dairy Producers Cooperative](#). Primary contacts for all three suppliers can be found in WCMA's [online member directory](#).

For 130 years, WCMA has served as the voice of cheese and dairy manufacturers, processors, marketers, and suppliers to the industry. Today, WCMA represents 110 dairy processing companies and cooperatives operating across the United States and around the world, and more than 575 supplier companies. We appreciate your engagement and support.

Renew Your WCMA Membership Today

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

Watch the video below 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!

Sign Up Colleagues for WCMA E-Newsletters

Thanks for subscribing to WCMA's weekly e-newsletter! This benefit is available to all WCMA 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.

