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NEWS

U.S.-Canada Dairy Trade Dispute Escalates



The U.S.-Canada dairy trade dispute escalated last week, with [new tariffs and import restrictions on Canadian dairy products](#) announced by the Trump Administration, while Canada's retaliatory tariffs on U.S. dairy products took effect September 8.

The Canadian tariffs include a 25 percent duty on U.S. cheese and 50 percent tariffs on milk, cream and whey products. Canada purchased approximately \$1.3 billion in U.S. dairy products in 2025, making it the second-largest market for U.S. dairy exports and accounting for roughly 14 percent of total U.S. dairy export value. However, two tariff exemptions may reduce the impact of this policy shift: products shipped to Canada under the Import for Re-Export Program are exempt, and Canada has established a tariff remission process for products used in Canadian manufacturing, agricultural production or food and beverage packaging.

On the U.S. side of the trade conflict, the Trump Administration [announced last week](#) that imports of Canadian whey and modified whey will be prohibited beginning September 29. Until then, those products remain subject to a 50 percent tariff, first announced in July. The United States imported approximately \$35 million in Canadian whey and modified whey in 2025.

President Donald Trump also [announced](#) a 50 percent tariff on a broad range of Canadian cheeses beginning September 15, including Cheddar, Parmesan, Provolone, Swiss, Gruyere, blue cheese, Gouda, Edam, processed cheeses, and others. The United States imported approximately \$89 million in these Canadian products last year.

WCMA will continue to monitor developments and advocate for expanded, fair, and predictable market access for American dairy products in Canada. Members with questions may contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

Dairy Coalition Urges Rejection of Childhood Diabetes Reduction Act



WCMA joined a broad coalition of dairy industry organizations and businesses in urging congressional leaders to reject or reconsider the [Childhood Diabetes Reduction Act of 2026](#) (S. 5026), which would establish front-of-package warning labels for foods containing ingredients captured by the bill's broad definition of "ultra-processed foods."

The coalition - including the International Dairy Foods Association, National Milk Producers Federation, Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative, in addition to WCMA – noted via a [letter distributed last week](#) that the legislation could result in warning labels on a wide range of nutrient-dense dairy products, including whole milk, cheese, ice cream, most yogurts and other cultured dairy products. The letter notes that such labels could confuse consumers, discourage consumption of nutritious dairy foods, and create unintended consequences for dairy farmers, processors and businesses throughout the supply chain.

The coalition emphasized that dairy is a core food group recognized by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and that most Americans already fall short of recommended dairy intake. The groups urged Congress to ensure nutrition policy is grounded in sound science and provides consumers with clear, consistent information.

Thirty-one WCMA members joined the letter, demonstrating strong engagement on the issue: Agri-Mark/Cabot Creamery, Agropur, Associated Milk Producers, Inc., Bel Brands USA, Biery Cheese Company, Cheese Merchants, CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley, Crystal Farms, Dairy Farmers of America, Foremost Farms USA, Glanbia Nutritionals, Grande Cheese Company, Grassland Dairy Products, Great Lakes Cheese, Hilmar Cheese Company, Klondike Cheese, Lactalis USA, Lanco-Pennland, Leprino Foods, Lifeway Foods, Masters Gallery Foods, Nasonville Dairy, Prairie Farms Dairy, Saputo, Sargento Foods, Sartori Cheese, Schreiber Foods, Schuman Cheese, The Kroger Company, and Valley Queen Cheese.

WCMA will continue working with national and state dairy partners to ensure federal food policy recognizes the important role of safe, nutritious dairy products in healthy diets. Questions may be directed to [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

WCMA Expands Dairy Export Consultation Program



With the global cheese market expected to reach \$328 billion in the next eight years, dairy processors are primed for substantial international growth. WCMA is excited to announce the [expansion of its Dairy Export Consulting Program](#) beyond Wisconsin to the broader Midwest region, offering free consultative services provided by global dairy professional Jacqueline Cook of Cook Alpine Ltd.

Through WCMA's program, Cook's services will now be available to dairy processors in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin. The expansion is made possible by financial support from the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance.

Participating Midwest dairy processors will have access to assistance with hands-on documentation and regulatory compliance, alignment of products with target international markets, market entry

planning, identification of qualified importers and distribution partners, and more.

Last year, thanks to funding from the Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports (championed by WCMA), the Association's dairy export consultation program helped 27 Wisconsin dairy companies and cooperatives break into global markets and expand their international sales. In fact, export sales grew an estimated aggregate of 55 percent in 2025, including five new exporters with 100 percent growth.

Applications for the program will be accepted on a rolling basis until all spaces are filled. To apply or for more information, contact [WCMA Director of Sustainability & Grants Danica Nilsestuen](#). See more export-related news in our featured section below.

Headlines

Wisconsin

- WKOW-TV: [Fifty percent tariff on whey, 25 percent on cheese: what it means for Wisconsin exporters](#)
- Yahoo! Finance: [Teamsters at Foremost Farms Reedsburg ratify strong contract](#)

National & Global

- CBC: [US tariffs on dairy industry are 'completely unwarranted': Dairy Farmers of Canada president](#)
- Dairy Herd Management: [Fuel prices: the silent profit killer dairy farmers can't afford to ignore](#)

Westby Cooperative Creamery Celebrates \$14M Modernization Project

Congratulations to WCMA member Westby Cooperative Creamery, which last week held a ribbon-cutting for its [\\$14.1 million cottage cheese plant modernization project](#).

This major investment brings innovative enclosed-vat technology to this 100-year-old facility, improving efficiency, food safety, sustainability, and employee safety while expanding capacity to meet growing demand. Most importantly, it strengthens a farmer-owned cooperative and helps ensure long-term opportunity and stability for the family farms that own it.

Congratulations to the entire Westby team on this investment in their future!



FEATURED: EXPORT

Learn more about WCMA's programs & services in this special rotating section! This week, we spotlight WCMA's dairy export resources and programming.

Strong Year for U.S. Dairy Exports, USDA Data Says



U.S. dairy exports are having a strong year, with cheese and butter shipments helping drive growth, according to [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) data](#). Cheese exports are expected to hit a record 751,000 metric tons in 2026, up 23 percent from 2025, as global demand and competitive prices for U.S. products support sales. There is also growing demand from Asia, Middle East-North Africa (MENA), and Europe, creating new opportunities for U.S. dairy exporters. [READ MORE...](#)

Submit Export Projects for Dairy Industry Impact Grants

Applications are [open now](#) through September 30 for [Dairy Industry Impact grants](#) offered through the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA). Businesses in DBIA's 11-state Midwest region pursuing projects with a potential impact on the broader industry, including export-related projects, are eligible to apply for the Industry Impact program. Visit [DBIA's website](#) for more information and to access the Helpful Hints instructional webinar.

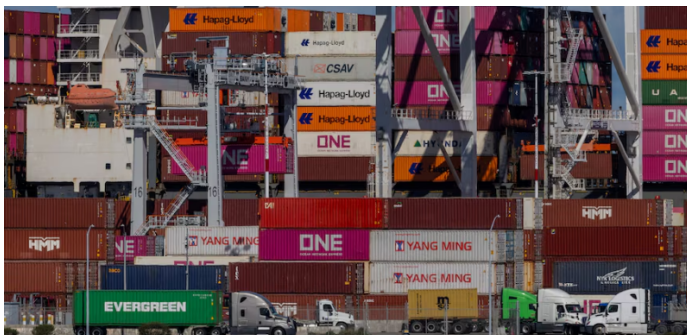
Make Plans to Join WCMA Dairy Export Group Meeting Dec. 2



Register now to join WCMA's annual [Dairy Export Group meeting](#) on Wednesday, December 2. The hybrid meeting will be held at WCMA's Madison offices for in-person attendees and online via Zoom.

The 2026 meeting will focus on providing practical guidance on the paperwork and certifications needed to successfully export dairy products to international markets. Participants will learn about key export documents, health and sanitary certificates, regulatory requirements and common paperwork challenges, with an opportunity to ask questions and share experiences. Registration and sponsorships are [available online now](#).

Apply Today for Wisconsin International Market Access Grants



Applications are open now for the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation's (WEDC) [International Market Access Grants](#). Funds awarded through the program can help increase export sales through reimbursement grants to offset the costs to attend trade shows, export education, consulting services and marketing or promotion in target markets. Questions may be directed to [WEDC staff](#).

Export Education Opportunity on November 11

An in-person [Madison International Trade Association \(MITA\) event](#) is coming up on November 11.

In "International Trade: Managing Risks and Reaping Rewards", attendees will hear from global trade leaders, risk managers, and industry exporters to learn best practices and share notes so they can confidently embark on opportunities abroad for their services and products. [Learn more and register now.](#)

EVENTS & CONNECTION

Strengthen Sustainability Data with WCMA Workshop Oct. 21-22



Dairy processors need reliable, repeatable, and defensible processes to collect, analyze and report their sustainability data. WCMA is here to help with our third annual in-person sustainability workshop on October 21-22 in Madison, Wisconsin. ["Good Data, Better Decisions: Building a Stronger Sustainability Data Strategy"](#) will help dairy processors strengthen data integrity, develop clear SOPs, and prepare for audits.

This workshop will be led by industry experts Kaitlyn Harbort, Sushil Rajagopalan (Harbor Environmental, a Terracon company), and dairy processors with extensive experience in this area. Participants will learn how to build confidence in their sustainability data so it can withstand customer and third-party scrutiny while finding new ways to create value for their business. Topics include which data they should collect and why, the importance of data integrity, why sustainability data matters, and how to turn data requests into strategic conversations. After the first day of the workshop wraps up on Wednesday, October 21, attendees are invited to a WCMA-hosted dinner.

Don't miss this chance to stay up-to-date on recommended sustainability practices and connect with peers and colleagues. [Register today!](#)

Learn Latest Updates at Dairy Food Safety Alliance Meeting



All dairy manufacturers, processors, and suppliers are invited to sign up now for the [next hybrid meeting of the Dairy Food Safety Alliance](#) on Thursday, October 29, from 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. (CT). [Join Alliance partners](#) Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) and the Center for Dairy Research (CDR) in-person in Madison, Wisconsin, and online for a day of education, peer networking, and the latest updates on timely food safety topics.

Don't miss this opportunity for connection and education. [Register today!](#)

Special thanks go to meeting sponsor [Exiges Instrument Systems, LLC](#) for their generous support. Additional sponsorships of this meeting are [available now](#) through October 21, including complimentary registration and recognition. Act now to reach new audiences and show your support for dairy processors' efforts to maintain a safe food supply!

Upcoming WCMA Events

September 17	September 23	October 14	October 20	October 21-22
<u>Front-Line Leadership Part A</u> (In-Person)	<u>Annual Member Meeting and Awards Ceremony</u> (In-Person)	<u>Front-Line Leadership Part B</u> (In-Person)	<u>Health & Safety Group Meeting</u> (Hybrid)	<u>"Good Data, Better Decisions" Sustainability Workshop</u> (In-Person)



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