



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



COVID-19 UPDATES



Federal Contractor Employees Must Be Fully Vaccinated by December 8

Employees of most federal contractors have until December 8, 2021 to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, according to [new guidance](#) issued by a Biden Administration task force on September 24. Federal contractors are also required to match the federal government's masking and social distancing procedures, which dictate that unvaccinated persons be masked at all times indoors and that vaccinated employees wear masks in communal areas in [locations of high community transmission](#). Under the guidance, federal contractors must also appoint an individual within their organization to oversee implementation of these requirements.

The new mandate applies to contracts from all executive branch agencies, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which are under the Federal Acquisition Regulation and worth more than \$250,000 in value. Any solicitation issued after October 15 or contract awarded after November 14 will have to have the COVID-19 clause included as part of the award. Agencies will also apply new clauses to existing contracts requiring compliance at the next option exercised or extension made.



WCMA Applauds New \$20M Investment in Food Security Initiative

Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers this morning introduced a package of bills designed to boost Wisconsin food producers and processors, including a [new, \\$20 million investment](#) in the Food Security Initiative, which supports the purchase of Wisconsin foods for hunger relief efforts. WCMA has championed this program, which was of particular benefit to dairy farmers and dairy processors as markets were disrupted amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and [applauded today's announcement](#).

Evers' package also invests \$400,000 in Something Special from Wisconsin™, a branded marketing program available to businesses who can attribute at least 50 percent of their ingredients, production, or processing activities to Wisconsin, \$400,000 for the Farm-to-School program which supports the purchase of fresh, locally-produced foods for school nutrition programs, and more than \$500,000 for the creation of a Farm-to-Fork program, designed to build connections between farmers and businesses, hospitals, and higher ed facilities which could purchase locally-produced foods.

UPDATE: Pandemic Response and Safety Grants Opening for Applications in October

Late last week, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) amended a previous announcement regarding the [Pandemic Response and Safety Grant Program](#). Instead of opening September 23, **the program will now open for applications in early October**. Once open, applicants will still have 45 days to apply for the grants.

This program will provide assistance to small businesses in certain commodity areas, including specialty crop producers; aquaculture and fish farms; specialty crop, meat, and other processors; distributors; and farmers markets. Approximately \$650 million in funding is available for these grants, which are funded by the Pandemic Assistance provided in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.

FDA, CDC Authorize Pfizer Booster Shots for Millions of Americans

A third booster dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is [recommended for certain Americans](#), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) said last week. Both agencies have now authorized booster shots for Pfizer vaccine recipients aged 65 and older, adults over 50 with health conditions that put them at risk of COVID-19 complications, and long-term nursing home residents.

Coronavirus Headline News

Wisconsin

- *Wisconsin Public Radio*: [DHS: Five percent of Wisconsin's ICU beds are available. COVID-19 is partly to blame.](#)
- *WBAY-TV*: [COVID-19 in Wisconsin: Cases slip, deaths remain in double digits](#)
- *WDJT-TV*: [Doctors stress importance of flu shots as Wisconsin hospitals battle COVID-19](#)
- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Wisconsin schools face food shortages amid pandemic](#)

National/International

- *USA Today*: [U.S. to drop travel ban for vaccinated international travelers starting in early November](#)
- *Associated Press*: [U.S. has enough COVID-19 vaccines for boosters, kids' shots](#)
- *Time*: [Here's why companies aren't fighting Biden's employee vaccine mandate](#)
- *Miami Herald*: [Can workers with COVID vaccine exemption be put on leave?](#)
- *The New York Times*: [Answers to your questions about COVID booster shots](#)

ADVOCACY



Wisconsin Senate Confirmation of Agency Heads Scheduled

The Wisconsin State Senate is in session today, and expected to confirm numerous agency heads, including Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary-designee Randy Romanski (pictured above, second from left), Wisconsin Economic Development Secretary-designee/CEO Missy Hughes and Department of Transportation Secretary-designee Craig Thompson, all of whom WCMA has strongly supported.

Wisconsin Lawmakers Revive Repeal of Personal Property Tax

Wisconsin Democrats have revived a proposal to [end the state's personal property tax](#), which requires business owners to continue paying property taxes on machinery and equipment for as long as they are owned and operated.

The new proposal, introduced by Governor Tony Evers, State Senator Brad Pfaff (D-Onalaska) and State Representative Robin Vining (D-Wauwatosa), comes months after Democrats rejected a [similar effort led by Republicans](#). Upon vetoing that measure in July, [Evers noted concern](#) over its potential effects on railroad taxes, taxes on utility companies and the state's manufacturing and agriculture tax credit, which are addressed in the new version.

WCMA has advocated for a repeal of the personal property tax in Wisconsin, and will continue to work to advance the concept.

WCMA Joins WMC for Business Day Event

WCMA will partner with business lobbying group Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce for its [Business Day 2021 event](#), set for October 14 in Pewaukee, Wisconsin. The program features Guy Benson, Political Editor of Townhall.com and FOX News contributor; Michael Gregory, Deputy Chief Economist and Head of U.S. Economics for BMO Capital Markets; Dr. Douglas A. Fisher, Associate Professor of Practice, Emeritus, who specializes in Supply Chain Management in the College of Business Administration at Marquette University; Wisconsin's legislative leadership; and a CEO Fireside Chat.

Interested in attending? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).



WCMA, CDR Update WDATCP Board on DBIA

WCMA was proud to join the Center for Dairy Research (CDR) last week to share the progress of the [Dairy Business Innovation Alliance \(DBIA\)](#) with the members of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) Board.

To date, DBIA has distributed \$1.2 million in grants, hosted 12 business webinars, and shared regulatory and informational resources with dairy farmers and businesses across the Midwest.

INDUSTRY UPDATES

USDA Urges Co-ops to Boost Cyber Defenses

Cooperatives should take steps to bolster their cybersecurity, U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom [Vilsack recently told state agriculture leaders](#). Amid ransomware attacks in Iowa and Minnesota, Vilsack urged co-ops to toughen their defenses online. The advice comes after the Federal Bureau of Investigation [issued an early September alert](#) outlining the risks and mitigation strategies food and agriculture businesses can take to protect themselves from cyber attacks.



WCMA Webinar

Cybersecurity Threats & Strategies to Safeguard Your Business

Register Now for WCMA Cybersecurity Webinar

In October, WCMA will present an expert look at online threats to your business and profitability, and practical strategies to increase your cybersecurity.

REGISTER NOW

Join WCMA on Tuesday, October 12 from 1:00-2:00 p.m. (CT) for presentations from:

- Michael Hemberger, Wisconsin Department of Justice Intelligence Analyst
- Emily Selck, M3 Insurance Director of Cyber Liability
- Jen Pino-Gallagher, M3 Insurance Director of Food and Agribusiness Practice Group

This webinar is the first in an **exclusive monthly series** offered only to WCMA members. Learn advanced strategies to grow your dairy processing business, protect your assets, and strengthen your workforce - all at no cost. These concise, one-hour webinars offer both expert insight and a chance to connect with your industry colleagues on a regular basis.

If you have questions about this or any other webinar in the upcoming monthly series, please contact **WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney**.

USDA Now Accepting Cheese Bids

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is soliciting bids for two types of cheese for use in federal food assistance programs. **Process cheese** bids are due **today**, September 28, at 5:00 p.m. (CT), and questions can be directed to **USDA staff**. **American cheese** bids are due Tuesday, October 5 at 1:00 p.m. (CT) and questions can be directed to **USDA staff**.

USDA Awards Mozzarella Contracts

Three WCMA members have been awarded contracts to provide mozzarella cheese for use in federal food assistance programs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture **announced today that it will buy** mozzarella products from Agropur, Dairy Farmers of America, and Saputo Cheese.

WDNR Nitrate Webinars Available On-Demand

WCMA members can now view the **full webinar series** focused on nitrates in groundwater, hosted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Division of Extension and College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. All webinar recordings are now available on-demand on **WDNR's website**.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DBIA

Dairy Business Innovation Alliance

DBIA Continues Free Business Webinar Series

Dairy industry professionals looking to strengthen their businesses should mark their calendars for the remaining DBIA webinars in the popular "[Let's Keep Your Business Going](#)" series. Here's a complete listing of upcoming sessions:

- Setting Up/Improving Manufacturing Processes: **today**, 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)

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



Join WCMA at World Dairy Expo

Join WCMA at [World Dairy Expo](#) in Madison, Wisconsin all week. Visit WCMA and Center for Dairy Research (CDR) staff at booth EH4423 in the Exhibition Hall to learn more about the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance. We look forward to seeing you!

Wisconsin

- WTMJ-TV: [Some Wisconsin dairy farmers say labeling non-dairy products as 'milk' is misleading](#)
- Forest & Bluff Magazine: [Goat's milk cheese curds with lavender](#) (Featuring WCMA member Renard's Cheese)

National/International

- Agri-Pulse: [U.S. commits \\$10B to food security, climate efforts at UN summit](#)
- Feedstuffs: [Biden administration offers ag trade strategy](#)
- Dairy Herd Management: [Strength in demand prompts USDA to raise all milk price forecast into 2022](#)
- Progressive Dairy: [August retail dairy sales reveal impact of COVID-19 variant](#)
- Dairy Herd Management: [Food inflation picking up](#)
- Associated Press: [Some Georgia dairy farmers see cash cow in raw milk sales](#)



Make "whey" for a monument to Ohio Swiss cheesemakers

WCMA members **Guggisberg Cheese** and **Pearl Valley Cheese** are [partnering with officials](#) in Sugarcreek, Ohio on a monument recognizing Swiss cheesemakers. Kudos to Richard Guggisberg, WCMA Board Member and President of Guggisberg Cheese, and Chuck Ellis, President of Pearl Valley Cheese, for leading this effort to honor the history of the Swiss cheese industry!

EDUCATION



Master Short Course: Understanding and Controlling Defects in Cheese

October 27-29



Short Course Spotlight: Sign Up by October 10 for CDR Cheese Defects Course

[Register by October 10](#) for the Center for Dairy Research's (CDR) 2021 Master Short Course: Understanding and Controlling Defects in Cheese. The course will be offered in-person from October 27-29 at Babcock Hall on the UW-Madison campus.

CDR staff and presenters will cover a number of topics during this short course, including understanding how cheese defects occur, gas formation, conversion issues, developing strategies to prevent defects in cheese, and much more. At the end of the short course, attendees will have the opportunity to participate in an interactive group activity where real-life cheese defect scenarios are presented, and participants will diagnose the solution. Speakers include:

- Mark Johnson, Center for Dairy Research
- Aldo Barbieri & Davide Tarricone, ALCE International (Italy)
- Séverine Dolci & Frédéric Lafforgue, Air Quality Process (France)

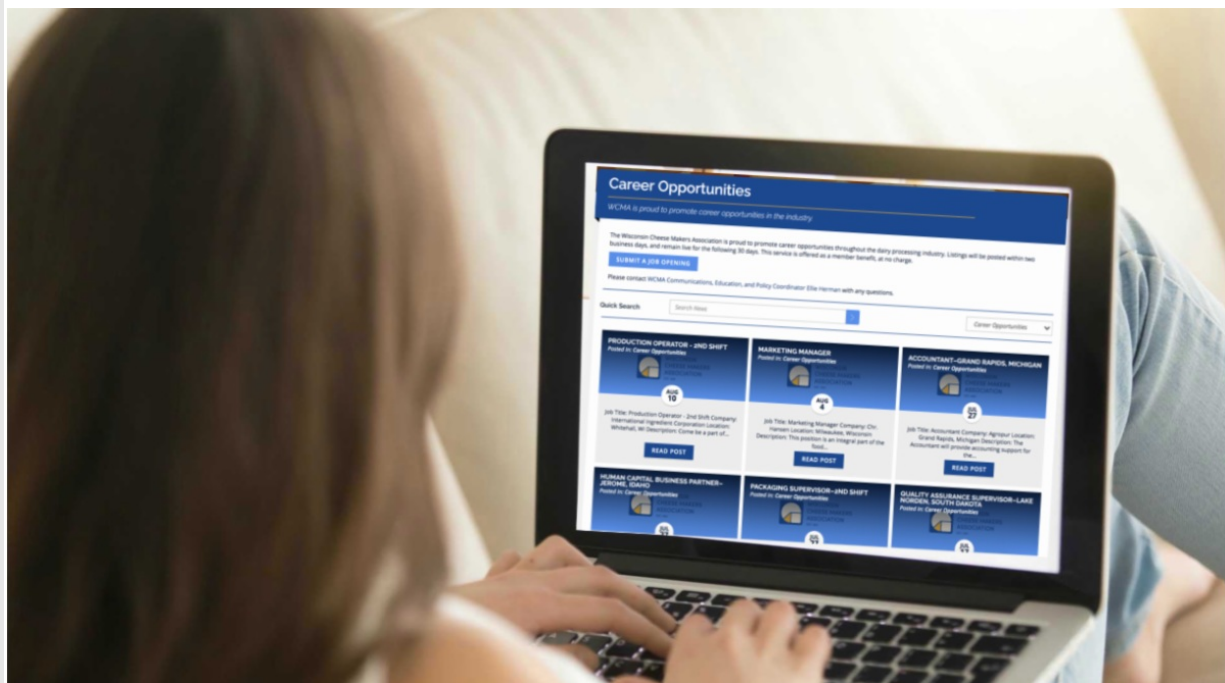
Please contact [CDR staff](#) with any questions.

Additional Industry Training Opportunities

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

- September 29: [SQF Quality Systems for Manufacturing](#) | Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- September 30: [SQF Internal Auditor Training](#) | 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 19-21: [Food Defense & FSPCA Intentional Adulteration Short Course](#) | Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin
- October 20: [Dairy Ingredients Fundamentals](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- November 15-18: [Advanced Cheese Technology](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- November 16: [Cheesemaking 101: What a Licensed Cheesemaker Should Know](#) | Center for Dairy Research
- January 20, 2022: [Certificate in Dairy Processing - Online](#) | Center for Dairy Research

WORKFORCE



Share Career Openings on WCMA Jobs Board

WCMA's [online jobs board](#) currently features industry career opportunities from member companies Agropur, Arena Cheese, Crystal Farms Cheese, Emmi Roth, and RELCO. All WCMA members are invited to [post openings](#). It's free and easy!

ADD CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

MEMBERSHIP

WCMA Seeks Images, Stories for 2022 Member Directory: "Together We Grow"

WCMA is seeking photos and stories of exceptional growth in your workforce for inclusion in our 2022 Member Directory! In accordance with the theme "Together We Grow," the directory will feature images of member employees and teams alongside brief narratives highlighting their career growth and advancement.

By close of business on **Friday, November 5**, [WCMA members are invited to submit images](#) of their employees or teams with 1-2 sentences explaining:

- Why they enjoy their work in the dairy processing industry
- How their work proves valuable to the company
- How they have grown and developed in their career
- What their professional goals may be, and/or
- How WCMA has helped support them in their work



Pictured above: 2021 WCMA Member Directory

WCMA encourages members to consider submitting images and stories that reflect the diversity of their operations. Please submit images of the highest available resolution.

Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton](#).

2022 Directory Ad Space Now Available

Act today to [reserve your ad space](#) in the 2022 WCMA Member Directory. Advertising in the directory connects your company with over 600 WCMA member companies and cooperatives and their employees. We invite you to consider incorporating this year's theme, "Together We Grow," into your advertisement.

The deadline to reserve ad space is **October 29**. For complete specifications and other details, [download our pricing form](#). Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Business & Membership Manager Sara Schmidt](#).

RESERVE YOUR AD NOW

WCMA Social Media Campaign Highlights Dairy Processing Industry Leaders

WCMA invites you to get to know the 21 industry leaders who serve on our Board of Directors and guide our work each day. We'll profile the Board on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and in this newsletter on a weekly basis. This week, we're featuring Chris Roelli of Roelli Cheese Company!

Chris Roelli Roelli Cheese Company

WCMA Board Member

Favorite Cheese

Cheddar Blue and Alpine style

Proudest Achievement

Succeeding as a small producer when many said it wouldn't work. We have many Best in Class awards, and our Little Mountain took Best in Show at the American Cheese Society Competition in 2016.

Why I Support WCMA

"As my team and I navigate the artisan cheese market and grow our brand in the coming years, I know we can rely on WCMA to keep us updated and be a strong advocate."



WISCONSIN
CHEESE MAKERS
ASSOCIATION
EST. 1891



To share ideas regarding WCMA social media campaigns or other communications, please contact [WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton](#).

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.

WisCheeseMakers.org

