

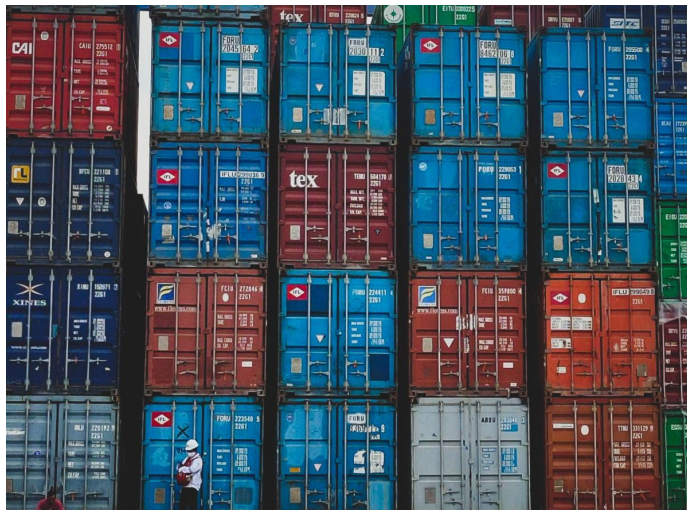


September 29, 2026
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NEWS

U.S.-China Trade Truce Extended, Dairy Included in Tariff Discussions



The U.S. and China this week agreed to [extend their trade truce](#) through January 10, 2027, while activating a new U.S.-China Board of Trade to pursue reciprocal tariff reductions.

The two countries identified \$60 billion in goods - \$30 billion from each country - for potential reduced tariff treatment, including a [range of agricultural products](#). U.S. dairy products, including cheeses, milk, cream, whey, yogurt, butter, and some other cultured products are included on the list of products being considered for tariff reductions in China.

Canadian Whey Imports Halted Tuesday



A U.S. import [ban on \\$1 billion worth of certain Canadian products](#), including whey and some other dairy ingredients, took effect at 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, September 29, amid escalating U.S.-Canada trade tensions. Canada supplied nearly half of the \$73.6 million in whey products imported by the U.S. in 2025, making the new restrictions significant for the North American dairy ingredient market.

The action comes as U.S.-Canada trade tensions continue to intensify amid an ongoing review of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

USDA Seeks Comments on State SNAP Restrictions



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is [seeking public comment](#) on 18 states' proposals to restrict the foods and beverages that may be purchased with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

The proposed restrictions vary by state and generally target products including soft drinks, sweetened beverages, energy drinks and candy – some of which contain dairy. Comments, to be submitted on [each state's proposal](#), are due October 15, 2026.

The comment opportunity follows a federal court ruling that [vacated USDA's approval](#) of SNAP food-restriction waivers in Colorado, Iowa, Nebraska, Tennessee and West Virginia. USDA has appealed that decision. The ruling does not affect the 18 states currently subject to the new comment process. While members may directly comment, WCMA also will submit a comment on behalf of its members regarding the proposed restrictions and their potential implications for the dairy processing industry. Members who would like WCMA to incorporate specific perspectives or data into these comments should send input to [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#) by close of business on October 8.

DBIA Grant Applications Due Tomorrow



Deciding whether to apply for a DBIA grant? [Click the "Play" button](#) to hear from awardee Cinnamon Ridge Farms about how DBIA funding helped boost their business.

The deadline for Midwest dairy businesses to [apply for the next round of grants](#) through the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA), a partnership between WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research (CDR), is tomorrow, September 30, at 5:00 p.m. (CT).

Two grant programs are available to small- to mid-sized dairy farmers and processors in DBIA's 11-state service region. The [Dairy Industry Impact](#) program funds projects with a potential impact on the broader industry. The [Dairy Business Builder](#) program supports those seeking to diversify on-farm activities, develop value-added products, enhance dairy by-products, or expand export programs.

Applicants may apply to both grant programs. **All applications are due by 5:00 p.m. (CT) tomorrow, September 30.** Questions may be directed to [DBIA staff](#).

Wisconsin Dairy Processor Grant Applications Due November 3



Wisconsin dairy processors have another opportunity to [apply for Dairy Processor Grants](#) through the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Applications for Round 2 of the 2027 grant program are due by 12 noon on November 3.

The competitive grants provide up to \$50,000 per project, with recipients required to provide a 20% match.

Funds can support projects that foster innovation, improve profitability and strengthen the long-term viability of Wisconsin dairy processing facilities, including food safety initiatives, employee training, plant expansion or modernization, and professional consulting services. Eligible applicants must operate a licensed Wisconsin dairy processing plant engaged in pasteurizing, processing or manufacturing milk or dairy products.

Since the program began in 2014, DATCP has received 297 proposals requesting more than \$12.1 million and has awarded \$3.8 million to 148 projects. WCMA is proud to advocate for these critical funds in each budget cycle.

Headlines

Wisconsin

- DATCP: [Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease \(EHD\) confirmed in Wisconsin cattle](#)
- Farm Progress: [Wisconsin dairy farms drop below 5,000 for first time](#)
- WPR: ['This may just be the end': Wisconsin farmers struggle to afford diesel during harvest season](#)

National & Global

- Fox Business: [E coli outbreak linked to raw milk cheese leads to 13 illnesses and eight hospitalizations across the U.S.: FDA](#)
- CNN: [Attention, protein-maxxers: Trump's trade war is coming for your whey](#)
- CBS News: [Diesel prices just hit a new record. Would a U.S. export ban bring relief?](#)
- AG Daily: [Dairy Checkoff names Corey Scott the third CEO in its history](#)
- KOAM: [Schreiber Foods invests \\$267 million in Carthage expansion project](#)
- eDairy News: [Saputo launches dedicated global ingredients division](#)

FEATURED: WCMA NOTES

Learn more about WCMA's programs & services in this special rotating section! This week, we spotlight WCMA's monthly column, WCMA Notes, sharing insights and ideas for the dairy processing industry.

Amid Challenges, Dairy Has All the Right Ingredients to Win



Despite navigating trade volatility, rising costs of production, workforce shortages, and other challenges, American dairy producers have committed \$11 billion to dairy production projects through early 2028. At WCMA's Annual Member Meeting last Wednesday, executives from three companies making major investments took part in a panel and shared why their businesses see value in financing new endeavors during this dynamic time for dairy. Read more in the latest [WCMA Notes column](#) by [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

EVENTS & CONNECTION



Thanks to Annual Member Meeting Sponsors & Attendees

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the 2026 Annual Member Meeting and Awards Ceremony on September 23! Special thanks go to our expert panelists, Jenny Drake of [Grande Cheese Company](#), Brianne Maier of [Land O'Lakes, Inc.](#), and Derek Miller of [Lifeway Foods](#), for sharing their businesses' strategic investments to capitalize on value-added opportunities. We were especially proud to recognize the second annual recipients of WCMA's Member Impact Awards: [Kerry](#), [Nelson-Jameson, Inc.](#), [Lifeway Foods](#), and [Sigma Foods - Darlington Plant](#). And kudos to our generous sponsors who made this event possible: [BluePrint Automation](#), [BPA](#), [Burnett Dairy Cooperative](#), [Compeer Financial](#), [Delta 3 Engineering, Inc.](#), [Grande Cheese Company](#), [M3 Insurance](#), and [Reiser](#).

Register for WCMA Sustainability Workshop by October 16



October 16 is the deadline to sign up for WCMA's in-person sustainability workshop, ["Good Data, Better Decisions: Building a Stronger Sustainability Data Strategy,"](#) held in Madison, Wisconsin, October 21-22. **Additionally, tomorrow is the deadline to book a room through [the hotel block](#).** Attendees of this two-day workshop will get an in-depth look at the sustainability reporting landscape, learn how to build sustainability data SOPs, and how to prepare for external scrutiny.

This program, led by industry experts Kaitlyn Harbort, Sushil Rajagopalan (Harbor Environmental, a Terracon company), and dairy processors with extensive experience in this area, will help attendees 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.

This two-day workshop costs \$750 to attend. If an organization sends more than one person, all other registrants after the primary will be \$250. Don't miss this chance to stay up-to-date on recommended sustainability practices and connect with peers and colleagues. [Register today!](#)

Stay In the Know with WCMA Dairy Food Safety Alliance Meeting



Register today for the [next hybrid meeting of WCMA's Dairy Food Safety Alliance](#) on Thursday, October 29, from 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. (CT) for a day of education, peer networking, and the latest updates on timely food safety topics. Attendees will join Alliance partners Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) and the Center for Dairy Research (CDR) in person at WCMA's offices in Madison, Wisconsin, and online.

[Sign up now](#) to hear from dairy plant inspectors on survey insights, get an overview of a typical Wisconsin inspection report, receive the latest updates in food safety guidance, take a deep dive into the anatomy of a product recall, learn best practices for water use and reclaimed water protection in dairy plants, and much more. Don't miss this opportunity for connection and education.



Thanks go to meeting sponsor [Exiges Instrument Systems, LLC](#). 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!

Become a Better Leader with Front-Line Leadership Trainings



Limited space remains in the next session of [WCMA's three-part Front-Line Leadership training series](#)! Part B, "Boosting Staff Performance", is designed for supervisors who want to cultivate a team mentality, communicate better, resolve conflicts, and manage their time and stress. The [virtual Part B training](#) will take place on October 7, while the [in-person training](#) will take place on October 14 at WCMA's offices in Madison, Wisconsin.

Missed Part A? Not to worry — all three parts are offered à la carte and can be taken in any order. Sign-ups for the Spring Front-Line Leadership training series will open soon. Additionally, **successful completion of all three parts of WCMA Front-Line Leadership results in a free, full registration to CheeseCon 2027 — a savings of approximately \$600. [Sign up now!](#)**



Thanks go to [Nelson-Jameson, Inc.](#) for their generous sponsorship of the in-person training on October 14. Sponsorship of the virtual meeting on October 7 is still available. [Become a sponsor](#) to show your support for the dairy processing industry's next generation of leaders.

Upcoming WCMA Events

October 7	October 14	October 20	October 21-22	October 29
Front-Line Leadership Part B (Virtual)	Front-Line Leadership Part B (In-Person)	Health & Safety Group Meeting (Hybrid)	"Good Data, Better Decisions" Sustainability Workshop (In-Person)	Dairy Food Safety Alliance Meeting (Hybrid)



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