



COVID-19 UPDATES

Register Now for WCMA Webinar Focused on OSHA's Revised COVID-19 Employer Guidance

Register now to take part in a free COVID-19 webinar available exclusively to WCMA members next **Tuesday, September 14 from 1:00-1:45 p.m. (CT)**. The webinar will focus on newly-revised COVID-19 guidance for employers issued by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene (WSLH) Industrial Hygiene Consultant-Engineer George Gruetzmacher, PhD, CIH, CSP, PE and Environmental Health Specialist Kelli Rush will join WCMA staff for this presentation, detailing what dairy processors can expect if they are inspected by OSHA in relation to their COVID-19 protocols. Rush will also detail the free services offered to Wisconsin employers by the WSLH WisCon COVID-19 Consultations program.

WCMA will reserve time at the end of the webinar for WSLH staff to answer member questions on any COVID-19 related topic, with WCMA staff presenting pre-submitted questions anonymously. Please **send your questions by 12:00 p.m. (CT) on Monday, September 13** to [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

REGISTER NOW

WCMA *Instant Data* Survey Finds Majority of Industry Employees Required to Mask

WCMA thanks the 40 dairy processing members that responded to the Association's *Instant Data* Survey conducted last week, focused on the industry's COVID-19 Delta variant outbreak prevention policies. Survey results representing nearly 24,000 industry employees reveal the vast majority - 74 percent - are required to wear face masks while at work regardless of vaccination status. Another five percent of industry workers are required to wear face masks while at work if they are unvaccinated.

To receive a summary of complete survey results, which include information about the prevalence of other risk mitigation strategies, such as required vaccination, on-site testing, and leave flexibility - or to suggest a question for a future survey, please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

WCMA Notes: Dairy Processors Pivot to Protect

Employees from Delta Variant

For many employers, Labor Day was the target for a return to normal. Office workers would head back to their cubicles, sales staff would travel the world once more, and operations would move past pandemic protocols. But as has happened so frequently during the COVID-19 crisis, plans have changed.



In the September edition of *WCMA Notes*, [Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#) details the dairy processing community's efforts to address the rapid spread of the more infectious, aggressive Delta variant, as well as the strategies public health officials recommend to guard against a workplace outbreak and protect your valued team. [Click here to read](#) the column.

USDA Offers September 9 Webinar on Fast-Track Pandemic Aid for Processors & Producers

WCMA members have until this coming Friday, September 10, to inform the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) if your company or cooperative will participate in the [Pandemic Market Volatility Assistance Program](#). [Register now via email](#) to participate in USDA's informational webinar on this program, set for Thursday, September 9 at 12 noon (CT).

Announced August 19, this program will provide up to \$350 million to dairy farms nationwide impacted by market volatility and disruptions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Payments will be calculated by proprietary milk buyers and cooperatives and cover the time period July through December 2020.

Milk buyers will work with USDA on the program, determining the amount owed to producers, and money will move to milk buyers for distribution to patron farms. Participants in the program will provide USDA with the volume of milk pooled in July through December 2020. Payments will reimburse dairy farms for 80 percent of the difference between the "higher of" and "average" Class 1 skim value by order in those months. USDA has announced a cap of five million pounds per producer, and producers must have an adjusted gross income of less than \$900,000 in tax years 2016, 2017 and 2018, or 75 percent of their AGI must come from farming. USDA will provide a worksheet for milk buyers to calculate their eligible producer pounds. A lump sum check will be sent to milk buyers and patron producers must be paid within 30 days of receipt of this money. The payment must be executed outside of regular milk checks.

PLEASE NOTE: WCMA will work with University of Wisconsin Director of Dairy Policy Analysis Mark Stephenson, PhD, to supply content for another requirement in the program: Producer education. Participating milk buyers must provide live or recorded educational webinars or mailings that explain topics such as federal orders, forward contracting, dairy margin coverage and more by March 1, 2022.

Members with questions may contact [WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer](#).

USDA Launches Farm & Food Worker Relief Plan, Promises Details on New Processor Aid

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom [Vilsack today launched](#) a new

\$700 million Farm and Food Workers Relief grant program to support farmworkers, meatpacking workers and front-line grocery store workers with pandemic-related health and safety costs. USDA officials also noted they will soon announce a separate \$700 million suite of pandemic safety and response grants for agricultural producers, processors, and distributors impacted by COVID-19.

Evers Extends Vaccine Reward Program

Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers last week extended the deadline for the state's \$100 COVID-19 vaccination reward program to Sunday, September 19. The offer is available to anyone aged 12 and up in Wisconsin who received their first vaccine dose after August 20. To receive the reward, Wisconsinites must fill out an [online form](#) or call 844-684-1064 to register.

Coronavirus Headline News

Dairy Industry

- *Brownfields Ag News*: [Your farm group says an end to the pandemic starts with you](#) (Featuring WCMA member Foremost Farms USA)
- *Successful Farming*: [Ag leaders urge COVID-19 vaccination in rural America](#)
- *Cheese Market News*: [Industry organizations make safety a priority during events](#) (Featuring WCMA)

Wisconsin

- *USA Today*: [The coronavirus accelerated an already short supply of Wisconsin workers: Here's what's driving the state's employment crisis](#)
- *WBAY-TV*: [Worker shortage could continue despite expiration of federal unemployment benefits](#)
- *WBAY-TV*: [Hospitalizations increase in Wisconsin over the weekend, more counties reach vaccine milestones](#)
- *Oshkosh Northwestern*: [There's 'no real ICU capacity left' in Oshkosh, Fox Valley hospitals as COVID surges](#)

National/International

- *Associated Press*: [Two anchors of COVID safety net ending, affecting millions](#)
 - *Politico*: [Virus threatens to slam labor market as jobless aid expires](#)
 - *New York Times*: [U.S. records 40 million known virus cases](#)
 - *Washington Post*: [U.S. COVID death toll hits 1,500 a day amid Delta scourge](#)
 - *Reuters*: [Biden to outline plan Thursday to curb coronavirus Delta variant as cases grow](#)
 - *Newsweek*: [Mu COVID variant that may resist vaccines found in 49 U.S. states](#)
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INDUSTRY UPDATES

USDA Accepting Bids for Butter Contracts

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is now [accepting bids](#) for fulfillment of butter solicitations for Section 32 programs. All bids are due Tuesday, September 14 by 9:00 a.m. (CT). Questions may be directed to [USDA staff](#).

CALS Dean VandenBosch Exiting in Spring 2022

Kate [VandenBosch announced](#) last week that she will step down as Dean of the

University of Wisconsin-Madison's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the end of this academic year. VandenBosch has served as dean since 2012. University leaders will conduct a national search for VandenBosch's successor.

WDATCP Shares Single Farm Pick-up Guidance

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP), in conjunction with the Dairy Rules Advisory Committee, has published two new interpretative memos addressing the [transfer of milk from an on-farm silo or large bulk tank](#) onto a bulk milk tanker serving a single farm, and addressing the [use of unrefrigerated raw milk storage](#) or bulk tanks on farms. Additional resources are available on WDATCP's [milk producers webpage](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

DAIRY FOOD SAFETY ALLIANCE



WISCONSIN
CHEESE MAKERS
ASSOCIATION
EST. 1891



Final Reminder: 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). The Alliance, a partnership between the Center for Dairy Research (CDR), Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin (DFW), and WCMA, is open to all dairy manufacturers, processors, and suppliers to the industry.



Presentation highlights include food safety research projects funded by DMI, opportunities for timer-sealer certification in Wisconsin, the new federal Food Safety Blueprint, and updated Preventive Controls guidance and resources.

Here's a detailed look at our agenda and speakers:
(All times are in Central Time)

10:45 a.m.: **Sign-in and Networking**

11:00 a.m.: **Lunch Service**

11:30 a.m.: **Introductions, News and Updates**

- Kirsten Strohmenger, Events Manager, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association
- Alex O'Brien, Dairy Safety and Quality Coordinator, Center for Dairy Research
- Adam Brock, VP Food Safety, Quality and Regulatory Compliance, Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin

12:00 p.m.: **Dairy Management Inc. Overview of Current Research Projects**

- Chad Galer, Vice President of Food Safety and Product Research, DMI

12:15 p.m.: **New Food Safety Blueprint from U.S. Food and Drug Administration**

- Nathan Anderson, FDA Office of Food, Safety Division of Food Processing Science

& Technology

12:45 p.m.: **Program Updates from Wisconsin Department of Agriculture & Consumer Protection**

- Tim Anderson, Manager, WDATCP Dairy Section in Bureau of Food and Recreational Businesses
 - WDATCP News & Updates; Inspection Information; Timer Sealer Certification

1:30 p.m.: **Deep Dive: Process Preventive Controls in Food Safety Plans**

- Review Preventive Controls & Justifications – Mary Rollins, WDATCP
- Raw Milk/ComBase Study – Alex O'Brien, Center for Dairy Research
- An Industry Perspective – Amandeep Dhillon, VP Quality and Regulatory Affairs, Grande Cheese

2:30 p.m.: **Open Forum/Question & Answer Session**

3:00 p.m.: **Adjourn**

All in-person registrants are asked to pay a \$35 fee, which includes the cost of a catered lunch. Those who wish to attend virtually may register at the rate of \$25. Virtual attendees will receive an individual Zoom link to join the programming beginning at 11:30 a.m. (CT). Questions may be directed to [WCMA Events Manager Kirsten Strohmenger](#).

REGISTER NOW

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.

Register Now for WDNR, UW-Extension & CALS Nitrate Webinar September 16

WCMA members are invited to join in the [final online webinar session](#) of a series

focused on nitrates in groundwater, hosted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, University of Wisconsin Extension and the University of Wisconsin Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences. The webinar, set for September 16, will offer a preliminary assessment of economic impacts on Wisconsin farms reducing nitrogen losses.

WisPolitics, Dairyland Power Cooperative to Host Rural Prosperity Event September 14

WCMA members are invited to join a [September 14 discussion](#) of the challenges and opportunities facing rural communities, hosted by *WisPolitics* and Dairyland Power Cooperative. The program will feature panelists and speakers from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, among others.

Interested in attending in this event virtually or in-person in La Crosse, Wisconsin? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

IN THE NEWS

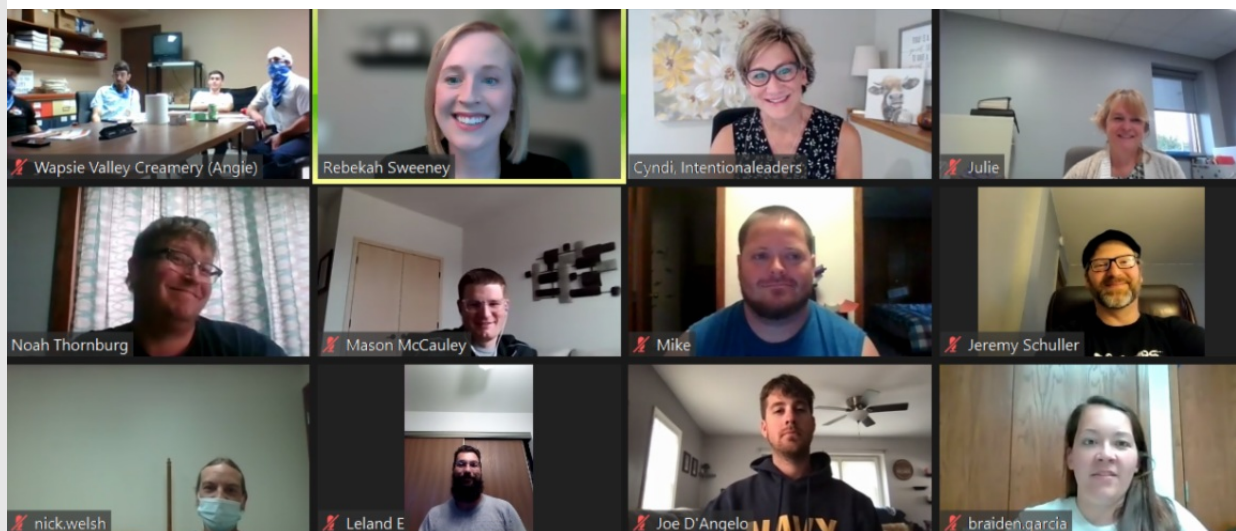
Wisconsin

- *Wisconsin State Journal*: [Fitchburg cheese company Emmi Roth enters feta market with purchase of Athenos](#) (Featuring WCMA member Emmi Roth USA)

National/International

- *Food Business News*: [Saputo adds to U.S. dairy division with acquisition](#) (Featuring WCMA member Saputo Dairy USA)
- *Olean Times Herald*: [Cattaraugus County IDA to vote Sept. 15 on Great Lakes Cheese benefits](#) (Featuring WCMA member Great Lakes Cheese Company)
- *High Plains Journal*: [Sharp spike in land values driven by traditional and nontraditional factors](#) (Featuring WCMA member Hilmar Cheese Company)
- *University of Illinois News Release*: [Less salt, more protein: Researchers address dairy processing's environmental, sustainability issues](#)

EDUCATION



Kudos to WCMA Front-Line Leadership Training Participants and Employers

Kudos go to the engaged, energetic member employees joining in WCMA Front-Line

Leadership training today with Cyndi Wentland of Intentional Leaders, LLC, learning communication, motivation and stress management strategies.

Thanks also go to Baker Cheese, Emmi Roth, Grande Cheese Company, Great Lakes Cheese Company, Klondike Cheese Company, Schuman Cheese, and Wapsie Valley Creamery for investing in ongoing employee education.



Final Reminder: Invest in Your Managers with WCMA's Advanced Leadership Series

Just one seat remains available in WCMA's upcoming [Advanced Leadership Series](#), designed specifically for mid-level managers and employees transitioning into management positions.

- 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 fall, the training will be offered in a hybrid format, allowing students to participate in-person in Madison, Wisconsin or online. Participants will complete the entire series as a cohort to facilitate relationship-building. 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.

To see reviews and testimonials from past participants and to register for a training, visit [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org). Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

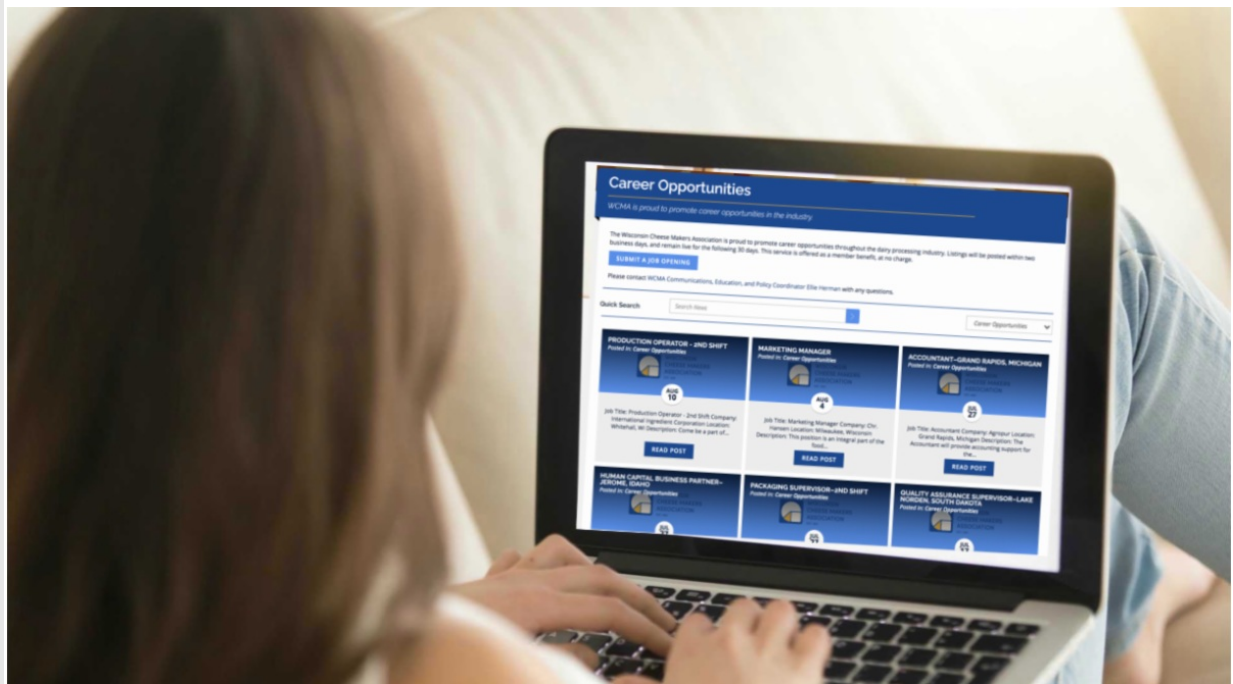
More Industry Training Opportunities

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 15: [Food Fraud Workshop Online](#) | 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
- 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 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

WORKFORCE



View, Share Opportunities on WCMA Jobs Board

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

[ADD CAREER OPPORTUNITIES](#)

WCMA SIGNATURE EVENTS

CHEESE EXPO

Global Technology for Dairy Processors

April 12-14, 2022 | Milwaukee, Wisconsin
CheeseExpo.org

Reserve Exceptional Sponsorship Opportunities

More than 50 percent of exclusive marketing opportunities for next April's [CheeseExpo 2022](#) are already sold. From well-attended special events to high-visibility displays to program advertisements, CheeseExpo offers platforms for companies of all types and sizes to market themselves at the largest dairy processing trade exhibition in the Western Hemisphere.

Sponsorships remain available at five levels for a limited time. Contact [WCMA Events Manager Caitlin Peirick](#) today to secure yours!

IN MEMORIAM

In Memoriam: Pat Polowsky

WCMA mourns with the family and friends of [Pat Polowsky](#), who passed away unexpectedly on August 29. Pat had served as a training coordinator at the Center for Dairy Research, and was well known and respected in the food science and artisan cheesemaking communities.

MEMBERSHIP

New WCMA Social Media Campaign Spotlights Dairy Processing Industry Leaders

WCMA invites members to get to know the 21 industry leaders who serve on our Board of Directors and guide our every effort. We'll profile the Board on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and in this newsletter on a weekly basis - and today, we're kicking things off with a virtual introduction Board President Steve Bechel of Eau Galle Cheese!



Steve Bechel Eau Galle Cheese

WCMA Board President

Favorite Cheese

Parmesan

Proudest Achievement

Becoming a
Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker

Why I Support WCMA

"As cheesemakers, we put a lot of time, energy, and care into delivering the best product we can. That's what's great about WCMA: its staff understand and apply that same dedication to serving our industry."



To share ideas regarding WCMA social media campaigns, please contact [WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton](#). Thank you!

WCMA Welcomes New Supplier Member

WCMA warmly welcomes one new supplier member this week: [Catalyst Construction, Inc.](#) Primary contacts for the company 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.

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.