



WCMA NEWS

Your source for the latest
in dairy processing

April 14, 2026

news@wischeesemakers.org



EVENTS & CONNECTION



CHEESE EXPO

April 14-16, 2026 | Baird Center | Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Tuesday, April 14, 9:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m.

On-Site Registration Hours: Wednesday, April 15, 7:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.

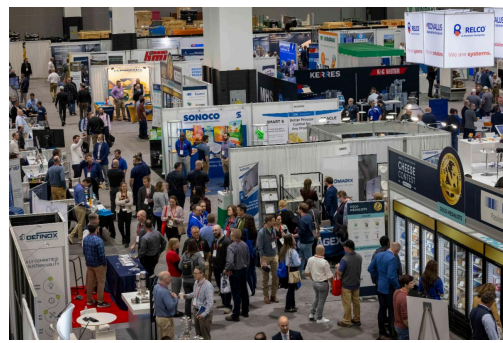
Thursday, April 16, 7:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m.

CheeseExpo.org

CheeseExpo 2026 Kicks Off with Record Crowd

[CheeseExpo 2026](https://CheeseExpo.org) kicked off this morning in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, bringing together a record crowd of more than 4,600 dairy processing professionals for the industry's premier event. There's still time to register on-site today until 7 p.m. (CT), and from 7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. tomorrow, April 15 and from 7:00 a.m.-6:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 16.

Connect with industry leaders across every role - from CEOs to quality assurance, plant operations, and sales teams. Take advantage of a full lineup of [educational seminars](#) anchored by event hosts WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research, explore CheeseExpo's largest-ever [exhibit show floor](#), and celebrate excellence in dairy processing alongside the next generation of leaders.



APP STORE

GOOGLE PLAY

Attendees are invited to check out the CheeseExpo [online directory](#) and download the free [CheeseExpo mobile app](#), sponsored by WCMA member [Membrane Process & Controls](#), for exhibitor details, floor maps, and real-time schedule updates.

Join WCMA, Kerry for Dairy Food Safety Alliance Meeting



Register now for the next [Dairy Food Safety Alliance meeting](#) on Wednesday, May 27 from 10:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (CT). This hybrid meeting includes a tour of Kerry in Beloit, Wisconsin, open to the first 30 in-person registrants. All attendees will enjoy an afternoon of updates and informative presentations from food safety experts. This meeting is open to all dairy manufacturers, processors, and suppliers, regardless of WCMA membership status.

RESERVE YOUR SPACE

Thanks go to [Saldesia Corporation](#) and [Nelson-Jameson](#) for sponsoring this meeting! Additional sponsorships are [available now](#) through May 20.

April 14-16	May 12-13	May 27	June 3
CheeseExpo 2026	WCMA Federal Advocacy Fly-In	Dairy Food Safety Alliance Meeting (Hybrid)	WCMA Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors (In-Person, WCMA)

NEWS

Final Reminder: Apply by April 16 for DBIA Goat, Sheep Grants



[Applications are due Thursday](#) for Midwestern dairy businesses working with goat, sheep, or mixed milk to apply for a share of \$70,000 in grant funding through the [Dairy Business Innovation Alliance \(DBIA\)](#), a partnership between WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research (CDR). [Grants of up to \\$6,000](#) per applicant are available to support educational training, product development trials, and trade show participation. Questions may be directed to [DBIA staff](#).

[APPLY NOW](#)

Advocacy Alert: Call on Congress for DBI Investment



Now is the time to advocate for [Dairy Business Innovation Initiative \(DBI\) funding](#) as Congress weighs its 2027 spending plans. Join WCMA and your fellow members in calling for a significant boost to this impactful program, delivering millions in direct-to-business grants along with technical support and education. More than ever, the work of DBI centers is essential to our industry's stability and growth.

Taking action is simple: [click the button below](#), to complete our e-advocacy form.

[ACT NOW](#)

Advance Smart Dairy Policy in D.C. at WCMA Fly-In



[Register now for WCMA's Federal Advocacy Fly-In](#) on May 12-13 and engage directly with the policymakers and regulators shaping dairy policy nationwide.

Over [two structured days](#) in Washington, D.C., you'll participate in targeted meetings with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), and members of Congress. These briefings and networking opportunities are designed specifically for dairy processing leaders. No prior advocacy experience is required, WCMA will prepare you with the tools and insights needed for confident, productive conversations.

For questions or to reserve hotel lodging, please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs and Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

[SIGN UP NOW](#)

Join Us: Growing Global Markets for Wisconsin Cheese



Learn ways to grow your exporting business in an [all-new workshop](#), brought to you by WCMA, the Madison International Trade Association (MITA), and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's International Agribusiness Center. On April 23 from 2:00-5:00 p.m. (CT), at the Global Water Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, join industry leaders from Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, Schreiber Foods, and the Center for Dairy Research as they share insights on export trends and strategies to compete worldwide. Questions? Contact [WCMA Director of Sustainability & Grants Danica Nilsestuen](#).

[REGISTER NOW](#)

USDA Launches New Searchable Guidance Portal



The U.S. Department of Agriculture has launched a new, [searchable guidance portal](#) that centralizes current agency guidance in one easy-to-use database, improving transparency and access for stakeholders.

The portal is designed to streamline and modernize federal guidance, and USDA will continue updating it to reflect current operations across its agencies and offices. [READ MORE...](#)

Headlines

Wisconsin

- Dairy Foods: [Meister breaks ground on Nex-Gen cheese expansion project](#)
- E-Dairy News: [Wisconsin PFAS deal eases pressure on dairy plants](#)
- WKOW: [Alice in Dairyland highlights Wisconsin cheese and dairy producers](#)
- Wisconsin State Farmer: [In the Heart of Wisconsin, Widmer's keeps aged brick cheese tradition alive](#) (Featuring WCMA member Widmer's Cheese Cellars)

National & Global

- Fox News: [Chocolate, cheese, and yogurt linked to longer life in detailed study of 3 million people](#)
 - Wall Street Journal: [Fight over feta strains America's ties with Europe](#)
 - American AG Network: [Dairy Defined: cottage cheese and a boom built to last](#)
 - Dairy Reporter: [Whey's boom is flipping dairy economics on their head](#)
 - Yahoo News: [Trump administration signals it will offer broad tariff refunds](#)
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Level Up with CDR's Upcoming Safety, Processing Classes



[LEARN MORE](#)

The Center for Dairy Research continues to offer [industry-leading training opportunities](#) designed to strengthen dairy processing, safety, and product innovation. Upcoming courses include [PCQI Training](#) April 28–30 in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, providing the FDA-recognized curriculum needed to meet Preventive Controls Qualified Individual requirements under FSMA. Additional upcoming programs include the [Cultured Dairy Products](#) course, happening May 12–14, covering the science and production of yogurt, kefir, and other fermented products, and the [Buttermakers Apprenticeship Workshop](#) June 8–12, an intensive, 40-hour experience designed to help participants build skills and complete requirements toward Wisconsin licensure.

Register Now for WCMA Basic Safety Training



[REGISTER NOW](#)

Register today for WCMA's [Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors](#) and take the next step toward building a stronger, more proactive safety culture at your facility.

Scheduled for June 3, this annual, in-person course delivers practical insights and hands-on tools designed for both new and experienced employees. Participants will also receive a comprehensive training packet and a certificate of completion from Chippewa Valley Technical College and WCMA, creating a valuable record of high-quality safety instruction.

For more educational opportunities from WCMA and our partners, visit:

[WisCheeseMakers.org/Events](https://www.wischeesemakers.org/Events)

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