



# WCMA NEWS

Your source for the latest  
in dairy processing

January 2, 2025

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**SUBSCRIBER NOTE:** WCMA's e-newsletter will return to its regular weekly publishing schedule next Tuesday, January 7. Happy New Year!

## NEWS



# H5N1 Response

## FDA Begins Raw Milk Cheese Testing Program



The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has [begun a new testing effort](#) to determine whether domestic aged raw milk cheeses carry viable, active H5N1 virus. As WCMA [noted in a previous newsletter](#), FDA staff will collect a total of 300 samples of raw cow's milk cheese that has been aged for at least 60 days from warehouses and distribution hubs nationwide. [READ MORE...](#)

Each sample will consist of two packages of product, weighing at least 100 grams. Samples will first undergo PCR testing. FDA expects to notify dealers of the results of these tests within a week of sample collection. If H5N1 is detected in the first PCR test, the product will then undergo viability testing to determine whether the virus is active. Results from this additional testing are expected to be provided within a month of sample collection.

FDA will not require any action from a firm *solely* in response to a PCR positive result. If, after viability testing, a sample is found to carry live H5N1 virus, [FDA notes](#) it will "take follow-up action as warranted to protect consumers. Any samples that test positive for viable virus will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis."

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## Headlines

### Wisconsin

- SeehaferNews: [Pine River Pre-Pack getting grant money from Dairy Business Innovation Alliance](#) (Featuring WCMA member Pine River Pre-Pack)
- WSAW-TV: [An end to 2024, with a drop of cheese in Monroe](#)
- WFLD-TV: [Plymouth, Wis. holds "cheese drop" to ring in the New Year](#) (Featuring WCMA member Sartori Company)

### National & Global

- Associated Press: [Toxic fumes sicken 20 workers at New Mexico cheese plant](#)
  - KNBC-TV: [The California Artisan Cheese Festival is a piquant wonderland of dreamy tastes](#) (Featuring WCMA member Cowgirl Creamery)
  - Food & Wine: [Could cheese be the secret to better sleep?](#)
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## EVENTS & CONNECTION

### Register for CheeseCon by January 28 to Save 20 Percent



Act now to join thousands of dairy processing professionals at [CheeseCon 2025](#), set for April 15-17 in Madison, Wisconsin. Hosted by WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research, CheeseCon is the dairy processing industry's largest gathering of the year. Don't miss engaging educational seminars, exciting celebrations of industry excellence, top-notch networking, and more. [Register by January 28](#) to save 20 percent!

[REGISTER NOW](#)

### Enter U.S. Championship Cheese Contest by January 31

Enter the [2025 U.S. Championship Cheese Contest](#) by Friday, January 31 to compete for the coveted title of U.S. Champion Cheese! Entries of cheese, butter, yogurt, sour cream, and dry dairy ingredients will be evaluated by a team of expert judges March 4-6 in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Complete details, including all deadlines, rules, and entry information, are available in the [official Entry Kit](#).

[ENTER TODAY](#)



## Explore AI for Sales & Marketing in Free WCMA Webinar



Join WCMA Thursday, January 16 for a [free, members-only webinar](#) focused on ways dairy processors can leverage artificial intelligence (AI) in their sales and marketing efforts. Attendees will learn about the current landscape of AI marketing tools and the potential advantages - and drawbacks - associated with their use. Members will also have a chance to hear from their industry peers and ask questions about their experiences using AI to help drive sales.

[RSVP NOW](#)

## Upcoming WCMA Events

January 14	January 16	January 21	January 22	February 6	February 13
<a href="#">Front-Line Leadership Part A (Virtual)</a>	<a href="#">Free Webinar: AI for Sales &amp; Marketing</a>	<a href="#">Front-Line Leadership Part A (Virtual)</a>	<a href="#">Workshop: Meeting WET Test Challenges</a>	<a href="#">Health &amp; Safety Group Meeting</a>	<a href="#">Front-Line Leadership Part B (Virtual)</a>

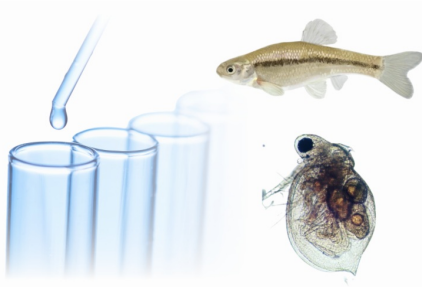
[VIEW ALL & REGISTER](#)

## EDUCATION

### Register Now for WCMA WET Test Workshop

Join the WCMA Technology Committee January 22 for a [live, hybrid workshop focused on the Whole Effluent Toxicity \(WET\) test](#) for water quality compliance. At





the request of members, WCMA has organized this deep dive into the challenges this test has posed for wastewater engineers and leaders in recent years, as well as solutions some members have found to explain WET test failures. Registration costs just \$35 per person, and all members are welcome to attend in-person or online. Thanks go to Agropur for hosting this gathering!

**JOIN WORKSHOP**

A background image showing a group of people in a classroom or workshop setting, some looking at a screen and others engaged in discussion.

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

**WisCheeseMakers.org/Events**

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