

# WCMA NEWS

Your source for the latest  
in dairy processing

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## NEWS

### Boozman, Thompson to Chair Congressional Ag Committees



Congressional committee assignments [have been announced](#), with a host of new members joining agricultural committees. The Senate Committee on Agriculture will be led by Sen. John Boozman (R-AR) with Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) serving as ranking member. In the House, Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson (R-PA 15) remains chairperson, with Rep. Angie Craig (D-MN 02) serving as ranking member. [READ MORE...](#)

### WCMA Welcomes New Class of Wisconsin Legislators



WCMA yesterday applauded the inauguration of the 2025-2026 class of state lawmakers today, including Rep. Jenna Jacobson (D-Oregon). Jacobson will serve as the [ranking Democrat on the Assembly Committee on Agriculture](#), a committee that will [again be chaired](#) by WCMA Cheese Champion awardee Rep. Travis Tranel (R-Cuba City).

Senator Patrick Testin (R-Stevens Point), also a WCMA ally, is the [new chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Revenue](#). Senator Brad Pfaff (D-Onalaska), also a previous WCMA Cheese Champion, will serve as the [ranking Democrat on that committee](#).

*Rep. Jenna Jacobson (D-Oregon, center) with WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney (right) and new WCMA Programs & Policy Manager Jake Burbach.*

Complete lists of all Wisconsin lawmakers and committees are [available online](#).

# WCMA Announces 2025 Recognition Awardees



WCMA is pleased to announce the 11 winners of its [2025 Recognition Awards!](#) These trailblazing dairy leaders will be recognized for their outstanding contributions to the dairy processing industry during the WCMA Recognition Breakfast exclusively sponsored by dsm-firmenich at [CheeseCon](#) on April 17, 2025. To join the breakfast and lock in special early bird pricing on most CheeseCon registrations, visit [CheeseCon.org](#) by January 28. [READ MORE...](#)

## USDA Issues Pre-Solicitation Notice for Dairy Products



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has [announced plans](#) to purchase cheese and fluid milk for distribution to various food nutrition assistance programs. Individual solicitations for the purchases are expected soon and will be shared in future WCMA e-newsletters. The pre-solicitation announcement and product specifications are [available online now](#).

## Headlines

### Wisconsin

- Dairy Foods: [Marieke Gouda founder achieves Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker certification](#) (Featuring WCMA member Marieke Gouda)
- Madison Magazine: [Dairy lovers rejoice — Wisconsin's first "butter barn" opens in Madison area](#) (Featuring WCMA member Royal Guernsey Creamery)
- Spectrum News 1: [Green Bay unveils a culinary adventure with the Cheese Curd Trail](#)

### National & Global

- Brownfield Ag News: [Trade war with Mexico would be detrimental to dairy](#)
- NBC News: [U.S. records its first human bird flu death](#)
- Food Business News: [Lifeway Foods spurns another Danone offer](#)

## FEATURED: WCMA NOTES

*Learn more about WCMA's programs and member 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.*

### Five Reasons Dairy's Amazing

As Americans again set a new record for enjoying cheese, the industry continues on a path of growth, and we begin a new year, it's a perfect time to reflect on what makes dairy processing so outstanding. In this



month's [WCMA Notes column](#), [WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer](#) explores five reasons the dairy processing industry is amazing, from its dedication to food safety and excellent craftsmanship, to its endless innovation and more.

[READ COLUMN](#)

## EVENTS & CONNECTION

### RSVP for Feb. 18 WCMA Dairy Sustainability Group Meeting



All WCMA members are welcome to attend the [next meeting of the WCMA Dairy Sustainability Group](#) on February 18. Join us in-person in Madison, Wisconsin or online to build your network, share ideas, and hear from industry experts on pressing sustainability issues. RSVP today and stay tuned for full agenda details and speaker information in the coming weeks!

[REGISTER NOW](#)

### Join Free WCMA Webinar on AI for Sales & Marketing



**Grace Atherton**  
WCMA



**Emily Bialkowski**  
Westby Cooperative  
Creamery



**Codi Regan Mustakas**  
Emmi Roth USA

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. Explore the current landscape of AI marketing tools, assess potential opportunities and drawbacks, and learn from peers at Westby Cooperative Creamery and Emmi Roth USA. Presenters will reserve time for Q&A with attendees.

[RSVP NOW](#)

### Sponsorships Available for January 16 Webinar

Show your support for ongoing learning and connection in the dairy processing industry as a sponsor of WCMA's free member webinars! Sponsorships are still [available through Monday, January 13 for this month's webinar](#). Have questions? Contact [WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton](#).

## 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

### Limited Space Remaining in January WCMA Front-Line Leadership



Act now to join the [January 14](#) or [January 21](#) virtual offerings of [WCMA Front-Line Leadership](#): Part A. New and seasoned supervisors alike will learn to strengthen essential leadership skills in this one-day session. Part B, offered in February, offers ways to boost staff performance, and Part C, set for March, focuses on cultivating a positive team mentality. Those who complete all three parts will receive a free Full Registration for [CheeseCon 2025](#), valued at approximately \$600.

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

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

[news@wischeesemakers.org](mailto:news@wischeesemakers.org)  
(608) 286-1001



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