



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Since March 13, WCMA has been distributing special bulletins alerting members to information and resources related to industry operations and coronavirus (COVID-19). We will continue sharing these bulletins as often news and needs warrant. Today's bulletin comes as part of WCMA's regularly scheduled Tuesday e-newsletter, so that we may also bring you other relevant industry information.

IDFA/NMPF Share "Milk Crisis Plan for USDA"

International Dairy Foods Association and National Milk Producers Federation are today sharing a ["Milk Crisis Plan for USDA,"](#) including a commodity purchase, loan programs for processors, the elimination of restrictions on the WIC program, temporary milk disposal reimbursement, producer milk balancing aid, and a reopening of the Dairy Margin Protection program.

The immediate commodity purchase called for by IDFA/NMPF is worth \$525 million, including 360 million pounds of milk, 170 million pounds of cheese, 60 million pounds of powdered milk, and 17 million pounds of butter, with dairy foods going to the food-insecure, via food banks. IDFA/NMPF also encourage USDA to offer a recourse loan program to expand availability of working capital for processors, covering basic commodities as well as specialty cheeses, Class II products, and FMMO component ingredient costs, as well as a forgivable loan program to cover ongoing operations costs, if employees are retained.

WCMA, in partnership with many leading dairy advocacy organizations, [called on USDA on April 1](#) to provide direct aid to farmers and purchase dairy products, including nonfat dry milk, butter, cheddar styles, mozzarella, and other Italian-styles of cheese, both in bulk formats and in formats purposed for use by restaurants and food service vendors.

WCMA fully supports IDFA/NMPF's plan, and will continue to work in concert with our counterparts and allies to push for immediate relief for dairy processors and producers.

Free CDR Webinar on Extended Shelf Life Tomorrow

Our partners at the Center for Dairy Research invite you to join a free webinar tomorrow (Wednesday, April 8) at 2 p.m. (CT) focused on ways to extend cheese shelf life. Topics include: holding cheese in low temperature storage, freezing cheese for storage, and high pressure processing. CDR experts will take questions during the webinar via chat. [Please register now to join.](#)

If you are unable to join live, the webinar will be recorded and available to watch on demand.

Supreme Court Overturns Evers' Election Order,

Wisconsinites Vote Today

Last night, the Wisconsin State Supreme Court overturned Governor Tony Evers' order to postpone the Spring election to June, to avoid the risk of coronavirus transmission. This means, Wisconsinites must vote today.

Per the U.S. Supreme Court, mailed absentee ballots must be postmarked no later than today (April 7) and received by 4:00 p.m. on April 13. You may also hand-deliver an absentee ballot to your polling location by 8:00 p.m. today to have it counted.

If you have not received an absentee ballot and wish to vote, [go to your polling location today](#). Polls are open statewide until 8 p.m., and they will not close until everyone in line at that time has the opportunity to vote.

WCMA Notes: Your Business Is Your Workforce

In the April edition of *WCMA Notes*, Executive Director John Umhoefer shares his perspective on dairy processors' essential and critical staff during the coronavirus pandemic.

"At this time, the dairy workforce is showing its tenacity and strength. Your team is coming to work every day and making the dairy products our nation, and the world, need. Tap the pride that you and your workers feel for being an essential industry."

[Read the full column here.](#)



WDWD Releases Coronavirus Info in Hmong, Spanish

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development has translated unemployment insurance, FMLA, and layoff notice information related to the coronavirus pandemic into Hmong and Spanish. Those resources are now publicly available at dwd.wisconsin.gov.

Coronavirus Headline News

Dairy Industry

- *Bloomberg*: [Dairy industry wants federal aid as its markets fall off 'cliff'](#)
- *KBOI-TV*: [Idaho dairy struggling amid coronavirus](#)
- *WSAW-TV*: [Wisconsin dairy cooperative encourages dairy farmers to 'quit' industry](#)
- *Quartz*: [COVID-19 has U.S. cheese and milk industries on the brink](#)
- *The Motley Fool*: [Kraft Heinz reduces production at three plants, but increases output of macaroni and cheese](#)
- *RiverTown.net*: [Ellsworth Cheese Curd Festival canceled over COVID-19](#)
- *BBC*: [Why Canadian farmers are dumping milk](#)

Wisconsin

- *WTMJ-TV*: [Wisconsin COVID-19 projections updated, shows earlier peak date and lower death rate](#)
- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Wisconsin braces for a difficult week as coronavirus cases and deaths mount -- and some itch to be free of stay-at-home order](#)
- *Reuters*: [Long lines and drive-through voting as Wisconsinites brave coronavirus at the polls](#)

National/International

- USA Today: [Kroger to limit shoppers entering stores](#)
- CNN Business: [Walmart limits the number of customers in stores](#)
- Politico: [Consensus starts to grow on 'Phase Four' of coronavirus relief](#)
- Yahoo Money: [175 million Americans will start receiving funds 'this week or early next.'](#)
[Larry Kudlow says](#)
- FOX News: [Trump hints at cutting WHO funding, says they 'really blew it'](#)
- ABC News: [CDC head downplays COVID-19 models, says deaths will be 'much lower' than projected](#)

Other Coronavirus Resources

WCMA will continue to provide links to both new and essential coronavirus resources for members in bulletins. We have also created a page on [WisCheeseMakers.org](#) with links to materials detailing employee safety best practices, operations guidance, federal and state support programs, and state orders impacting the dairy industry.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact WCMA staff. We are always here for you.

Key Contacts:

- WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer: jumhoefer@wischeesemakers.org or 608-225-7130
- WCMA Communications, Education, and Policy Director Rebekah Sweeney: rsweeney@wischeesemakers.org or 608-386-3012

WCMA SIGNATURE EVENTS

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP CHEESE CONTEST

MARCH 3-5, 2020 | MADISON, WISCONSIN, USA



2020

Champion Cheese Live, Online Auction April 24

Challenging times have brought change and delay for CheeseExpo, but Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association would like to keep one tradition alive in 2020. On Friday, April 24, we'll recognize the great effort, the mastery of cheesemakers – Gold Medal winners in the 2020 World Championship Cheese Contest – with the Auction of Champion Cheeses.

Mark your calendars for 2:00 p.m. on Friday, April 24 to witness a live, on-line auction of the champion cheeses at Koning Maple Lane Event Center in Monroe, Wisconsin executed by Tim Slack and Dave Koning. A few days from now, we'll [open the auction website](#) in advance of the event, so

you can see the items for bid. And a few days before the live event, we'll encourage bidders to register on the [bidding website](#), and we'll even announce a time when early birds can begin placing silent bids before the live auction.

The Auction of Champion Cheeses provides crucial support to the World Championship Cheese Contest, funds our scholarship-winning students, and has built our menu of supervisor and manager training programs at WCMA. It's always been a chance for supplier partners and processors to thank and support the cheese companies that make this industry famous.

A live, online auction on Friday, April 24 will be a first – and we'll supplement the auctioneer's live action with WCMA staff offering Facebook Live color commentary and thanks in real time at the Koning Maple Lane Event Center. It's a bit of CheeseExpo, a bit of normalcy, in challenging times. We hope you'll join us and consider bidding on the world's finest cheese.



CheeseExpo Registration Refunds, Exhibitor/Sponsor Information Coming Soon

This week, WCMA staff will be emailing a CheeseExpo Memo and Action Form to all CheeseExpo exhibitors, sponsors and advertisers detailing options available for 2020 CheeseExpo purchases. Responses will be due Thursday, April 23.

WCMA staff will also be emailing individuals and businesses to refund 2020 CheeseExpo attendee registration fees.

If you have questions, please contact [WCMA Events Director Judy Keller](#).

OTHER HEADLINE NEWS

- *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation:* [Canada notifies U.S. and Mexico it has ratified revised NAFTA](#)
- *Progressive Dairy:* [Bankruptcy judge to approve Dean sale](#)
- *Brownfield Ag News:* [February cheese, butter production up on year](#)
- *Agri-Pulse:* [FCC moves ahead to establish rural America 5G fund](#)

STAY CONNECTED

Thanks for subscribing to WCMA's weekly electronic communications, which focus in alternating weeks on industry news and industry events. WCMA extends this benefit to all member employees; let us know if we should [add your colleagues](#) to our mailing list.

To share feedback on WCMA newsletter content, please contact [WCMA Communications, Education, and Policy Director Rebekah Sweeney](#).

