



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION & RESOURCES

WCMA has been distributing regular bulletins alerting members to information and resources related to industry operations and coronavirus (COVID-19). We will continue sharing these messages 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.

Reduced Supplies of CO2 Gas Threaten Dairy, Food and Beverage Packaging

Two dairy processors and Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association joined a Wisconsin Department of Agriculture call today regarding concern for diminished supplies of food grade carbon dioxide gas (CO2). Dairy packaging, meatpackers, and food and beverage companies in Wisconsin are facing rising surcharges, limited allocations and rising prices for CO2 as the common source for the gas, ethanol production plants, are idled across the U.S. Forty-seven ethanol plants in the country produce and sell CO2 and 17 are closed due to reduced demand for fuel. In Wisconsin, three of the six ethanol plants that capture CO2 are off-line.

Dairy participants confirmed reduced supplies, longer delivery time and rising costs, and noted that a lack of CO2 to gas-flush packaged cheese could idle cheese processing plants and reduce retail supplies. WDATCP is working to raise awareness of this concern with USDA and would welcome additional information from the dairy industry. Contact [WCMA's John Umhoefer](#) with information on how CO2 availability is impacting your business.

USDA Food Box Proposals Due Friday, Register Now for Informational Webinar Tomorrow

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced this afternoon it will host an informational webinar tomorrow, (Wednesday, April 29) at 1 p.m. (CT) for food manufacturers and processors, farmers, and shippers interested in submitting a proposal for the new [Farmers to Families Food Box program](#). [Register now to participate.](#)

The [request for proposals and associated FAQ are available online](#) now. Proposals are due on Friday, May 1. Please let [WCMA staff](#) know if you have questions.

Dairy Food Safety Alliance to Host Webinar Tomorrow

WCMA, together with its partners at the Center for Dairy Research and Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, will host a free Dairy Food Safety Alliance webinar tomorrow (Wednesday, April 29) from 12-1 p.m. A

webinar agenda is now [available here](#). Dairy Food Safety Alliance presenters, including CDR's Marianne Smukowski, DFW's Adam Brock, and WCMA staff will also field pre-submitted questions.

This free webinar is not open to the media. RSVP to [WCMA Office and Member Services Manager Sara Schmidt](#) with your interest in joining and include any questions you may wish to ask. You'll receive access information to this Zoom webinar (or telephone call-in option) in reply. Please note: this webinar is nearly full. WCMA plans to make the webinar available on its [COVID-19 resources page](#) following its conclusion.

Coronavirus Headline News

Dairy Industry

- *National Public Radio*: [Amish cheese maker moves to online sales - without the internet](#)
- *Wall Street Journal*: [She polices social distancing at Kraft's mac-and-cheese factory amid coronavirus](#)
- *Wall Street Journal*: [Coronavirus spreads to farms, packaged-food plants](#)
- *Daily News*: [New York aims to buy dairy and farm products, distribute to food banks and needy](#)
- *Facebook*: [Pine River Pre-Pack donates 8,000 pounds of dairy products to area pantries](#)
- *KVII-TV*: [Southwest Cheese donates 600 pounds of cheese to Clovis school meals](#)

Wisconsin

- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Evers allows more businesses to reopen, but event cancellations continue](#)
- *WKOW-TV*: [Evers to reopen some state parks and forests](#)
- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [A week after Evers unveiled plan to reopen, there's little clarity on benchmarks](#)
- *Wisconsin Public Radio*: [FEMA working with state to deliver supplies for COVID-19 response, but barriers remain](#)
- *WJFW-TV*: [Grocers could see meat shortages by end of the week](#)

National/International

- *USA Today*: [Trump plans to order meat processing plants to stay open during coronavirus](#)
 - *Associated Press*: [U.S. reopening is coming, but 'normal' still a ways off](#)
 - *CBS News*: [Judge blocks 30-day extension of Illinois stay-at-home order](#)
 - *Reuters*: [Pandemic slams meat sector](#)
 - *FOX Business*: [Small business rescue loans over \\$2M will be audited before forgiveness](#)
 - *Wall Street Journal*: [Coronavirus unemployment often pays more than work](#)
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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
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Championship Cheese Auction Raises \$93K for Educational Opportunities, Scholarships

Dairy industry suppliers, marketers and processors joined in the first-ever online Championship Cheese Auction last Friday, **raising more than \$93,000** to support WCMA's Championship Cheese Contests, scholarship programs and educational workshops.

WCMA thanks these bidders for their generous support: Great Lakes Cheese Co., Inc., Kelley Supply, Inc., Chr. Hansen, T.C. Jacoby and Co., Inc., Custom Fabricating and Repair, Inc., Nelson Jameson, Inc., ProActive Solutions USA, LLC, TC Transcontinental, Complete Filtration Resources, Dairy Connection, Inc., Masters Gallery Foods, Decatur Dairy, APT- Advanced Process Technologies, R. Mueller Service & Equipment Company, Loos Machine Automation, Wisconsin Aging & Grading Cheese, Milk Specialties Global, Vivolac Cultures Corporation, B-Team, Cheese Market News, ProAmpac, and ALPMA USA, and DSM Food Specialties.



INTERNATIONAL TRADE

USMCA to Take Effect July 1

The Trump administration this week announced the United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement (USMCA) will take effect July 1. Meanwhile, administration officials and industry leaders are **voicing concern that implementation of new trade guidelines will take additional time.**

For more on international trade developments, see these news articles:

- *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation:* **[U.S. seals the deal on USMCA, says trade agreement can now take effect July 1](#)**
- *Reuters:* **[Mexican president welcomes July start of USMCA trade pact](#)**
- *Politico:* **[New British ambassador urges swift U.S.-U.K. trade negotiations](#)**
- *Reuters:* **[U.S. should avoid phased approach to trade deal with Kenya](#)**

INDUSTRY RESOURCES

Food Fraud, Vulnerability Assessment Tools Now Available on WisCheeseMakers.org

WCMA is pleased to share a **[new food fraud standard operating procedure template and fraud vulnerability assessment](#)** from industry consultants Jim Mueller and Larry Bell, who led our Artisan Dairy Producer Food Safety Initiative. WCMA has also added a Wisconsin Preventive Control Checklist, offered by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, to our array of free food safety tools on **[WisCheeseMakers.org](#)**.

WDATCP Offers Dairy-Specific e-Newsletters

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) invites WCMA members to sign up for its newsletter offerings, specific to certain industry groups.

Click on any or all of the following links to sign up for WDATCP messages, delivered direct to your email inbox, designed for:

- [Dairy Plant Field Representatives](#)
- [Dairy Plants](#)
- [Dairy Plants with Batch Pasteurization](#)

OTHER NEWS HEADLINES

- *Food Dive:* [Bankrupt Borden Dairy and Dean Foods bondholders propose merger](#)
- *Wisconsin State Journal:* [Ousted agriculture secretary Brad Pfaff to run for State Senate](#)

WisCheeseMakers.org

