



WCMA NEWS

Your source for the latest
in dairy processing

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NEWS

House Advances Long-Awaited Farm Bill



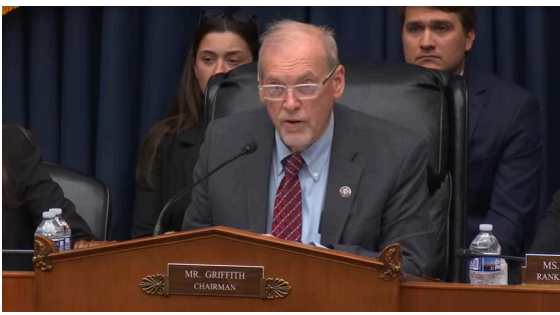
WCMA applauds the U.S. House of Representatives work last week to approve a long-awaited, new [five-year Farm Bill](#) by a bipartisan 224-200 vote following late-night debate and last-minute changes.

The bill includes several WCMA member priorities, including:

- An expansion of dairy nutrition incentive projects to encourage purchases of milk, cheese, yogurt, and cultured products, and increased funding authorization;
- Permanent authorization of Mandatory Cost Surveys within the Federal Milk Marketing Orders system;
- Strengthened trade promotion programs with increased funding and protections for common food names;
- Permanent authorization of the Dairy Forward Pricing Program;
- Support for serving whole and 2% milk in school breakfast programs following enactment of the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act; and
- Via amendment, a measure ensuring all four Dairy Business Innovation Initiative centers are treated equitably. (As a reminder, the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives program was permanently authorized in the 2018 Farm Bill and requires only annual appropriations.)

As the Senate continues the legislative process, WCMA will robustly advocate for these provisions. Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Health Reviews Food Regulation Proposals



On April 29, the U.S. House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health held a hearing titled [**“Healthier America: Legislative Proposals on the Regulation and Oversight of Food,”**](#) examining 28 bills that could significantly reshape federal food regulation, labeling, and safety oversight. The discussion focused on modernizing FDA authorities and enhancing transparency for consumers.

Key themes included potential reforms to the “Generally Recognized as Safe” (GRAS) pathway, increased scrutiny of food chemicals and additives, updated labeling requirements, stronger safety standards for infant formula and baby foods, dietary supplement oversight, enforcement of food identity standards, and import safety protections.

Among the proposals discussed were two priority bills for WCMA. The [**DAIRY PRIDE Act \(H.R. 8414\)**](#) would strengthen enforcement of dairy standards of identity, ensuring terms like “milk,” “cheese,” and “yogurt” are reserved for products derived from real dairy. The [**CURD \(Codifying Useful Regulatory Definitions\) Act \(H.R. 1394\)**](#) would establish a federal definition for “natural cheese,” improving clarity for consumers and consistency for manufacturers.



Chad Hamilton (pictured) of WCMA member Sargento testified in support of the CURD Act, underscoring the importance of clear, science-based standards and consistent national labeling rules.

WCMA will continue to monitor these proposals and keep members informed as they move through the legislative process.

Organic Dairy Lawsuits Seek FMMO Exemption



A coalition of organic dairy processors and farmers has filed [**multiple federal lawsuits**](#) seeking exemption from the Federal Milk Marketing Order (FMMO) system and compensation for what they argue are more than \$60 million in wrongly collected payments over the past six years. The Coalition for Organic Dairy Exemption (CODE), which includes WCMA member CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley, argues that the current FMMO structure forces organic dairy to subsidize conventional dairy products, despite organic milk operating under distinct production, pricing, and market conditions.

USTR Report Highlights Protection of Common Food Names



Last Thursday, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative released its [2026 Special 301 Report](#), noting meaningful progress in protecting U.S. dairy producers' ability to use widely recognized, generic food names like "parmesan" and "feta" in global markets. The report highlights recent trade efforts to push back against restrictive European Union geographical indication (GI) policies that limit fair competition. WCMA remains engaged with federal partners on this issue to ensure reliable market access for U.S. dairy exporters.

Apply Now for Wisconsin Agricultural Road Improvement Grants



The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is accepting applications now for a [new round of Agricultural Roads Improvement Program \(ARIP\) grants](#). Announced April 29, this round will distribute \$70 million to support local road and culvert projects that help farmers and processors move products efficiently, with applications due June 29.

This opportunity builds on \$50 million in ARIP funding awarded to 29 projects earlier this spring - 20 of which directly benefit Wisconsin's dairy industry.

WCMA encourages members to connect with local elected officials to explore project opportunities and advocate for infrastructure investments that support dairy processing growth statewide. Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

USDA Awards Contracts for Cheddar, Pepper Jack, String Cheese

The U.S. Department of Agriculture this week announced [contract awards](#) to WCMA members Associated Milk Producers, Inc., Masters Gallery Foods, and Pacific Cheese for delivery of nearly two million pounds of cheese, including cheddar, pepper jack, string cheese, and kosher cheese, for nutrition programs. A list of [open USDA solicitations](#) and information on how to become an [approved vendor](#) is available [online](#).

Headlines

Wisconsin

- WTAQ-AM: [Maria Woldt named director of Dairy Innovation Hub](#)
- Brownfields Ag News: [Wisconsin loosens restrictions on dairy cattle movement](#)

National & Global

- Associated Press: [Push for raw milk intensifies across the US, despite illness outbreaks and scientists' warnings](#)
- Bloomberg: [How Chobani turned Greek yogurt into an American refrigerator staple](#) (Featuring WCMA member CoBank)
- eDairyNews: [Lactalis chief warns Europe is hurting its dairy edge](#)

- AgWeek: [More dairy farms would be eligible for assistance under bill passed by Minnesota House and Senate](#)
- CT Insider: [CT's struggling dairy farms may get boost from tax credits, grants: 'Save an industry'](#)

EVENTS & CONNECTION



WCMA Golf Outing & Trap Shoot Registration to Open May 19; Sponsorships Available Now at WisCheeseMakers.org

Registration for the [WCMA Golf Outing & Trap Shoot](#) opens Tuesday, May 19 at 10:00 a.m. (CT), with the event set for Wednesday, July 22 in central Wisconsin. Space sells out in minutes - so set an alarm to secure your spot early for a day of networking and fun, featuring golf at five area courses, a pickleball tournament, and trapshooting. All participants will enjoy a complimentary lunch, followed by the [Amcor](#) Social Hour and a buffet dinner to close out the day.

Connect with more than 800 industry pros via an impactful sponsorship, available now at WisCheeseMakers.org. Premier sponsors are eligible for reserved golfer spots if secured by May 15.

Questions? Please contact the [WCMA Events Team](#).

WCMA Webinar

Trends in Cheese Sales

Save the Date: Member Webinar June 11 on Cheese Sales Trends

Consumer preferences, economic pressures, and retail strategies are constantly shifting - and those shifts can have a direct impact on dairy processors' bottom line. [Register now](#) to join WCMA on Thursday, June 11 at 1:00 p.m. (CT) for a free, members-only webinar focused on current trends in cheese sales, offering the latest data and concise, thoughtful insights to help WCMA members stay competitive and spot new growth opportunities.

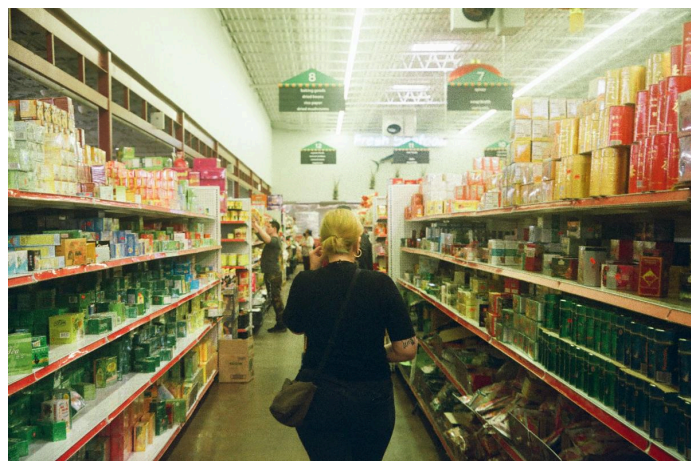
Upcoming WCMA Events

May 12-13	May 27	June 11	July 7
Federal Advocacy Fly-In	Dairy Food Safety Alliance Meeting (Hybrid)	Free Webinar: Trends in Cheese Sales	Free Webinar: Supplier Roundtable

FEATURED: FOOD SAFETY

Learn more about WCMA's programs & services in this special rotating section! This week, we spotlight WCMA's dairy food safety resources and programming.

New York Lawmakers Advance GRAS Legislation



State-level momentum around food additive oversight and GRAS (Generally Recognized as Safe) ingredients continues to build. In New York, lawmakers late last month [advanced legislation](#) aimed at increasing transparency around the use of certain food additives, including those that are self-affirmed as GRAS. If signed into law by Governor Kathy Hochul, it would require companies to report “self-affirmed” GRAS substances to the state’s Department of Agriculture and Markets, creating a publicly accessible database.

The bill would also prohibit the sale of foods containing certain additives, including FD&C Red 3, potassium bromate, and propylparaben, while targeting other substances companies currently deem safe through internal GRAS determinations.

If enacted, the measure would take effect one year after signing, though bans on specified additives would be implemented more quickly to allow for inventory depletion. Supporters say the proposal would enhance transparency and consumer safety, while some analyses suggest it could contribute to higher food costs.

USDA Announces Reorg Plans, Opening Safety Center in Iowa



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) last week announced a reorganization of its Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) aimed at modernizing operations and improving efficiency. As part of this effort, USDA will establish a new National Food Safety Center (NFSC) in Urbandale, Iowa, which will serve as the primary hub for FSIS administrative, technical, and support functions. [READ MORE..](#)

RSVP Today for Dairy Food Safety Alliance Meeting May 27



[RSVP today](#) for the next Dairy Food Safety Alliance meeting, set for Wednesday, May 27 from 10:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (CT). This hybrid event will feature a small-group tour of Kerry in Beloit, Wisconsin, along with presentations and updates on microbiological testing, sanitation validation, and more from food safety experts and state regulators. Thanks go to our generous event sponsors: [bioMérieux, Inc.](#), [Nelson-Jameson](#), and [Saldesia](#).

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Learn more and get involved!
WisCheeseMakers.org

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