

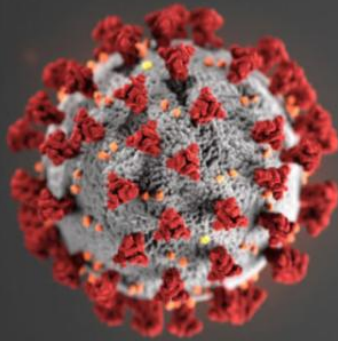


WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



COVID INFORMATION AND RESOURCES



Wisconsin Food, Dairy Workers Proposed for Third, Not Second Wave of Vaccinations

The Wisconsin State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee (SDMAC) vaccine distribution subcommittee this morning approved [draft recommendations](#), further breaking down Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance, indicating **there will now be a Phase 1B vaccination group and a Phase 1C vaccination group**. These groups will be eligible to receive doses after Wisconsin's 320,000 front-line health care workers and 22,000 people living in assisted living facilities and nursing homes have been served.

SDMAC's **Phase 1B recommendations do not include food processing workers**, but instead would direct vaccinations to the following groups:

- Wisconsinites aged 70 or older (682,451 people)
- Police and fire personnel (27,880 people)
- Educators (160,000 people)
- Additional health care personnel, including cleaning staff and IT (25,000 people)
- Inmates and group housing (117,000 people)
- Mink farmers (300 people)

State officials indicate that **Phase 1C will likely include food processing workers** and others in close-quarters manufacturing jobs, grocery store staff, public transit workers, as well as people aged 65 and older and adults with high-risk medical conditions.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (WDHS) and Governor Tony Evers will make final determinations within the next few weeks, though WDHS officials have announced, at minimum, they will advance plans to vaccinate [police and fire personnel](#), with distribution to begin as early as next week. As of Monday, WDHS reported having administered more than 150,000 vaccine doses, including 11,000 second (final) doses. A [tracking site](#), launched in early January, offers updates each Monday.

Public comments on the SDMAC recommendations are being accepted via [email](#). WCMA maintains regular communications with WDHS and the Evers Administration, advocating for the earliest-

Operation Warp Speed to Release More Vaccines in Storage, Following Governors' Request

Operation Warp Speed (OWS) officials today agreed to send states additional coronavirus vaccine doses, as requested by Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker, California Governor Gavin Newsom, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, Kansas Governor Laura Kelly, and Washington Governor Jay Inslee in a [letter](#) sent late last week.

Roughly 50 percent of prepared vaccine doses are currently being held in federal storage, according to an OWS plan to mitigate potential challenges in vaccine manufacturing and distribution.

Other States Share Details on Vaccination Plans

Illinois

Late last week, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker revealed [new details](#) about the state's next phase of vaccinations, noting that Phase 1B will begin when "Phase 1A is substantially complete." Illinois' Phase 1B includes food processing workers, but the group includes 3.2 million Illinois residents, meaning that it could take months to complete vaccinations.

South Dakota

South Dakota state officials have released details on its [vaccination distribution groups](#), with food processing workers included in Group E. The state is currently vaccinating Group C, which includes health care workers, long-term care facility residents, correctional officers and other first responders.

The state has also launched a site detailing [where to find vaccine providers](#), with more information to be added when doses are more broadly available.

Minnesota Launches Vaccine Tracking Site

The Minnesota Department of Health on Monday launched an [online dashboard](#) for tracking COVID-19 vaccine distribution statewide. The dashboard will offer daily updates on the number of doses of the vaccine that have been administered, and the number of doses that have been shipped to Minnesota.

Wisconsin Senate GOP Approves Compromise Coronavirus Package, Gains Evers' Support

Wisconsin State Senate today approved a [substitute amendment](#) to the Assembly Bill 1, a COVID-19 package proposed by Assembly Republicans. The initial bill failed to garner support from Senate Republicans, or Governor Tony Evers.

The new, pared-back Senate proposal retains strong civil liability protections from COVID-19 suits, but preserves an employer's right to determine its own vaccination policies, two priorities for which [WCMA advocated](#).

The Senate proposal also preserves the Governor's right to direct future federal COVID-19 aid to the state without legislative approval, health officers' rights to continue emergency orders and set vaccination orders, and school districts' rights to offer virtual education without school board votes.

Senate Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu (R-Oostburg) reportedly directly negotiated the details on the

amendment with the Evers Administration. Governor Tony Evers released a statement moments ago noting his gratitude for LeMahieu's focus on "common ground" and calling the bill a "good faith effort in compromise and bipartisanship." Evers called on Assembly Republican leaders to approve the bill as amended and send it to his desk for signing without delay.

Assembly Speaker Robin Vos (R-Rochester) has yet to comment on the package as amended.



WCMA Policy Committee Advocates for Member Priorities in COVID-19 Bill, Other Legislation

Members of the WCMA Policy Committee are advocating for the dairy processing industry at the federal and state level, and this week met with Wisconsin state lawmakers to detail WCMA priorities in pending COVID-19 legislation and for the legislative session ahead. We thank members for their impactful engagement, and welcome all members to [join in this effort](#).

Also this week, WCMA outlined policy priorities in a [letter to state lawmakers](#). The letter notes broad industry support for civil liability protection against COVID-19 lawsuits, preservation of employers' rights to set vaccination policies, grants for businesses that have retrofitted facilities and changed operations to protect employees from COVID-19, and additional support for the Food Security Initiative. It also details WCMA support of truth-in-dairy labeling legislation, investments in dairy exporting initiatives, dairy processing innovation and modernization grants, support for high-value grazing and organic dairy initiatives, and continued funding for the Dairy Innovation hub and Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

WCMA Salutes Critical and Essential Workers

Throughout 2021, WCMA is saluting its members' essential and critical workforce,

Adriana Pineda
Lead Packaging
Staff Member
Crave Brothers
Farmstead Cheese LLC

Salute
TO THE DAIRY PROCESSING
INDUSTRY'S CRITICAL
& ESSENTIAL WORKFORCE

people who daily demonstrate their dedication to the mission of feeding the world delicious, nutritious dairy products, even in this challenging time.

This week, we are shining a spotlight on Adriana Pineda, Lead Packaging Worker at Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese. Adriana sets bar for productivity in the plant, and is wholly committed to safe. Thank you for your important work!

Watch for WCMA salutes in Tuesday e-newsletters, our printed membership directory (coming soon!), and on our Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn pages.

Have an employee or team you'd like us to celebrate? Just contact [WCMA staff](#).

Coronavirus Headline News

Dairy Industry

- Dairy Herd Management: [CFAP 3 is coming, is it needed?](#)
- WFRV-TV: [Wisconsin's dairy farmers looking for change in 2021](#)
- Wisconsin Public Radio: [Wisconsin food bank leaders applaud continuation of federal pandemic aid](#)
- Dairy Herd Management: [High demand fails to offset national butterfat surplus](#)

Wisconsin

- Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: [Wisconsin's COVID-19 case and death averages are on the rise again after dipping to recent low points](#)
- WLUK-TV: [Wisconsin health officials expect new coronavirus strain, after discovery in Minnesota](#)
- WAOW-TV: [Federal officials warn about COVID-19 vaccine scams in Wisconsin](#)

National/International

- CNN: [As the world begins its vaccination push, delayed rollouts draw criticism and concern](#)
- Washington Post: [Warp Speed will urge vaccination of those 65 and older, and those with repexisting conditions](#)

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



FDA Clarifies Cheese Types Covered in Proposed “Additional Traceability Records” Rule

Today, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration [offered language](#) clarifying the cheeses involved in its newly-proposed rule on “Requirements for Additional Traceability Records for Certain Foods.” FDA proposed this added traceability paperwork for certain foods on September 23, and in December pushed the deadline for public comments on these [proposed regulations](#) to February 22, 2021.

FDA clarified that hard cheeses – cheeses with less than 39 percent moisture, such as cheddar, Romano and parmesan – are not included in the requirements of the new, proposed regulation. FDA also improved its initial description of cheeses facing this regulation. Instead of simply stating, “Includes all soft ripened or semi-soft cheeses, and fresh soft cheeses that are made with pasteurized or unpasteurized milk,” FDA has added more detail and examples.

The new description of cheeses affected by this proposed regulation reads: “Includes all cheeses made with either pasteurized or unpasteurized milk, other than hard cheeses. Includes soft ripened/semi-soft cheeses (e.g., brie, camembert, feta, mozzarella, taleggio, blue, brick, fontina, monterey jack, and muenster) and soft unripened/fresh soft cheeses (e.g., cottage, chevre/goat, cream, mascarpone, ricotta, queso blanco, queso fresco, queso de crema, and queso de puna).”

Industry comments on “Requirements for Additional Traceability Records for Certain Foods” can be filed at [Regulations.gov](#), and this is Docket ID: FDA-2014-N-0053.

Register Now for Free DBIA Exporting Seminar

WCMA invites you and valued members of your team to join in a [free Dairy Business Innovation Alliance seminar](#) on Tuesday, January 19, focused on [how to launch and grow an dairy exporting initiative](#). The seminar will feature general information, breakout sessions, and interviews with processors who will share their experiences and lessons learned. [Register today!](#)

A [recording](#) of the January 5 webinar centered on economic development financing is now available online.

DBIA Webinar 7

Economic Development Financing



Connect With Potential Export Partners in Canada

Wisconsin-based WCMA members are invited to [register by Friday, January 22](#) to connect with export partners in Canada via an upcoming [Virtual Trade Venture](#) hosted by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) on March 22-26.

WEDC will handle all technology and scheduling, so participants can focus on showing up ready to make their pitch and determining if the potential partner is a good fit. A country briefing offered at the beginning of the program will go over elements of Canada's culture and business environment, expectations and strategies for success.

USDA Issues Solicitations for Butter, String Cheese

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is now accepting bids for the purchase of [5 million pounds of butter](#) for delivery through spring 2021. Bids are due Thursday, January 21 by 1 p.m. (CST), and questions may be directed to [USDA staff](#).

USDA is also accepting bids for the purchase of [75,600 pounds of string cheese](#) for delivery in April and June 2021. Bids are due Friday, January 22 by 1 p.m. (CST), and questions may be directed to [USDA staff](#).

A complete listing of USDA open solicitations is [available online](#).

Register Now for Webinar on Common Food Names

Learn about geographical indications (GI) and usage rights during a free [webinar](#) hosted in part by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection on Wednesday, January 27 at 1 p.m. (CST). Shawna Morris, Senior Director at the Consortium for Common Food Names, will detail the current restrictions of GIs in labeling.

IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *Wisconsin State Farmer*: [NMPF calls for more equitable Class I mover](#)
- *Wisconsin Ag Connection*: [Wisconsin lost just 360 dairy herds in 2020](#)

- WFRV-TV: [Wisconsin's dairy farmers looking for change in 2021](#)
- WTMJ-TV: [First all-female dairy farm class at Wisconsin college](#)
- Sheperd Express: [The big cheese boasts aged cheddars 'so mature they've gone through graduate school'](#)

National/International

- Hoard's Dairyman: [The roadmap to dairy's full-fat approval](#)
- Politico: [Trump's final trade battles create an early test for Biden](#)
- Brownfield Ag News: [McKinney says Canada is violating dairy provisions of USMCA](#)

SIGNATURE EVENTS



Register Now for CheeseExpo Global Online

Keynote presentations at [CheeseExpo Global Online](#) April 6-8, 2021 will showcase dairy industry CEOs and top marketing experts, offering attendees an in-depth look at timely industry opportunities, challenges and consumer trends.

Register before February 1 and receive a \$100 discount on CheeseExpo Global Online's daily keynote with informative seminars, Ideas Showcase talks, exhibits and "spotlight" closing events each day.

Keynote presentations will kick off each day's official programming from noon to 12:55 p.m. (CDT), including:

April 6: **The RELCO® Opening Keynote: Cheese Industry CEOs Look to the Future**

This online panel will feature David Ahlem, CEO and President of Hilmar Cheese Company; Emile Cordeau, CEO of Agropur and Carl Colizza, President and CEO of Saputo Dairy USA. These leading cheese producers in the U.S. and globally will reflect on 2020, but focus on learnings and strengths that will guide dairy into the future after the largest global disruption in generations. Phil Plourd, President of Blimling and Associates, will moderate and guide this discussion, hosted by RELCO®, a Koch Separation Solutions Company.

April 7: **The DSM Food Specialties USA Keynote Event: WCMA Recognition Awards**

A host of industry leaders earned our thanks and recognition in 2020 and 2021, and we'll highlight our Cheese Industry Champions, Distinguished Service Award winners, Vanguard Award cheesemakers and Babcock Award educators. Join the ceremony and applaud these greats as they acknowledge their awards in video presentations. Hosted by DSM Food Specialties USA.

April 8: **The Amcor Flexibles North America Keynote Address: Moving On – Trends that will Change the Way You Do Dairy**

An energetic keynote address from Paul Ziemnisky, Executive Vice President of Global Innovation Partnerships with Dairy Management Inc. and Laurie Demerit, CEO of The Hartman Group, will explore the consumer and sales channel environment in a marketplace emerging from COVID-19. Data can provide a look back at the shock and disruptions of 2020, but most importantly, research and information offer look forward. Our keynoters will address topics including:

- How have consumers acted and reacted in the last 12 months?
- Which of those tendencies and trends will carry into the future – how will they transform the future for dairy?

- What new business models and actions are emerging in the restaurant trade and grocery trade that may reflect the impact from 2020, and change how and where consumers enjoy cheese and dairy products?
- What consumer trends and new behaviors are emerging in in-home dining, in snacking?
- How has major growth in e-commerce impacted dairy and where is that trend headed?
- What dairy products, new cheese products, might fit with changes in the future?

Amcor Flexibles North America hosts this final keynote event of CheeseExpo Global Online.

Visit CheeseExpoGO.org by February 1 to receive a \$100 discount at CheeseExpo Global Online.

REGISTER NOW

EDUCATION



WCMA Opens Registration for Leadership Trainings

WCMA has opened registration for early 2021 offerings of its popular Front-Line Leadership Training program. All trainings will be offered remotely via a digital platform facilitating small group and partner discussions, interactive polling features and participant chat.

WCMA Front-Line Leadership Training - Part A, which offers a self-assessment on essential leadership skills and practical methods for improvement, will be held on Tuesday, February 23.

REGISTER NOW

WCMA Front-Line Leadership Training - Part B is set for Thursday, March 18, and will focus on ways to positively assess and impact staff performance.

REGISTER NOW

WCMA Front-Line Leadership Training - Part C focuses on how to build a team, and will be held Thursday, April 15.

REGISTER NOW

Classes are limited to 22 participants. They are offered à la carte, and may be taken in any order. Tuition for each course is \$135 per person.

Other Industry Trainings

WCMA is proud to host and promote opportunities for industry-specific training and enrichment. Here's a look at some of those upcoming events:

- January 26, 2021: [Cheesemaking 101 What a Cheesemaker Should Know On Demand | Center for Dairy Research](#)
- February 1-5, 2021: [Food Defense and FSPCA Vulnerability Assessment Training | Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin](#)
- February 10-12, 2021: [HACCP Workshop | UW-River Falls](#)
- February 18-19, 2021: [Pasteurization Short Course | UW-River Falls](#)
- February 23-24, 2021: [Process Cheese Course On Demand | Center for Dairy Research](#)
- March 1-5, 2021: [Cheesemaker's Short Course | UW-River Falls](#)



WCMA SCHOLARSHIPS

Apply for WCMA Scholarships Totaling \$15,000

WCMA is now accepting applications for five student scholarships worth a total of \$15,000.

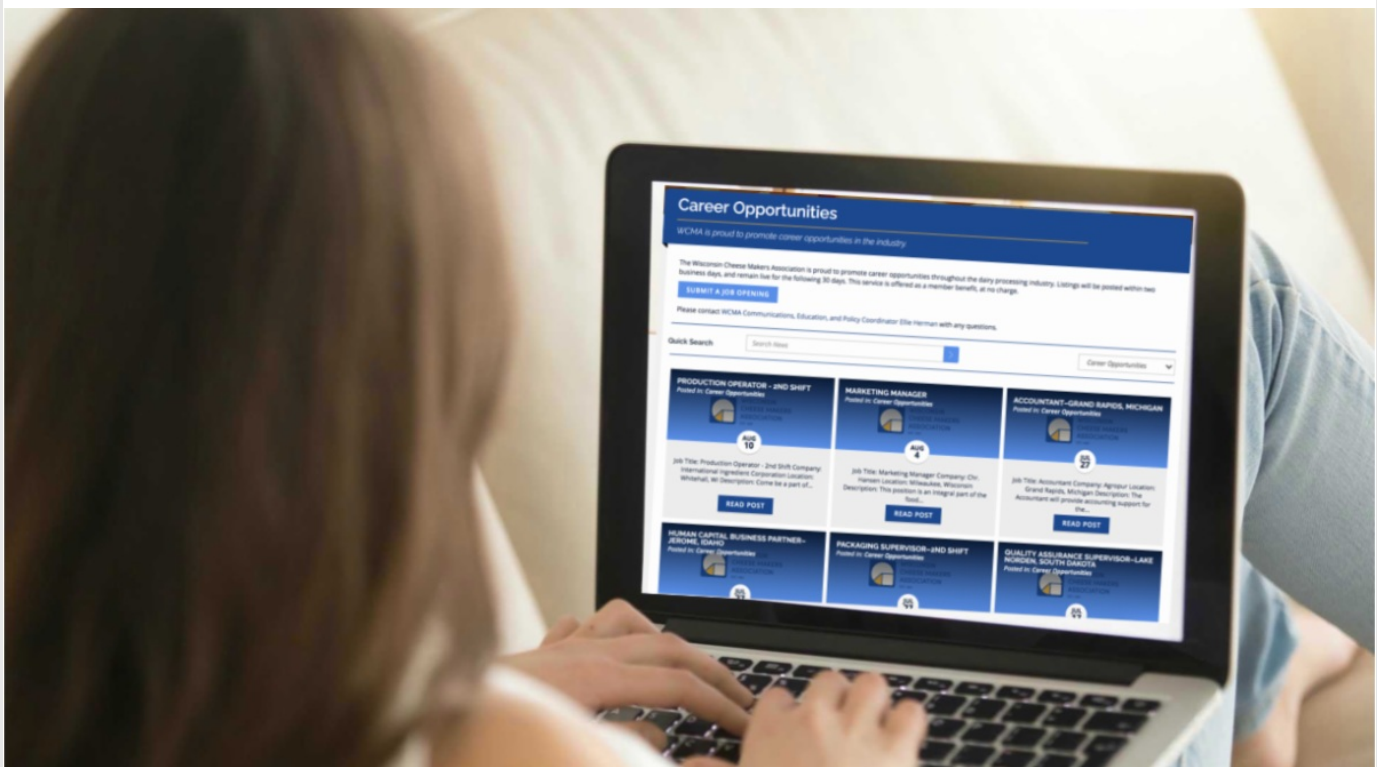
In 2021, two students will be awarded the [WCMA Myron P. "Mike" Dean Cheese Industry Student Scholarship](#), worth \$3,000 each. Any employee or child of an employee of a WCMA dairy manufacturing, processing, or marketing member company may apply.

Employees or children of employees at WCMA supplier member companies may apply for the [WCMA Cheese Industry Supplier Student Scholarship](#). Three students will receive scholarship awards of \$3,000 each.

Applicants must supply transcripts, a letter of recommendation, and a completed application form by Wednesday, February 17, 2021. Forms may be found at [WisCheeseMakers.org](#), or can be directly requested from [WCMA Office & Member Service Manager Sara Schmidt](#).

Successful applicants will be announced in March 2021, with awards made in September.

WORKFORCE



Career Opportunities Featured on WCMA Jobs Board

WCMA's [online jobs board](#) is this week featuring 15 new industry career opportunities with the Center for Dairy Research and member companies Agropur and Westby Cooperative Creamery. Check out listings for cheesemakers, content writers, electromechanical technicians, production supervisors and more!

All WCMA members are invited to [post openings](#). It's free and easy! Questions may be directed to [WCMA Communications, Education and Policy Coordinator Ellie Herman](#).

[ADD JOB OPPORTUNITIES](#)

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome New Member

This week, WCMA welcomes new supplier member [Fluid Path Products, LLC](#). WCMA membership now includes nearly 700 companies operating in 39 states and around the world, employing tens of thousands of people.

Sign Up Colleagues for WCMA E-Newsletters

Thanks for subscribing to WCMA's weekly electronic newsletter! Please note, WCMA extends this benefit to all member employees. Let us know if we should [add your colleagues](#) to our mailing list, or if you'd like to share feedback on this or other communications products.

