



WCMA NEWS

Your source for the latest
in dairy processing

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NEWS

U.S. Announces Five New Trade Deals and Frameworks



In recent weeks, the Trump Administration announced a flurry of new trade deal frameworks and signed trade agreements containing favorable provisions for U.S. food and agricultural producers. Below is a summary of key provisions affecting the dairy industry.

Deals signed with [Argentina](#), [El Salvador](#), and [Guatemala](#) in the last two weeks all include agreements to protect common cheese names and address non-tariff barriers such as facility registration requirements. Argentina also agreed to implement a 1,000-metric-ton quota for certain U.S. cheese exports, and to remove tariffs of up to 28 percent on U.S. milk powders, dairy proteins, lactose, and other dairy ingredients.

In a framework announced yesterday, [Bangladesh](#) committed to providing "significant preferential market access" for U.S. agricultural goods, including dairy products. The country also committed to protect common cheese names, and buy \$3.5 billion in U.S. agricultural products, though dairy was not specifically mentioned. In return, the U.S. agreed to reduce Bangladesh's reciprocal tariff rate to 19 percent, among other provisions.

A framework announced with [India](#) late last week agreed to eliminate or reduce tariffs on all U.S. industrial goods and a wide range of U.S. food and agricultural products, although the countries did not provide a full list of specific products. India also agreed to address unspecified "long-standing non-tariff barriers" on U.S. food and agricultural products.

For more on these trade developments, see the related news coverage:

- Dairy Herd Management: [New U.S.-Argentina trade deal opens door for dairy exports](#)
- Southeast Ag Net: [U.S. finalizes trade deal with El Salvador](#)
- FreshFruitPortal: [U.S.-Guatemala trade deal eliminates tariffs and boosts access for American agricultural goods](#)
- Hindustan Times: [Bangladesh opens dairy, agricultural sectors to U.S. in new trade deal](#)
- The Hill: [U.S., India announce framework for interim trade deal, including tariff cuts](#)

FDA Updates Guidelines for "No Artificial Colors" Labeling



The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will now allow food manufacturers to claim "no artificial colors" on their product labels if the product does not contain any petroleum-based colors. Previous guidance only allowed the claim if a product contained no added color whatsoever. In an announcement last Thursday, FDA also approved beetroot red as a natural color option for food products, and expanded the allowable uses of spirulina extract in food.

[READ MORE...](#)

Register by March 15 for Wisconsin-Germany Trade Mission



The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), in partnership with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), will host a [Global Trade Mission to Hessen and Baden-Württemberg, Germany](#), June 6–13, 2026. Germany is a top export destination for Wisconsin, ranking fourth in 2024 with more than \$1 billion in goods exported.

This mission is ideal for companies new to exporting or seeking to enter the European market. Participants will receive customized market assessments, pre-arranged business appointments, and support identifying potential partners. With Germany's stable economy and strong results from past missions, this is a valuable opportunity to expand your global reach. [Learn more...](#)

Partner with Local Leaders on WI Rural Infrastructure Grants



A total of \$30 million in grant funding is now available to local governments through the Wisconsin [Local Small Structures Improvement Program](#) (LSSIP) to support the repair or replacement of aging culverts and small bridges in rural communities. This funding is part of the \$150 million invested in the Agricultural Roads Improvement Program in the 2025-27 biennial state budget, thanks to WCMA member advocacy. WCMA members are encouraged to partner with their local leaders to apply for the funding no later than May 1. [READ MORE...](#)

CDR Launches New Biotech Grant Program



ACCELERATE BIOTECHNOLOGICAL Innovations in Dairy

The Center for Dairy Research unveiled a new grant program, designed to help businesses scale up dairy byproduct conversion technologies. Selected recipients will receive access to CDR's state-of-the-art pilot plant, including the use of a 400L bioreactor. [READ MORE...](#)

USDA Awards Cheese Contracts to WCMA Members

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has [awarded contracts](#) to purchase over 50 million pounds of processed cheese from WCMA members Associated Milk Producers Inc., Bongards Creameries, and Great Lakes Cheese for use in federal food distribution programs. USDA also [announced plans](#) to purchase over 100 million pounds of indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity (IDIQ) cheddar cheese from WCMA members Associated Milk Producers Inc., Bongards Creameries, Masters Gallery Foods, and Winona Foods. A list of [open USDA solicitations](#) and information on how to become an [approved vendor](#) is available [online](#).

Headlines

Wisconsin

- Wisconsin State Farmer: [World Championship Cheese Contest returns to Monona Terrace in Madison](#) (Featuring WCMA)
- Green Bay Business News: [Green Bay native named as Schreiber's next president/CEO](#) (Featuring WCMA member Schreiber Foods)
- BizTimes Media: [Wisconsin 275: The state's most influential business leaders](#) (Featuring WCMA member Masters Gallery Foods)

National & Global

- Brownfield Ag News: [USDA reports strong December gains for cheese, butter; dry milk production lags](#)
 - Yahoo! News: [A mini government shutdown is on the horizon again, as Democrats and Republicans appear miles apart on DHS funding](#)
 - The Evening Tribune: [Why BelGioioso Cheese workers in Campbell are happy with new contract](#) (Featuring WCMA member BelGioioso Cheese)
 - ABC News: [Kroger names former Walmart executive as its new CEO](#) (Featuring WCMA member The Kroger Co.)
 - Dairy Processing: [Bel brings on new CEO for North America business](#) (Featuring WCMA member Bel Brands USA)
 - Lancaster Farming: [Schuylkill Haven milk plant to reopen for cottage cheese production](#) (Featuring WCMA member Dairy Farmers of America)
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FEATURED: ENVIRONMENT & TECHNOLOGY

Learn more about WCMA's programs & services in this special rotating section! This week, we spotlight WCMA's offerings and related news focused on industry regulation and technical issues.

Reserve Space Now at Food & Dairy Joint Industry Meeting



The WCMA Technology Committee invites all WCMA members to join the annual [Food & Dairy Joint Industry Meeting](#) with Midwest Food Products Association and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources on Thursday, March 12. This [unique gathering](#) pairs regulators and industry professionals in talks designed to advance the technology and regulation of environmental systems in dairy and food. WCMA has applied for continuing education credits for this meeting.

Thanks go to meeting sponsors [Applied Science, Inc.](#); [Complete Filtration Resources](#); [Hach Company](#); [M3 Insurance](#); [Mead & Hunt](#); and [Staab Construction](#) for their generous support.

Wisconsin Rolls Out New Website on Wastewater Landspreading

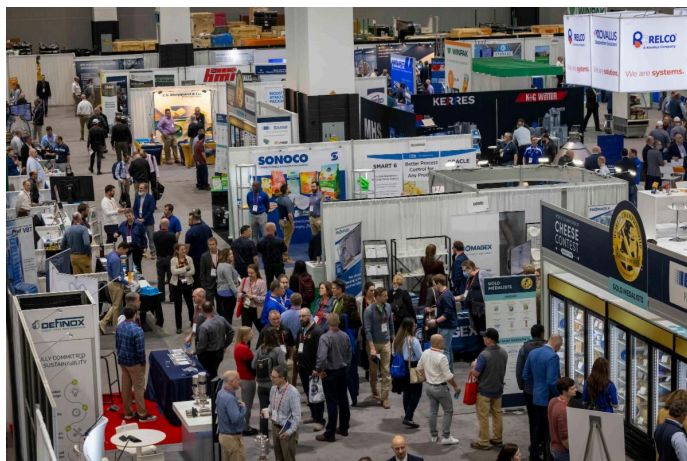


The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) launched in January a [new website](#) focused on landspreading of industrial liquid waste. The site includes:

- Detailed summaries of landspreading-related topics (WPDES permit requirements, site requests, management plans, site optimization, storage, alternative disposal, etc.)
- Frequently Asked Questions from the regulated community and public
- Quick access to WDNR forms, landspreading-related guidance documents, etc.

EVENTS & CONNECTION

Explore the Latest Innovations at CheeseExpo Ideas Showcase



Dive into the latest technologies and innovations awaiting your business at CheeseExpo's [Ideas Showcase](#) presentations! Located on two stages right on the exhibit floor, these quick-hitting talks offer concise, useful insights for dairy manufacturers and processors from trusted industry suppliers. This year, speakers will focus on food safety, automation, innovations in dairy processing and packaging equipment, smart project management strategies, and more. View the full schedule and register now at [CheeseExpo.org](#).

Elite Global Judging Team to Evaluate 3,375 Entries at World Championship Cheese Contest



WCMA last week [announced the elite panel of 56 judges](#) selected to evaluate 3,375 entries across 150 classes at the 2026 World Championship Cheese Contest®. This world-class judging panel includes top cheese graders, buyers, and dairy science experts from 22 countries, 12 U.S. states, and Puerto Rico. Dairy manufacturers from 25 countries, 33 U.S. states, and Puerto Rico have entered their products to be evaluated March 3-5 at the Monona Terrace in Madison, Wisconsin. [READ MORE...](#)

February 11	February 18	March 3-5	March 12	March 17
Policy Committee Meeting & State Advocacy Day (In-Person)	Dairy Sustainability Group Meeting (Hybrid)	2026 World Championship Cheese Contest	Food & Dairy Joint Annual Meeting with Wisconsin DNR (Hybrid)	Health & Safety Group Meeting (Hybrid)

EDUCATION

Learn Practical Sustainability Strategies at Feb. 18 Meeting



Brush up on practical strategies to further your sustainability efforts at the [next hybrid meeting of WCMA's Dairy Sustainability Group](#) on Wednesday, February 18. Get ideas on attainable sustainability goals for small to medium-sized companies, along with insights from fellow WCMA members and ample discussion time. Thanks go to [BIOIONIX](#) and [Clean Water Technology](#) for their sponsorship of this meeting.

[REGISTER NOW](#)





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