



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



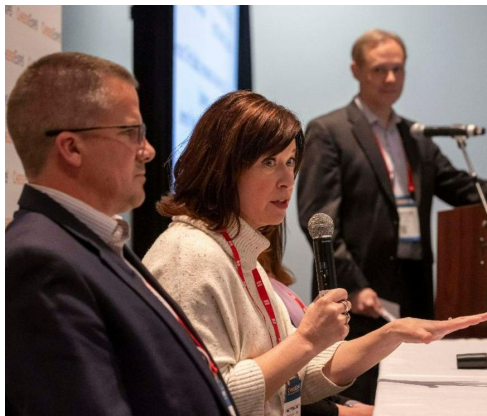
SIGNATURE EVENTS

CHEESE EXPO

Global Technology for Dairy Processors

April 16-18, 2024 | Baird Center | Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Act by February 27 for CheeseExpo Savings



Just one week remains to [receive a special early-bird rate](#) on your registration for the global dairy processing industry's premier event of the year: [CheeseExpo!](#) Register now through February 27 to take advantage of these limited-time savings.

Set for April 16-18 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, this year's event promises a full schedule of fascinating educational seminars, 134,000 square feet of the latest in global dairy technology, and unbeatable networking.

[Register now at CheeseExpo.org](#) to save 10 percent on full, single-day, and exhibits and networking registrations for most attendees. Don't wait - make your plans now to join over 4,000 friends and colleagues this spring.

**REGISTER
TODAY**

Have questions? Please contact [WCMA's Events team](#).

ADVOCACY



Joint Industry Meeting Offers Environmental Updates, Networking Opportunities



RSVP now to join the WCMA Technology Committee March 13 for important environmental updates and discussion at WCMA's **11th Annual Joint Industry Meeting** with Midwest Food Products Association and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR).

REGISTER TODAY

This full-day, hybrid meeting focuses on nutrient and wastewater issues for dairy and food manufacturers. Network with colleagues and peers - and get important updates on topics including fertilizer designation for wastewater solids, the launch of the Water Quality Clearinghouse for phosphorus credits, alternate concentration limits for nitrogen in soil-based treatment systems, PFAS regulation and legislation, and a deep dive into the Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) test and best practices to avoid WET test failures.

In-person registration costs \$55 and includes a catered lunch. Those who wish to attend virtually can register for a reduced rate of just \$35.

This meeting provides continuing education credits for certified wastewater operators. For more information, contact **WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer**.



Support Local Leaders' Applications for Wisconsin Ag Road Grants

Wisconsin's new [Agricultural Roads Improvement Program \(ARIP\)](#), championed by WCMA and other agricultural groups, is now live and accepting grant applications from local governments through April 5. Up to \$50 million in funds will be awarded in this first round, followed by another round of up to \$100 million later this year.

WCMA members can take action now to support agricultural road improvements in their communities: simply complete [WCMA's two-page form](#) and share it with local government leaders. Villages, towns, and other municipalities are the primary applicants for ARIP grants, but they will need information from local businesses in order to be successful. Dairy processors' assistance is essential for a strong submission!

HELP IMPROVE AG ROADS

Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

GRANTS



WISCONSIN
CHEESE MAKERS
ASSOCIATION



**Achieve Growth Goals
with RFSI Grants**

February 13, 2024

Watch Free Webinar on \$27M Wisconsin RFSI Grants for Application Tips, Key Contacts

View WCMA's [latest webinar online now](#) for an inside look at Wisconsin's \$27 million offering of the federal Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) grant program, accepting applications now through March 5. Helpful contacts and resources shared during this webinar are [available online to logged-in WCMA members](#).

Thanks go to over 50 WCMA members who attended the webinar, as well as our guests from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP): Grace Puc, Andrew Bernhardt, Chad Kauffman, and Kara Kasten-Olson.

The RFSI grant program, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), aims to build resilience throughout the food supply chain and strengthen local and regional food systems.

Questions about the Wisconsin RFSI program can be directed to [WDATCP staff](#). Questions and suggestions for future WCMA member webinars can be directed to [WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton](#).

RFSI Grants Now Available in 36 States

Agriculture agencies in 36 U.S. states, including Wisconsin, are now accepting applications for [RFSI grants](#). USDA has allocated a total of up to \$420 million nationwide for the grants. A full list of states with open application windows is available on [USDA's website](#).

FIND YOUR STATE



DBIA

Dairy Business
Innovation Alliance

Southeast Dairy Business
Innovation Initiative

NORTHEAST DAIRY BUSINESS
INNOVATION CENTER



Apply Now for Nationwide Dairy Business Innovation Grants

Dairy farmers and processors across the U.S. can apply now for grants available through four regional Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives:

- **[Dairy Business Innovation Alliance](#)**, administered by WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research
 - Eligible states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin
- **[Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center](#)**, administered by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets
 - Eligible states: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont
- **[Pacific Coast Coalition - Dairy Business Innovation Initiative](#)**, administered by Fresno State University
 - Eligible states: Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington
- **[Southeast Dairy Business Innovation Alliance](#)**, administered by the University of Tennessee
 - Eligible states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Puerto Rico

Individual award amounts, eligibility, and application requirements vary by region. Funding for the grants is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives were first championed by U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisconsin) and WCMA as part of the 2018 Farm Bill.

IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *Wisconsin Public Radio*: **[Yes, in Green County, they taper icy roads with a cheese-making byproduct](#)** (Featuring WCMA member Grande Cheese Company)
- *Madison Magazine*: **[Wait, UW has cheese taste-testers?](#)**

National/International

- Reuters: **[Arla says sales could slip this year as consumers cut back on dairy products](#)**
- *Dairy Processing*: **[U.S. dairy exports decline in 2023](#)**
- *RFD-TV*: **[The Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act is gaining momentum](#)**

- [Wisconsin State Journal: Crowds to return for World Championship Cheese Contest \(Featuring WCMA\)](#)

WORKFORCE



Members Connect with Peers, OSHA Experts at Health & Safety Group Meeting



Thanks go to members of WCMA's Health & Safety Group who last Thursday gathered in a hybrid meeting, discussing ergonomics best practices for dairy processing personnel and warehouse safety protocols - an especially important topic given the launch of the Occupational Safety & Health Administration's (OSHA) National Emphasis Program. The group also heard the latest updates from OSHA on its Regional Emphasis Program for Food Processors.

Special kudos go to presenters Kelli Humber from WisCon, Kris Schleis from OSHA, Mark Bonovetz of BelGioioso Cheese, and Zach Thayer of Emmi Roth.

Interested in getting involved? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

Stay Competitive with Industry Insights from WCMA Wage & Workforce Survey

Participate now through Friday, March 1 in the [2024 WCMA Wage & Workforce Survey](#) to gain insight on the latest industry trends in



wages, benefits, and training. This free, annual online survey helps WCMA compile critical data employers need to successfully attract and retain top talent in an increasingly competitive labor market. Thanks to member feedback, this year's survey features additional careers including EHS positions, comptroller, and supply chain analyst.

Members are encouraged to [review the questions](#) before beginning the survey, as responses may not be saved if the online form is closed while in progress.

COMPLETE SURVEY

All responses will remain confidential and anonymous. Survey respondents will receive a summary report from WCMA later in March containing blinded and aggregated data. Some broad, topline data (such as overall industry wage growth year-to-year) may also be used in industry advocacy efforts.

Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

MEMBERSHIP

WELCOME



NEW WCMA MEMBERS!

Dairy Industry Suppliers



New WCMA supplier member [Pan America Environmental, Inc.](#) is a manufacturer of wastewater treatment systems.



New WCMA supplier member [Handtmann Process](#) provides design, construction, and commissioning of Lactoferrin (LF) extraction systems for the dairy industry.



New WCMA supplier member [IB International](#) manufactures engineered industrial centrifugal fans and blowers.



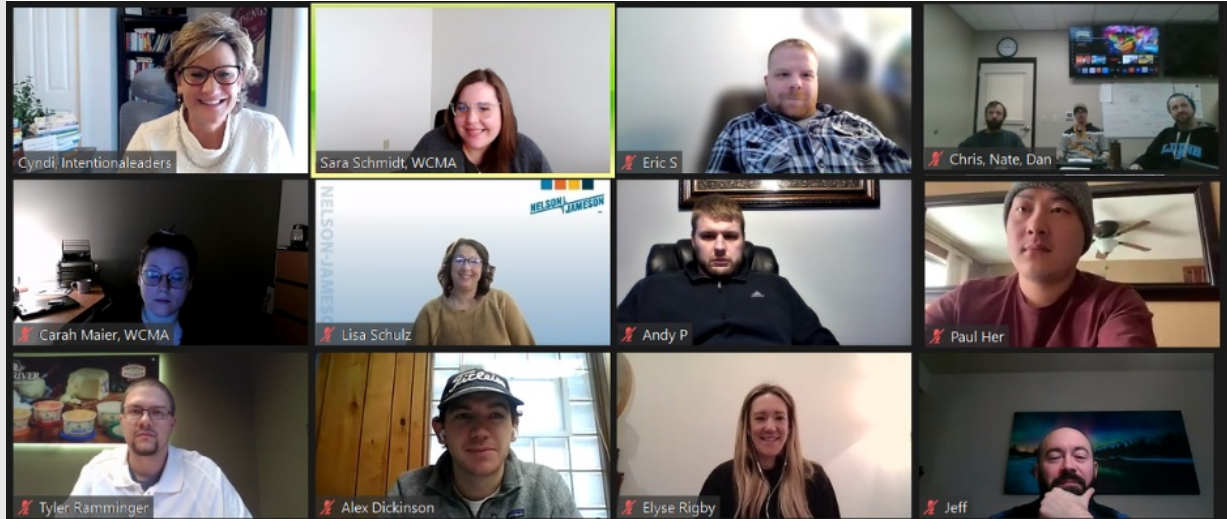
New WCMA supplier member [WEL Companies](#) is a provider of refrigerated trucking and warehousing services.



New WCMA supplier member [Egan Company](#) is a specialty contractor for expansions, process control integration, mechanical and electrical system installations, and more.

Visit WCMA's [online member directory](#) for more information.

EDUCATION



Invest in Valued Front-Line Teams with WCMA Spring Educational Offerings

Help your valued staff sharpen their leadership skills and expand their networks by registering for WCMA's popular [Front-Line Leadership Trainings](#) - completed by over 1,000 WCMA member employees to date. Space is still available in the spring offerings of these highly-rated trainings!

The course is offered in a la carte in three parts that can be taken in any order. Part A covers essential leadership skills, while Part B offers strategies to boost staff performance. Part C helps participants learn to cultivate high-performing, positive teams. Limited space remains available in our all-virtual classes in February and April:

- [February 26: Part B - Boosting Staff Performance](#)
- [February 29: Part B - Boosting Staff Performance](#) - *Only three seats left!*
- ~~[April 2: Part C - Cultivating a Team](#)~~ - **SOLD OUT**
- [April 3: Part C - Cultivating a Team](#)

These classes will be offered again in fall 2024. Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Membership Director Sara Schmidt](#).



Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association

Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors

Space Available in New WCMA Safety Trainings

Register today for WCMA's all-new [Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors](#), offered five times in two convenient formats throughout 2024:

- April 9 ([In-Person](#))
- May 14 ([Virtual](#))
- June 4 ([In-Person](#))
- September 24 ([Virtual](#))
- October 15 ([In-Person](#))

This course, designed with input from WCMA's Health & Safety Group, aims to help support members' efforts to keep their valued employees safe on the job. Attendees will learn about their rights; employer responsibilities; and how to identify, abate, and avoid job-related hazards they may encounter. The curriculum concentrates on the key focus areas of the Occupational Safety & Health Administration's ongoing Local Emphasis Program for food processors: machine guarding, lockout/tag out, prevention of slips, trips, and falls, chemical controls, and control of hazardous energy.

In-person classes cost \$179, including lunch and snacks. Virtual sessions are offered at just \$149. Each class is capped at 24 attendees, so don't wait!

Have questions? Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

Additional Industry Educational Opportunities

WCMA is pleased to share opportunities for industry training and enrichment. Here's a look at upcoming offerings from WCMA partners:

- February 22-23: [Short Course - Pasteurization](#) - UW-River Falls
- March 4-8: [Short Course - Cheesemaking](#) - UW-River Falls
- March 19-21: [Cheese Grading & Evaluation](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- March 22: [Cheese Judging](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- April 3-4: [Cheesemaking Fundamentals](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- May 7-9: [Advanced Cheesemaking: American Varieties](#) - Center for Dairy Research
- On-Demand:
 - [Introduction to Food Safety Principles \(English and Spanish\)](#) - Cornell University
 - [Online Dairy Science and Sanitation \(English and Spanish\)](#) - Cornell University
 - [Artisan Dairy Food Safety Coaching](#) - Cornell University
 - [Online HACCP Training](#) - North Carolina State University
 - [Environmental Monitoring in the Dairy Industry](#) - North Carolina State University
 - [Preventive Controls for Dairy Processors](#) - North Carolina State University
 - [Food Safety Basics For Artisan Cheesemakers](#) - North Carolina State University

WisCheeseMakers.org
(608) 286-1001



Wisconsin Cheese Makers Assn. | 5117 West Terrace Drive, Suite 402, Madison, WI 53718

[Unsubscribe news@wischeesemakers.org](mailto:news@wischeesemakers.org)

[Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by news@wischeesemakers.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!