

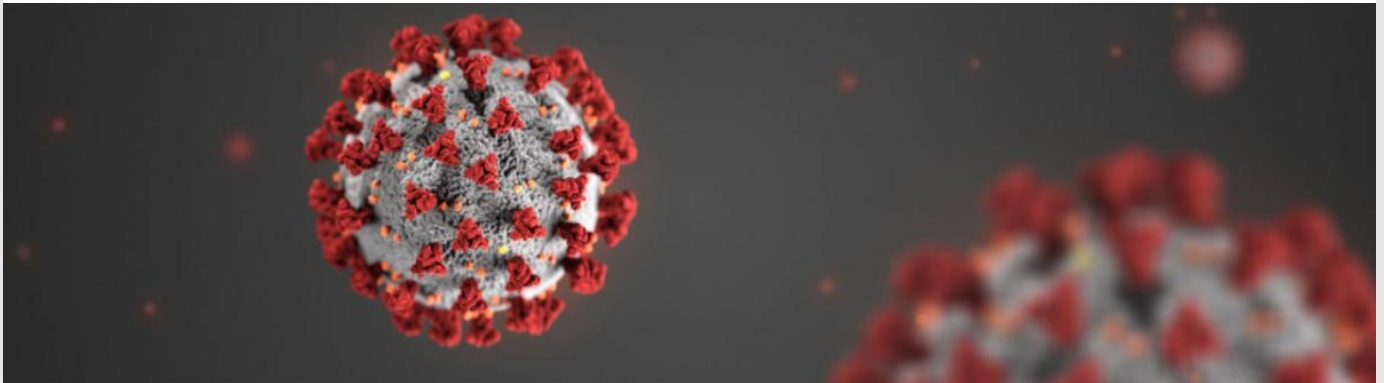


WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



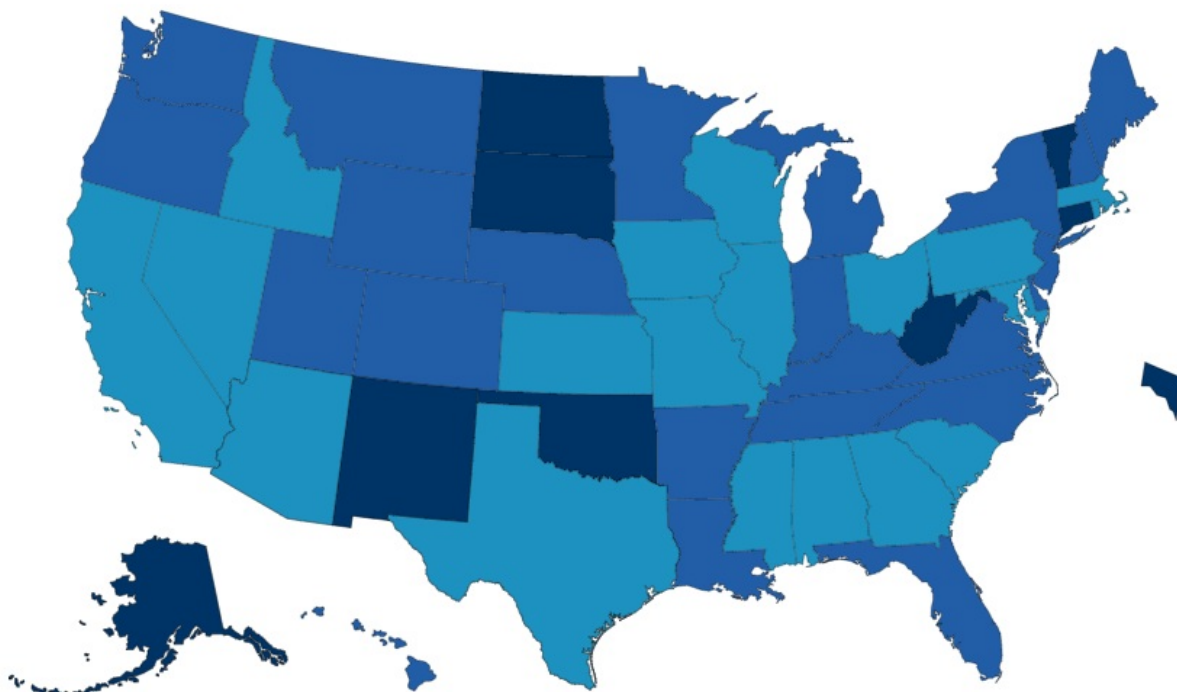
COVID INFORMATION AND RESOURCES



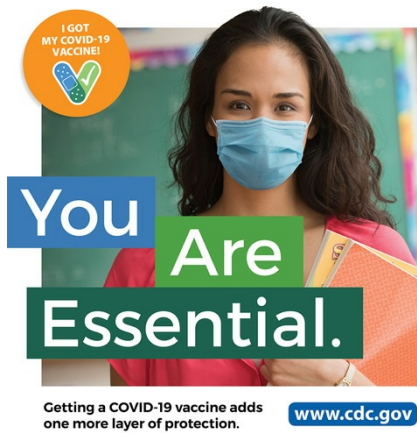
CDC Tracker Shows States' Vaccine Rollout Progress

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention unveiled major updates to its [vaccine tracking dashboard](#) last Thursday, offering an interactive map that shows how vaccine distribution and administration is going in every U.S. state and territory. The dashboard will be updated every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Total Doses Administered Reported to the CDC by State/Territory and for Selected Federal Entities per 100,000



CDC Adds Resources to Employer Vaccine Toolkit



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has added resources to its [COVID-19 Vaccination Communication Toolkit for Essential Workers](#).

The toolkit now includes:

- Sample letter to employees
- Slide deck
- Fact sheets (9 languages)
- Sample newsletter content
- Printable posters (13)
- Printable stickers
- Social media graphics (10)
- FAQs

WCMA Joins in Phase 1B Vaccination Working Group

This week, WCMA will join a small working group organized by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, designed to provide industry feedback and ideas on the Phase 1B vaccine rollout. Governor Tony Evers added dairy plant workers and farm workers to Phase 1B last month, with vaccinations expected to start March 1.

WCMA will seek clarity on vaccine logistics, including how your essential and critical workers can schedule a vaccination appointment or participate in a mobile clinic, the potential for employers to host vaccination events at plant sites, and details regarding necessary documentation to verify inclusion in Phase 1B.

WCMA will continue to share new findings regarding Wisconsin's Phase 1B rollout with members via electronic communications. Have questions? Please contact [WCMA staff](#).

Biden, Republicans Meet to Discuss \$1.9T Relief Plan, While Democrats Carve Path to Passage

President Joe Biden met with a group of Senate Republicans Monday night in an effort to [talk through their differences](#) on pandemic response and relief, and to attempt to advance a \$1.9 trillion relief package that Democrats want to move quickly through Congress.

Biden's American Rescue Plan offers \$465 billion for direct relief payments, \$350 billion for enhanced unemployment benefits, \$350 billion in aid to state and local governments, \$170 billion to support schools reopening safely, \$160 billion for pandemic response, \$120 billion for a child tax credit, \$50 billion for small business aid, including \$40 billion for the Paycheck Protection Program, \$40 billion for child care assistance, and \$35 billion for rental assistance.

A group of ten Republican Senators have countered with a \$618 billion proposal, mirroring Biden's plan for pandemic response and small business aid. To pare back, Republicans have eliminated other initiatives and favored smaller allocations of \$220 billion for direct relief payments, \$132 billion for enhanced unemployment benefits, \$20 billion for child care assistance, and \$20 billion to support schools reopening safely.

As an alternative to striking a deal with Republicans, Democratic leaders Monday began to explore an alternative pathway for the Biden American Rescue Plan: budget reconciliation. Framing this aid package as a joint budget resolution, aspects of the Plan related to Congressional spending can be passed in the U.S. House and Senate by simple majorities held by the Democrats.

WCMA Advocates for Tax-Free PPP in Wisconsin

WCMA is calling on Wisconsin lawmakers to make [Paycheck Protection Program \(PPP\) loans tax-free aid](#) for the purposes of state filings. Such action would mirror a bill approved on the federal level in December. Absent legislation, Wisconsin's Department of Revenue estimates increased tax revenues of \$457 million in 2021.

WCMA will keep members informed of relevant developments via electronic communications. Members are also encouraged to [join in WCMA Policy Committee efforts](#).

WCMA Salutes Critical and Essential Workers



Throughout 2021, WCMA is saluting its members' essential and critical 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 the team members at Widmer's Cheese Cellars. These dedicated employees continue to work hard each day, persisting through the volatile times of the pandemic. Thank you for your important work!

Watch for WCMA salutes in Tuesday e-newsletters, our printed [membership directory](#), 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

- *Farm and Dairy*: [USDA freezes \\$2.3 billion in CFAP money to farmers](#)
- *NewsDakota.com*: [Senators seek guidance for farmers applying for PPP loans](#)
- *Dairy Herd Management*: [Butter trades at its lowest since COVID crash](#)

Wisconsin

- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [The Wisconsin advisory panel that decides who's next in line for the vaccine will 'pause' to wait for Biden's strategy](#)

- WKOW-TV: [FEMA to send \\$47 million to Wisconsin for vaccine distribution](#)
- WGBA-TV: [Wisconsin to launch online appointments for virus shots](#)
- WGBA-TV: [Northeast Wisconsin vaccine clinics are not seeing enough dosage supply to meet the demand](#)

National/International

- Associated Press: [Pandemic's deadliest month ends with signs of progress](#)
- Washington Post: [U.S. response to coronavirus variants emphasizes masks and vaccines instead of lockdowns](#)
- CBS News: [U.S. closing in on 50 million COVID-19 vaccinations; who's getting them?](#)

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

INDUSTRY UPDATES



DBIA to Award \$1 Million in Next Round of Grants



The [Dairy Business Innovation Alliance \(DBIA\)](#), a partnership between the Center for Dairy Research and Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, will be distributing \$1 million this spring, in its next grant cycle.

Dairy enterprises including processors, farmers and entrepreneurs in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota and Wisconsin are encouraged to apply.

Eligible projects include dairy farm diversification, the creation of “value added” dairy products and

starting/increasing exports of dairy products. Grants of up to \$50,000 will be awarded through a competitive process.

Grant applications will be available for download on the DBIA website starting Monday, March 1, 2021 and are due Friday, April 30, 2021.

In 2020, **13 companies and cooperatives** received a total of \$230,000 from the first round of grants offered by this new USDA program.

Register Now for Upcoming USDA Virtual Trade Events



The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA-FAS) is offering upcoming **virtual trade events** help U.S. companies, especially those new to the export market, expand their reach to potential customers around the globe.

On March 23-24, USDA-FAS will host **U.S. Sips and Snacks in Sub-Saharan Africa** for U.S. producers of processed products, food ingredients, wine, spirits and craft beers.

On April 20-21, USDA-FAS will host **Trendy Markets for U.S. Sweets & Snacks** for producers looking to learn about trade with Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama – all countries with U.S. free trade agreements.

Visit the **USDA-FAS website** to learn how to participate and engage with potential foreign buyers.

Dairy Innovation Hub Details Specialized Equipment Grants Designed to Streamline Research Projects



The Dairy Innovation Hub this week detailed awards of more than 20 grants for the purchase of **specialized research equipment** to increase research efficiency and ensure Wisconsin's dairy community is at the global forefront. Recent Hub grants have allowed researchers to utilize automated feeding equipment, technology for measuring gene expression to improve dairy forages, and more.

The Dairy Innovation Hub supports research projects and academic hiring at UW-Madison, UW-Platteville and UW-River Falls with \$7.8 million in annual state funding. WCMA proudly advocates for the Dairy Innovation Hub and its endeavors.

Nominations Open for U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards

Nominations are now open for the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy's **2021 U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards**. WCMA members are invited to nominate themselves or another dairy processor for four award categories: Outstanding Dairy Farm Sustainability, Outstanding Supply Chain Collaboration, Outstanding Dairy Processing & Manufacturing Sustainability and Outstanding Community Impact. Nominations must be submitted by Friday, March 26 at 11:59 p.m. (CDT). Additional information about the awards and nomination process are available **online**.

WCMA Supports Vilsack's Senate Confirmation

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) secretary nominee Tom Vilsack enjoyed bipartisan praise during his confirmation hearing earlier today, with a Senate panel voting unanimously to advance him through the confirmation process.

WCMA offered the Senate Agricultural Committee members praise and support for Vilsack in a [letter](#) delivered Monday.

Vilsack served as USDA Secretary during the Obama Administration, the only member of the Cabinet to complete two full terms. Most recently, he served as president and CEO of the U.S. Dairy Export Council, and has been a strong advocate for the dairy industry.



Join in Policy Committee Meeting Tomorrow

Join WCMA's Policy Committee members for a meeting with Wisconsin Joint Finance Committee Vice-Chair and State Representative Amy Loudenberg (R-Clinton) tomorrow, February 3, from 3:00-3:30 p.m. (CST). This meeting was rescheduled from its original date and time due to a critical Assembly caucus meeting.

WCMA staff and members will detail industry budget priorities, including funding for dairy export initiatives, dairy processor grants, the Dairy Innovation Hub and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

[Register for the meeting now!](#)



IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *Spectrum News*: [UW Agriculture Outlook Forum projects more volatility in 2021](#)
- *Hoard's Dairyman*: [Evers thanks farmers, says there's work to do](#)

National/International

- *Politico*: [At USTR, a straight-shooter will have to navigate Biden's old guard in Washington](#)
- *Agri-Pulse*: [Biden executive order seeks to involve ag in battling climate change](#)
- *Agri-Pulse*: [Stabenow aims to use climate package to boost ag spending](#)
- *Hoard's Dairyman*: [U.S. dairy cow herds expand the most since 1998](#)
- *CNBC*: [Shipping carriers rejected tons of U.S. agricultural exports, opting to send empty containers to China](#)

SIGNATURE EVENTS

CHEESE EXPO

GLOBAL ONLINE

CheeseExpo Global Online Announces 12 New Seminars Designed to Build Your Dairy Business

Build your business with expert information delivered April 6-8, 2021 at [CheeseExpo Global Online](#). A dozen seminars, newly announced, offer the latest in dairy processing technology and food science, insights on opportunities in market sectors and sales abroad, practical guidance for crisis management and workforce development, and much more!

Take a look at the informative expert-led seminar topics below, and view the entire [CheeseExpo Global Online schedule](#) at [CheeseExpoGo.org](#).

Tuesday, April 6 Seminars:

- Optimizing Cheese Yield & Mass Balance
- Negative PPDs and Positive Change for Federal Milk Marketing Orders
- Data Debut: Cheese Usage in Foodservice Channels 2020
- Crisis Preparedness and Crisis Management: National FARM Program Solutions

Wednesday, April 7 Seminars:

- Practical Application of Process Data in Dairy Plants
- Export Market Outlook in a Recovering Global Economy
- Artisan Focus: Surface Microbial Communities in Cave-Aged Cheeses & CDR's New Affinage Capabilities
- Dairy 2050 Environmental Goals and the Net Zero Initiative for Carbon Emissions

Thursday, April 8 Seminars:

- Microbes that Negatively Impact Cheese Quality and Advances in their Identification
- Peer Learning: Strategies to Recruit and Motivate Your Workforce
- Succeeding with Online Dairy Product Sales
- Whey and Dairy Powder Pathogen Control Best Practices

CheeseExpo Global Online's concurrent seminars kick off each day at 1:30 p.m. (CT), with four different offerings. We invite you to check out all of our seminar options live – and access others on-demand! Register now to attend CheeseExpo Global Online at [CheeseExpoGO.org](#).

**REGISTER
NOW**

Become an Exhibitor at CheeseExpo Global Online

Exhibiting at CheeseExpo Global Online with a virtual booth is easy and impactful – take a look at the [list of companies](#) that have already signed up to exhibit!

*Advanced Detection Systems | Air Quality Process | Alliedflex Technologies, Inc.
ALPMA USA | Amcor Flexibles North America
Anderson Chemical Company/Sanitation Technologies/Water Management*

*bioMerieux, Inc. | Burkert Fluid Control Systems | Cheese Reporter | Chem-Aqua, Inc.
Chr. Hansen, Inc. | Coprodev Plus | Cybertrol Engineering | Delkor Systems, Inc.
Deville Technologies Inc. | DSM Food Specialties USA, Inc. | Ecolab, Inc. | Enerquip, LLC
ePac Flexible Packaging | Evaporator Dryer Technologies, Inc. | Excel Engineering, Inc.
Flair Flexible Packaging Corporation | FlexLink Systems, Inc. | Food Safety Net Services
Foss | FT System North America LLC | Great Northern Corporation
Harpak-Ulma Packaging, LLC. | Heat And Control, Inc. | Hydrite Chemical Co. | ID Technology
Inficon | JLS Automation | Kelley Supply, Inc | Koss Industrial, Inc. | Krohne Inc.
Kurita America Inc. | Lallemand | LETICO Inc. | Loos Machine & Automation
Masters Gallery Foods, Inc. | Matrix Packaging Machinery | Multi-Conveyor LLC
MULTIPOND America Inc | Multivac, Inc. | Munters Corporation | Nelson-Jameson, Inc.
Pentair Südmo | Quadbeam Technologies Ltd. | Reiser
RELCO, A Koch Separation Solutions Company | Rieger Flow Products, LLC | Sani-Matic, Inc.
Schenck Process | Sheffield Machine Knife | Shuttleworth | Spancrete
Suez Water Technologies & Solutions | TC Transcontinental Packaging
Technology Group International | Tetra Pak | Urschel Laboratories, Inc. | Witt Gas Controls
Wonderware Midwest*

During the virtual event, registered attendees will be view exhibitor products, contact exhibitor staff and chat via text or live video, and so much more.

Learn more and reserve your exhibitor page today at [CheeseExpoGO.org](https://www.cheeseexpoGO.org).

WORKFORCE



Participate in 2021 Wage and Workforce Survey

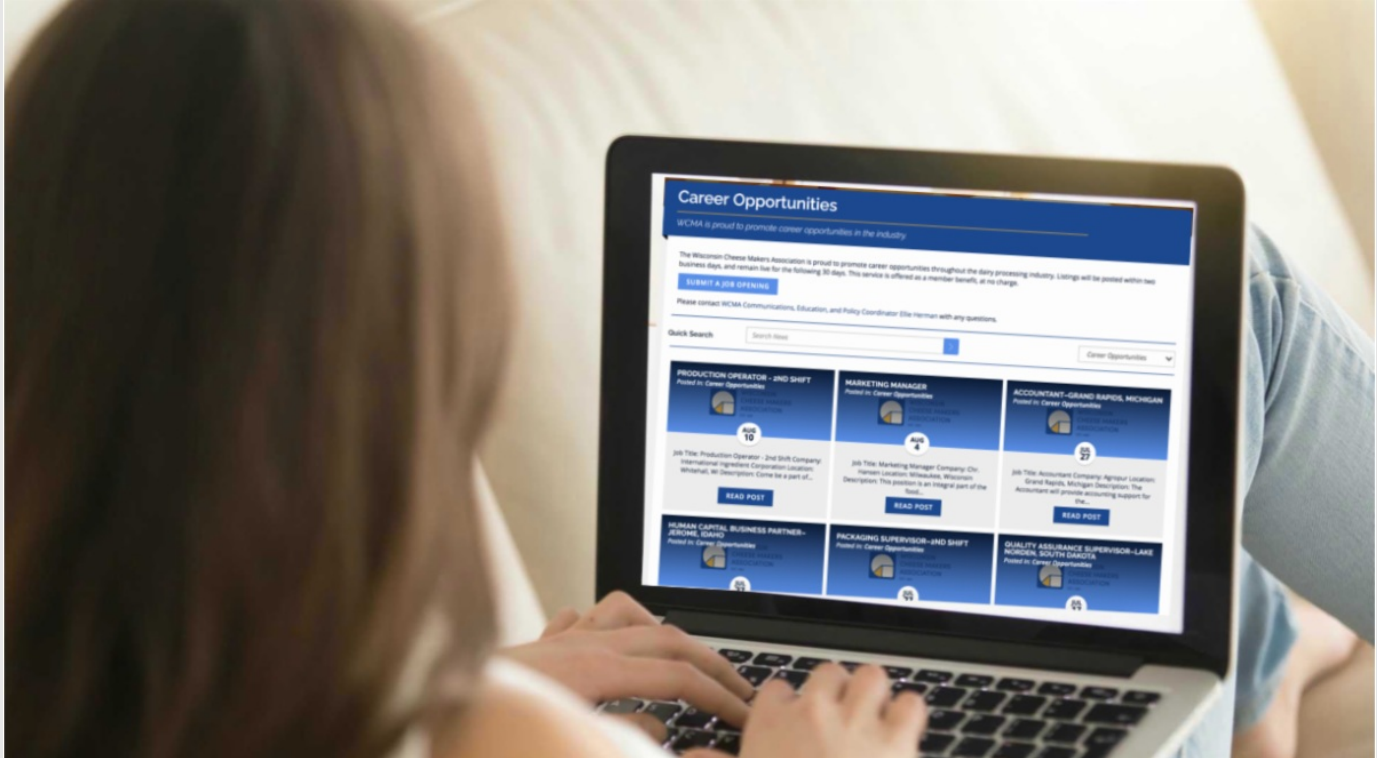
Members are invited to participate now in the [2021 WCMA Wage and Workforce Survey!](#) This free annual members-only survey helps WCMA provide critical data employers need to successfully attract and retain top talent.

Survey responses are due Friday, February 19. Individual responses are held in confidence, and participants will not be identified.

Participating member companies and cooperatives will receive a **free summary report** from WCMA in early March detailing current industry wage ranges and benefits packages, as well as comparative data on non-industry wages in their region.

Questions may be directed to [WCMA Communications, Education, and Policy Director Rebekah Sweeney](#).

TAKE THE SURVEY



Career Opportunities Featured on WCMA Jobs Board

WCMA's [online jobs board](#) is featuring 12 industry career opportunities with the Center for Dairy Research and member company Agropour. Check out listings for bilingual logistics coordinators, cheesemakers, 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](#)

EDUCATION



Space Now Limited in WCMA Leadership Trainings

Space is now limited in early 2021 offerings of WCMA's 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~~, offering a self-assessment on essential leadership skills and practical methods for improvement, is set for Tuesday, February 23. **SOLD OUT!**

Just **two** seats remain in **WCMA Front-Line Leadership Training - Part B**, which is set for Thursday, March 18, and will focus on ways to positively assess and impact staff performance.

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Just **four** seats remain in **WCMA Front-Line Leadership Training - Part C**, which focuses on how to build a team on 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.

Register Now for Cronobacter Webinar February 12

Register now for a free webinar on best practices for controlling Cronobacter in dry dairy operations hosted by the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy's Food Safety Committee on Friday, February 12 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. (CST). Industry experts and leaders will present on the risks of Cronobacter and discuss best practices to manage. The presentation will be followed by a Q&A session with the presenters and invited panelists.

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:

- February 10-12: [HACCP Workshop | UW-River Falls](#)
- February 18-19: [Pasteurization Short Course | UW-River Falls](#)
- February 23-24: [Process Cheese Course On Demand | Center for Dairy Research](#)
- March 1-5: [Cheesemaker's Short Course | UW-River Falls](#)
- March 2: [Cheesemaking 101 What a Licensed Cheesemaker Should Know On Demand | Center for Dairy Research](#)
- March 8-11: [Implementing SQF Systems Virtual Short Course | Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin](#)
- March 9: [Process Cheese Course On Demand | Center for Dairy Research](#)



WCMA SCHOLARSHIPS

WCMA Student Scholarships Due February 17

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.

MEMBERSHIP

2021 WCMA Member Directories Now Available

Check your mailboxes! Hard copies of the 2021 WCMA Member Directory were recently distributed via mail to all members. An electronic copy is posted now on [WisCheeseMakers.org](#), too.

This year's directory pays tribute to our industry's critical and essential staff; be sure to take a look at the photos



highlighting member employees!

Please note, an [online, searchable version of WCMA's directory](#) is always available to you at WisCheeseMakers.org. Thank you for your support.

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 our communications products.

WisCheeseMakers.org

