



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



ADVOCACY



POLICY COMMITTEE

WCMA Calls for Action on Truth-in-Dairy Labeling Bills

Calling for quick legislative action, WCMA members today **testified in support** of Wisconsin bills designed to protect consumers from misleading labels on imitation “dairy” products.

“It’s critical that consumers understand exactly what they’re buying, and offering to their families,” said John Umhoefer, WCMA Executive Director. “While these soy- and nut-based products may try to mimic milk, they cannot deliver the same nutritional benefits.”



Together with WCMA President Dave Buholzer of Klondike Cheese Company of Monroe and WCMA Past President Kim Heiman of Nasonville Dairy of Marshfield, Umhoefer delivered that message to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Tourism, in support of **Senate Bills 81** and **83**.



The proposals, authored by Republican Senator Howard Marklein of Spring Green and Republican Representative Travis Tranel of Cuba City, would ban the labeling of products as milk or as a dairy product or ingredient, if the food is not made from the milk of a cow, sheep, goat, or other mammals.

“The makers of cheese imitations would like you to think their products offer better nutrition, but that’s simply not the case,” said Buholzer.

A **recent consumer study**, sponsored in part by WCMA, showed that one-quarter of people believe

real milk is present in plant-based foods that mimic cheese. One-third of those studied think plant-based mimics contain protein, though imitators have little to no protein. One-quarter think plant-based mimics are lower in calories or fat, and have fewer additives, but neither perception is true.

“Consumers deserve clear, truthful labels as they make choices in the grocery store,” said Heiman. “When you choose milk and cheese, you expect a delicious dairy product, not a nutritionally-inferior plant product masquerading as dairy.”

Identical proposals were approved by the Wisconsin State Assembly in the 2019-20 legislative session with unanimous, bipartisan support.

WCMA will keep members informed of relevant developments in the legislative process.



Evers Announces Support for Many WCMA Policy Priorities, to Invest \$43M in Wisconsin Agriculture

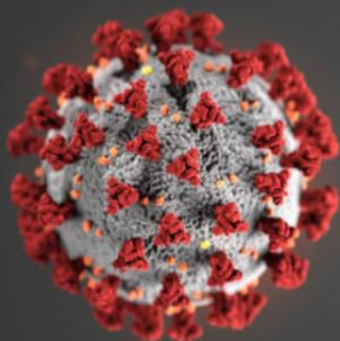
On Friday, February 5, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers previewed his 2021-23 state budget proposal, with **investments totaling \$43 million** in the state's agricultural industries. The plan includes funding for many WCMA priority projects.

Next week, via the budget address, Gov. Evers will formally deliver his plan which is designed to:

- Direct \$20 million to support food banks and pantries partnering with Wisconsin food processors to combat hunger;
- Create and fund the Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports, which will build Wisconsin's dairy brand and boost sales of cheese and other value-added dairy products in emerging global markets;
- Boost state support for the Dairy Processor Grant Program by \$1.2 million to support plant modernization and industry innovation to keep Wisconsin at the forefront of the global dairy industry;
- Create and fund a Value-Added Agricultural Grant Program, providing education and technical assistance to support the production of value-added agricultural goods;
- Fund the Farm-to-School Grant Program;
- Create and fund the Farm-to-Fork Program;
- Increase funding for the Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin Program; and
- Boost Something Special from Wisconsin™, a branded marketing program.

WCMA **applauded Evers' announcement**, and will work with him and legislative leaders to advance members' priorities through the budget process.

COVID INFORMATION AND RESOURCES



Register Now for Vaccination Webinar February 18

Vaccine communication and education strategies are the focus of a [free webinar](#) coming Thursday, February 18 from 1:00-1:45 p.m. (CT). Registration is open now at WisCheeseMakers.org, and available exclusively to WCMA members.

WCMA is pleased to present featured speaker Jeff Christensen, Director of Communications at M3 Insurance, as part of this webinar. Join as Jeff walks through the fundamentals business leaders should consider and apply while communicating with employees about their organization's COVID-19 vaccine plan.

Public health experts will share insights on the safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines, and practical experiences from those who have already received full doses.

WCMA staff will also present the latest information on Wisconsin's Phase 1B vaccine rollout, which is set to begin March 1.

WCMA will reserve time at the end of the webinar for responses to member questions. To submit questions to be presented anonymously during the webinar, please send them by close of business on Monday, February 15 to [WCMA Communications, Education, and Policy Director Rebekah Sweeney](#).



Jeff Christensen
Director of Communications

Wisconsin Leads U.S. in Vaccine Distribution

Wisconsin is now [leading the nation](#) in the average number of COVID-19 vaccine shots administered daily. According to the weekly average, Wisconsin is now administering roughly 6,170 shots per million residents per day, with the [total number administered](#) now approaching 800,000.

WDHS officials note that vaccination of Phase 1B, including dairy plant and other food processing workers, is set to begin March 1. WCMA will keep members informed of relevant developments.

Wisconsin Opening Community Vaccination Clinics

Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers and Wisconsin Department of Health Services (WDHS) announced officials Monday they will open the first of approximately ten [community vaccination clinics](#) in Rock County on February 16.

The clinic will be run in partnership with Virginia-based AMI Expeditionary Healthcare, a health care company which is administering COVID-19 testing sites and vaccination clinics nationwide, and the Wisconsin National Guard. As Wisconsin receives more doses of the COVID-19 vaccines, each community clinic will have the capacity to administer up to 1,000 shots per day.

WCMA is communicating with WDHS officials to learn where other clinics will be located and to advocate for member interests.

WCMA Notes: Vaccination Varies in Dairy States

Vaccination of dairy plant workers remains a priority in most leading dairy states, but questions abound among manufacturers reaching out to state and county health officials. Most states, with the notable exception of New



York, have maintained a high priority for food and agriculture workers, with many explicitly noting dairy or food processing in that category.

In the **February edition of WCMA Notes**, WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer shares an overview of vaccination eligibility and rollout in leading cheesemaking states, including New York, Wisconsin, California, Idaho, New Mexico and more.

Evers Vetoes Republicans' COVID-19 Bill

On Friday, Wisconsin Governor Tony **Evers vetoed** Republicans' \$100 million pandemic response bill, objecting to provisions that would have barred employers from requiring vaccinations, limited the authority of public health officials, and given the Legislature control over how federal money is spent.

Assembly Bill 1 also offered strong civil liability protection from frivolous COVID-19 suits, and would have extended the one-week waiting period, provisions Evers could have supported. Due to the veto, the state's unemployment benefits waiting period will again take effect, costing Wisconsin \$1.3 million in federal aid.

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 Plant Superintendent Adam Monson at Foremost Farms in Richland Center, Wisconsin. Adam ensures dairy product quality, performance and consistency are met for customers so that Foremost Farms may return value back to the farmer-owners who supply quality milk. 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

Wisconsin

- *New York Times*: [Wisconsin had a mask law. Then it didn't. Then it did. Stay tuned.](#)

National/International

- *New York Times*: [See how the vaccine rollout is going in your state](#)
- *Associated Press*: [California uses zip codes, outreach to boost vaccine equity](#)
- *Reuters*: [U.S. government to ship COVID-19 vaccines directly to community health centers next week](#)
- *Associated Press*: [Dems propose \\$1,400 payments as part of Biden virus relief](#)

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

WORKFORCE

WCMA



JOB FAIR

Register Now for WCMA Virtual Job Fair March 24

Find the career or the team member that's right for you at the [2021 WCMA Virtual Job Fair!](#) Set for **Wednesday, March 24 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. (CT)**, event registration is open now through March 17 at [WisCheeseMakers.org](#). This event is free for prospective employees and WCMA member employers.

WCMA is partnering with Collegiate Dairy Products Evaluation Contest organizers to invite participation from students from throughout the country pursuing dairy-related degrees, though the event is open to all job seekers, including those just graduating from high school or seeking a career

change. Employers may highlight all openings, including hourly or salaried full-time, part-time, or internship positions.

The 2021 WCMA Virtual Job Fair will be held via Zoom on March 24, but WCMA will post basic profiles on each participant to a password-protected page on [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org) one week in advance. Employers and prospective employees may preview those joining in the job fair and contact them for an in-depth interview or information after it is held.

[JOB SEEKER REGISTRATION](#)

[EMPLOYER REGISTRATION](#)



Deadline for Wage Survey Responses February 19

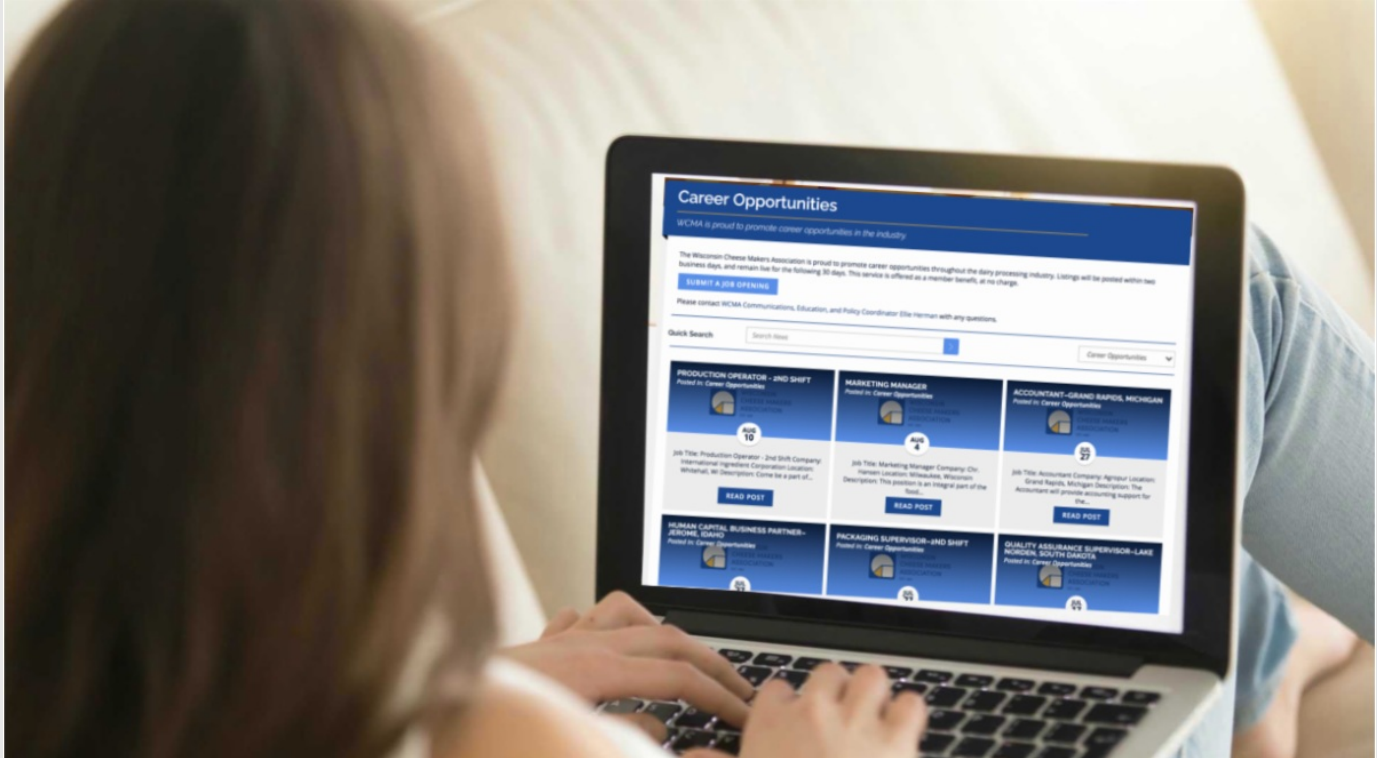
Members are invited to participate now in the [2021 WCMA Wage and Workforce Survey!](#) This free annual members-only survey helps WCMA provide critical data employers need to successfully attract and retain top talent.

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 14 industry career opportunities from member companies Agropur, Klondike Cheese Company and Winona Foods. Check out listings for bilingual logistics coordinators, maintenance technicians, quality assurance 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](#)

INDUSTRY UPDATES

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, including an informational [recorded webinar](#) and [presentation slides](#) are available [online](#).

IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Creators feed people's love for charcuterie boards at Valentine's Day and all year](#)

National/International

- WDRB-TV: [Price of parmesan cheese may surge in 2021, experts warn](#) (Featuring WCMA member Schuman Cheese)
- Politico: [USDA projects farm income to flatten in 2021](#)
- Brownfield Ag News: [Members selected for House rural broadband task force](#)
- New York Times: [Biden appointments signal a trade approach that hews to the left](#)

SIGNATURE EVENTS

CHEESE EXPO

GLOBAL ONLINE

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.
Berkert Fluid Control Systems | Center for Dairy Research | Cheese Reporter
Chem-Aqua, Inc. | Chr. Hansen, Inc. | Coprodev Plus | Cybertrol Engineering
Dairy Connection Inc. | Delkor Systems, Inc. | Deville Technologies Inc.
Diversey F&B | 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.
FoodSafe Drains | Food Safety Net Services | Foss | FT System North America LLC
Great Lakes Cheese Company Inc. | 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
Membrane System Specialists, Inc. | Multi-Conveyor LLC*

*MULTIPOND America Inc | Multivac, Inc. | Munters Corporation | Natec USA LLC
Nelson-Jameson, Inc. | Pentair Südmo | POWER Engineers, Inc.
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.

BECOME AN EXHIBITOR

CheeseExpo Global Online Savings Expire March 1

The 2021 CheeseExpo Global Online [lineup](#) offers dairy processors and marketers free access to live Ideas Showcase offerings, exhibits and spotlight networking events. Upgrade by March 1 to save \$50 on [Full Registration](#) to add a host of keynote presentations and live seminars!

**REGISTER
NOW & SAVE!**

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.

Just **one** seat remains open 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 **three** seats remain available in **WCMA Front-Line Leadership Training - Part C**, which 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.

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 12: [Best Practices for Controlling Cronobacter in Dry Dairy Operations | Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy's Food Safety Committee](#)
 - 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](#)
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WCMA SCHOLARSHIPS

WCMA Student Scholarships Due February 17

The application deadline is fast approaching for five WCMA student scholarships worth a total of \$15,000, due Wednesday, February 17.

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

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

