



# WCMA NEWS

Your source for the latest  
in dairy processing

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## NEWS

### Congress Works to Avoid Friday Government Shutdown



Congressional leaders are working to advance a stopgap bill to avoid a government shutdown, with current funding set to run out on Friday, March 14. House Speaker Mike Johnson on Saturday released a [99-page text](#) for a continuing resolution which would largely keep funding for the government at levels set by former President Joe Biden until September.

Johnson will need to hold his caucus together for passage, given their slim majority and reports that some Republicans have already decided to [vote against the bill](#). Democratic support is unlikely, as party leaders have stated that they would need additional guardrails for Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) to get on board.

If the bill is approved in the House, it also faces a tenuous future in the Senate, where seven Democrats will be necessary along with the 53-seat Republican majority for approval. Democratic Senator Patty Murray of Washington, the ranking member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, on Saturday [expressed strong concerns](#) about the package, connected to DOGE cuts.

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### Trump Reverses Course on Some Tariffs; Doubles Others



President Donald Trump on Thursday reversed some, but not all, of the 25 percent tariffs he enacted earlier this month on Mexican and Canadian goods shipped to the United States. Tariff [delays announced last week](#) are expected last through April 2 for products that are in compliance with the U.S.-Mexico-Canada (USMCA) free trade treaty. However, only around 50 percent of the goods the U.S. imports from Mexico and 38 percent of the goods from Canada comply with USMCA terms.

In addition, President Trump is threatening to enact a [250 percent tariff on Canadian dairy](#), and 50

percent tariffs on all [steel and aluminum imports](#) are set to take effect on March 12.

Also this week, [China's retaliatory tariffs](#) against [U.S. agricultural products](#), including a ten percent tariff on dairy products, took effect Monday. Canadian Premier Doug Ford [enacted a 25 percent tariff](#) on electricity exports to the U.S. on Monday, estimating that it would add almost \$70 to the monthly bills of many homes and businesses in New York, Michigan, and Minnesota, and Canadian leadership are promising other retaliation soon.

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## USDA Releases DBI Funding Following Industry Advocacy



WCMA last week [applauded news](#) that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) released Congressionally-directed funding for the federal Dairy Business Innovation (DBI) Initiatives.

USDA froze DBI grant monies two weeks ago, triggering grave concern for hundreds of dairy farmers and processors nationwide. WCMA sent a letter to USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins on [February 26](#) urging her to release the funding. A [second letter](#) on March 3 was signed by 120 dairy businesses from 29 states.

In addition, [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#) led a coalition of dairy processors and industry partners in more than a dozen advocacy meetings with Congressional leaders in Washington D.C. Many thanks go to WCMA members Land O'Lakes, Organic Valley, and Sargento Foods; DBI partner The Old Stone Creamery; and the International Dairy Foods Association for joining WCMA for this in-person effort.

For more on WCMA's DBI advocacy, see related news coverage:

- NPR: [Dairy farmers in Wisconsin see federal funding unfrozen as others are left waiting](#)
- FoodTank: [The ripple effects of federal grant freezes: Small business owners share their stories](#)
- MSN: [USDA releases DBI funds following industry advocacy](#)
- Wisconsin State Journal: [Federal dairy grants blocked by Trump are now flowing again, USDA says](#)
- WEAU-TV: [USDA releases DBI funds](#)
- WKOW-TV: [USDA releases funds for Wisconsin dairy farmers, easing financial strain](#)

Members interested in effecting meaningful change can join WCMA's active, engaged Policy Committee by contacting [Rebekah Sweeney](#).

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## Final Opportunity! Take Action on Raw Milk, Budget Funding at March 18 WCMA Policy Committee & State Advocacy Day

WCMA members' voices have a real, lasting impact on regulations and policies affecting the dairy industry. With a new raw milk bill and a biennial state budget expected in the Wisconsin legislature in the coming weeks, now is the time to act.

[RSVP now](#) to join WCMA's [Policy Committee Meeting & State Advocacy](#)



**Day** next Tuesday, March 18. This in-person gathering features opportunities to hear from key players about the session ahead - and to advocate for industry priorities.

**REGISTER NOW**

Thanks go to meeting sponsors [Nasonville Dairy](#), [Compeer Financial](#), [Sargento Foods](#), and [Klondike Cheese Co.](#) for their support! Limited sponsorships are [available now](#) through March 16.

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## Headlines

### Wisconsin

- Allrecipes: [We tried the Wisconsin-made cheese with the most awards in U.S. history](#)  
(Featuring WCMA member Uplands Cheese)
- UpNorthNews: [4 “must-try” cheeses, according to Wisconsin’s “Cheese Masters”](#)  
(Featuring WCMA members Edelweiss Creamery, Roelli Cheese Co., Sartori Company, and Widmer's Cheese Cellars)

### National & Global

- Yahoo! News: [Health of California dairy workers was compromised as bird flu spread, new study says](#)
  - Dairy Processing: [Trump administration gets rid of food safety committees](#)
  - CNN: [Fact check: What Trump doesn't mention about Canada's dairy tariffs](#)
  - Food & Wine: [This is officially the No. 1 American-made cheese, according to this year's U.S. Championship Cheese Contest](#)
  - WJW-TV: [Ohio cheese wins at U.S. Championship Cheese Contest](#)
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## EVENTS & CONNECTION



## WCMA Members Excel at U.S. Championship Cheese Contest

WCMA congratulates and thanks all competitors in the [2025 U.S. Championship Cheese Contest](#), held last week in Green Bay, Wisconsin!

Special kudos go to the many WCMA members whose outstanding dairy products won gold medals in their classes: Actus Nutrition, Agropur, Arena Cheese, Arla Foods, Associated Milk Producers Inc., Beecher's Handmade Cheese, BelGioioso Cheese, Bongards Creameries, Burnett Dairy Cooperative, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Caputo Cheese, Carr Valley Cheese, Cedar Grove Cheese, Cedar Valley Cheese, Cowgirl Creamery, Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese, CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley, Dairy Farmers of America, Decatur Dairy, Edelweiss Creamery, Ellsworth Creamery, Emmi Roth, Foremost Farms USA, Gilman Cheese Corporation, Glanbia Nutritionals, Great Lakes Cheese, Guggisberg Cheese, Henning Cheese, Hidden Springs Creamery, Hill Valley Dairy, Hilmar Cheese, Hook's Cheese Company, Kingston Cheese Cooperative, Klondike Cheese Co., Lactalis, LaGrandier's Hillside Dairy, Land O'Lakes, Landmark Creamery, Lynn Dairy, Marieke Gouda, Masters Gallery Foods, Maytag Dairy Farms, Meister Cheese, Mexican Cheese Producers, Mosaic Meadows - LaClare Creamery, Narragansett Creamery, Nasonville Dairy, Nordic Creamery, OneDairy, Pearl Valley Cheese, Pine River Pre-Pack, Prairie Farms Dairy, Roelli Cheese Co., Sabrosura Foods/Wisconsin Cheese Group, Saputo, Sartori Company, Savencia Cheese USA, Schreiber Foods, Schuman Cheese - Lake Country Dairy, Union Star Cheese Factory, Uplands Cheese, V&V Supremo Foods, and Widmer's Cheese Cellars. Complete results for all classes are available at [USChampionCheese.org](https://USChampionCheese.org).

News of the 2025 United States Championship Cheese Contest - and this year's winner, Europa made by Arethusa Farm Dairy in Bantam, Connecticut - has already spread far and wide! To date, hundreds of stories have appeared in media outlets across the country. Here are just a few highlights:

- KPRC-TV: [Connecticut wins top cheese at U.S. Championship Cheese Contest](#)
- NewsNation: [Wheels to Wisconsin: U.S. Championship Cheese Contest underway](#)
- WCAX-TV: [Vermont cheesemakers bring home ribbons in United States Championship Cheese Contest](#)
- WIZM Radio: [Westby's Hidden Springs Creamery big winner in U.S. cheese championships, as multiple Coulee Region cheeses win awards](#)
- Yahoo! Life: [2025 United States Champion Cheese announced, nine cheeses in Wisconsin finish in top 20](#)
- Wisconsin State Journal: [Photos: The 2025 U.S. Championship Cheese Contest in Ashwaubenon](#)

A full collection of high-resolution photos from the Contest is available on our [Facebook page](#). Visit our YouTube channel for a [recording](#) of the livestreamed announcement of the Top 20 cheeses and 2025 U.S. Champion. Also, check out our coverage on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and [TikTok](#)!



## Thank You, Contest Volunteers and Judges!

Our thanks go to the nearly 100 B-Team volunteers who gave generously of their time, talent, and muscle to make the 2025 U.S. Championship Cheese Contest possible. We are grateful for your essential support!

Congratulations and thanks are also in order for Contest judges Cathy Strange and Greg Kinate, and volunteers Larry Bell and Gary Vidlock. These exceptional leaders earned recognition for their outstanding contributions to support and grow WCMA's Championship Cheese Contests.

[READ MORE...](#)

## RSVP Now for March 20 Joint Industry Meeting with WDNR



Register now to join WCMA and Midwest Food Products Association (MWFPA) next Thursday, March 20 for the [12th annual joint meeting](#) with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR).

Discuss environmental issues of the day with state regulators and network with peers and colleagues. A complete agenda and speakers are available [online now](#).

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Thanks go to sponsor [Applied Science Inc.](#) for their generous support of this meeting! Limited sponsorships are [available through March 18](#).

## Upcoming WCMA Events

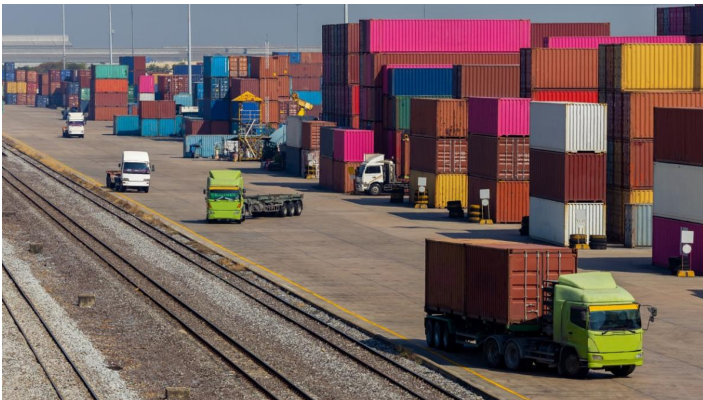
March 13	March 18	March 18	March 20	March 20
<a href="#">Front-Line Leadership Part C (Virtual)</a>	<a href="#">Front-Line Leadership Part C (Virtual)</a>	<a href="#">Policy Committee Meeting &amp; State Advocacy Day</a>	<a href="#">Technology Committee Joint Industry Meeting</a>	<a href="#">Free Webinar: Setting, Measuring and Reporting on GHG Goals</a>

**VIEW ALL & REGISTER**

## FEATURED: EXPORTS

*Learn more about WCMA's programs and member services in this special rotating section! This week, we spotlight WCMA's dairy export resources and programming.*

### Join Free WCMA Webinar April 24 for Export Insights



In today's rapidly changing international marketplace, dairy processors need accurate, insightful export resources. Find valuable trade perspectives in WCMA's [free member webinar](#) on Thursday, April 25, focused on dairy exporting. Speakers and topics will be announced soon, but registration is open now!

**SAVE THE DATE**

Sponsorships of this webinar are [available now through April 21](#), including recognition in promotions and during the session. Don't miss this opportunity to reach new audiences and show your support for the dairy processing industry!

### Join WCMA Members at April 8 MITA Trade Event



WCMA members can register now to join the [Madison International Trade Association's April 8 panel discussion](#) focused on international trade strategy for food businesses, moderated by WCMA member M3 Insurance. Attendees will hear from seasoned global companies such as WCMA member Schreiber Foods, as well as newer agricultural exporters. A networking reception and optional tour of the Farm & Food Discovery Center are also included.

### U.S. Dairy Exports Start 2025 with Continued Gains

Almost all categories of U.S. dairy exports saw increases in January 2025, offsetting shortfalls in nonfat dry milk/skim milk powder and lactose, according to recent [analysis by the U.S. Dairy Export Council](#). Cheese exports performed particularly well, with year-over-year volume increasing for the

13th consecutive month and growth occurring in diverse markets including Japan, Panama, and Bahrain. Butterfat exports from U.S. dairy manufacturers also rose an impressive 145 percent year-over-year. [READ MORE...](#)

## EDUCATION

### Mark Your Calendars for WCMA Human Resources Workshop



Registration is open now for WCMA's [all-new, in-person Human Resources Workshop](#) on Tuesday, May 27 at our offices in Madison, Wisconsin.

HR leaders in the dairy processing industry will learn how effective collaboration drives organizational success and achievement, discover how embracing constructive conflict enhances team dynamics and fosters innovation, and identify and overcome common barriers to collaboration. Don't wait - [sign up today!](#)

For more educational opportunities from WCMA and our partners, visit:

[WisCheeseMakers.org/Events](https://www.wischeesemakers.org/Events)

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