



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



ADVOCACY



WCMA Joins Wisconsin Lawmakers in Call for Investments in Dairy Export Program

Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association members joined with Wisconsin State Representative Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc) and Senator Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan) at a news conference introducing the [lawmakers' bill](#) to support expanded exports of Wisconsin agricultural products.

The legislation would direct \$5 million to a joint programmatic effort run by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection through June 2027, designed to support at least 25 percent growth in the total value of the state's agricultural exports. A total of \$2.5 million would be earmarked to support the growth of Wisconsin dairy exports.

Representing dairy processors, Jack Heinemann, export sales manager at WCMA member Specialty Cheese Company noted, "Wisconsin dairy processors are doing a great job reaching American consumers, who – on average – are eating more than 40 pounds of cheese per year. But if we don't look beyond our borders and gain a foothold in emerging global markets, we're limiting the dairy industry's future growth."

For more on this legislative proposal, see these news releases and articles:

- *News Release:* [Ballweg and Kurtz reveal comprehensive agricultural export program](#)
- *WKOW-TV:* [GOP lawmakers introduce bill to increase value of agricultural exports](#)
- *Brownfield Ag News:* [Wisconsin legislators, ag groups push expanded ag export funding bill](#)

The concept of investing in dairy exports has bipartisan backing in Wisconsin. As part of his budget plan, Governor Tony Evers proposes directing \$2 million to launch and fund the Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports over a two-year period, with \$1 million earmarked for dairy endeavors.



Wisconsin Truth-in-Dairy Labeling Bills Advance

On Wednesday, April 7, the Wisconsin State Assembly Committee on Agriculture **advanced Assembly Bills 73 and 74**, legislation designed to protect consumers from misleading labels on imitation “dairy” products. The proposals, authored by Senator Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green) and Representative Travis Tranel (R-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.

Both bills are now eligible for floor votes in the Assembly and Senate, and WCMA continues to advocate with legislative leaders on members' behalf.

WCMA Comments on Processor Costs in Proposed Wisconsin Land Application Rules

Regulatory proposals to curtail landspreading of liquid manure during winter months in Wisconsin will directly impact dairy manufacturers. **WCMA offered processor concerns** with land availability and added costs to land apply or process wastewater and sludges in public comments for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) this week.

Proposed changes to NR 151, related to farm nutrient management, would lower nitrogen application limits on more than three million cropland acres in Wisconsin. A key prohibition would stop landspreading of liquid manure after September 1 through the end of winter, with some exceptions. Land application of stored liquid manure would be concentrated

into spring months.

“This concentration of a high volume of nutrient application into a small timeframe in the springtime will undoubtedly impact land made available by producers for land application of industrial sludges and wastewaters from WPDES permitholders,” WCMA wrote in comments on the economic impact analysis tied to the proposed rules.

WCMA defined millions of dollars in costs dairy processors will face if farms limit land availability in spring. WCMA members noted costs for hauling waste products, building new storage for waste streams, paying municipalities to process wastes or adoption of new technology, such as sludge drying, to comply with the proposed rule. In its draft economic analysis, Wisconsin DNR defined zero costs to processors.

Beyond reopening this economic analysis to include new costs that food and dairy businesses will face, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association urged WDNR leadership and staff: “to engage in a holistic discussion with all its regulated partners regarding the land application of nutrients in the state of Wisconsin with the goal of developing a guiding strategy that reflects environmental concerns balanced by Wisconsin’s opportunity to retain and grow in its role as a crucial food producer for the U.S. and nations abroad.”

INDUSTRY UPDATES

Bechel Elected WCMA President in 2021-22 Term



Steve Bechel

Steve Bechel of Eau Galle Cheese Factory in Durand, Wisconsin, will serve as President of the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) Board of Directors in the 2021-2022 term, which begins July 1.

“Earning the confidence of my peers and friends to lead the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association is a tremendous honor, and I’m excited to continue the work our Board has been doing to expand member services and the reach and impact of the Association’s advocacy work,” said Bechel.

WCMA Board elections were held last week, determining both new officers and new directors for the 2021-2022 term. Joining Bechel as officers are Doug Wilke of Valley Queen Cheese Factory in Milbank, South Dakota, who will serve as First Vice President; Mike Sipple of Agropur Inc.-USA, based in Appleton, Wisconsin, who will serve as Second Vice President; Mike Neu of Chr. Hansen in Milwaukee, Wisconsin who returns to his post as Treasurer; and Chris Renard of Renard’s Cheese in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, joining as Secretary.

Three industry leaders have been elected to join the WCMA Board, including: Tom Dahmen of V&V Supremo Foods-Chula Vista Cheese in Browntown, Wisconsin; Kyle Jensen of Hilmar Cheese Company in Hilmar, California; and Chris Roelli of Roelli Cheese Company in Shullsburg, Wisconsin.

The 2021-22 Board of Directors also includes:

- Graham Archer of Tetra Pak, Inc., Winsted, Minnesota
- Brian Baker of Baker Cheese, St. Cloud, Wisconsin
- Linda Lee of Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.-Cheese Division, Davenport, Iowa
- Craig Filkouski of Great Lakes Cheese Company, Hiram, Ohio
- Jeff Gentine of Masters Gallery Foods, Plymouth, Wisconsin
- Gary Gosda of Schuman Cheese-Lake Country Dairy, Turtle Lake, Wisconsin
- Richard Guggisberg of Guggisberg Cheese, Millersberg, Ohio
- Mike Hinrichsen of Associated Milk Producers, Inc., New Ulm, Minnesota
- Randy LaGrandier of LaGrandier’s Hillside Dairy, Stanley, Wisconsin

- Tim Omer of Emmi Roth USA, Fitchburg, Wisconsin
- Paul Scharfman of Specialty Cheese Company, Reeseville, Wisconsin
- Bruce Workman of Edelweiss Creamery, Monticello, Wisconsin
- Tayt Wuethrich of Grassland Dairy Products, Inc., Greenwood, Wisconsin

WCMA wishes to express its appreciation to outgoing Board President Dave Buholzer of Klondike Cheese Company in Monroe, Wisconsin and directors Greg Siegenthaler of Grande Cheese Company in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin and Mark Witke of Zimmerman Cheese in South Wayne, Wisconsin, who are all retiring from the Board after serving the maximum term limit of six years.

Apply by April 30 for DBIA Grants Worth \$50K

Applications for grants worth up to \$50,000 through the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance, a partnership between WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research, are due Friday, April 30. Dairy processors and farmers in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota and Wisconsin are eligible to apply. Projects must focus on dairy farm diversification, the development of value-added dairy products, or dairy product exporting.



[Complete details](#) and an [informational webinar](#) are available now. Questions? Contact [WCMA Communications, Education, and Policy Director Rebekah Sweeney](#).

APPLY NOW

Register to Join WDATCP for China, United Arab Emirates Dairy Export Events

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) is encouraging registration for two upcoming dairy export trade shows.

[Register by May 30](#) for the China Dairy Expo on July 17-20 to showcase your company and products with or without traveling. China Dairy Expo is the largest dairy show in China.

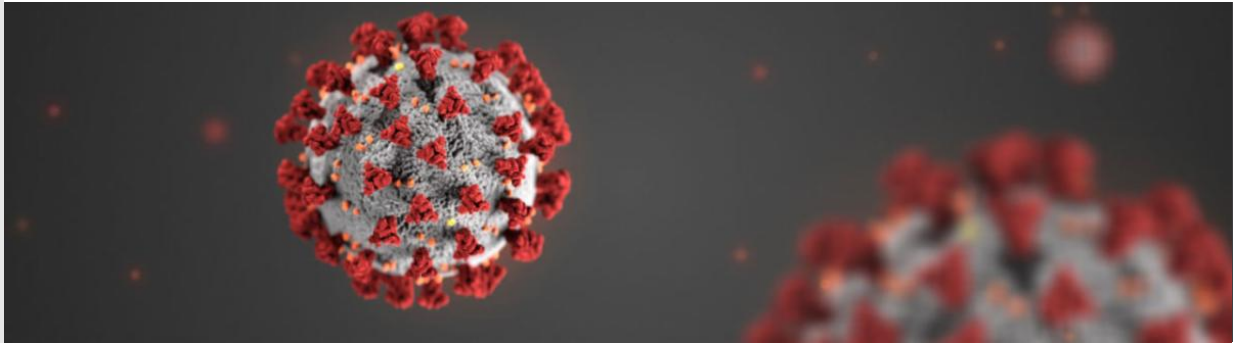
Sign up by July 31 for the [VIV Middle East agriculture trade show](#) in the United Arab Emirates in November 2021. WDATCP will lead Wisconsin businesses to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia followed by exhibiting at the agriculture trade show in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Contact [WDATCP staff](#) with questions.

USDA Solicits String Cheese Bids

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is [accepting bids](#) for the purchase of string cheese now through April 23, with deliveries to occur from July 1 to September 30.

Questions may be directed to [USDA staff](#). A complete listing of open USDA dairy product solicitations is [available online](#).

COVID-19 UPDATES



FDA Pauses Distribution of Johnson & Johnson Vaccine, Expected to Last a "Matter of Days"

Today, U.S. Food and Drug Administration officials announced a **pause in the distribution** of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine, saying they expected it to last a "matter of days" as the agency investigates six reported cases of blood clots forming in women who received the shot. Federal officials said that anyone who received the vaccine and experienced symptoms like severe headache, abdominal pain, leg pain or shortness of breath in the three weeks following the shot should alert their health care provider. Officials said the events appear to be extremely rare, and that they have not found the other authorized coronavirus vaccines – Pfizer and Moderna - to cause such clots.

WCMA Salutes Critical and Essential Employees



Pam Hodgson
Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker
Sartori Company

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.

This week, we are shining a spotlight on Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Pam Hodgson of Sartori Company. Pam, along with almost four dozen licensed cheesemakers, plays a

key role in producing Sartori's award-winning flavors for consumers. Thank you, Pam!

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

- *Aberdeen News*: [SDSU Extension addresses vaccine safety with dairy workforce](#)
- Reuters: [France's lockdown vice? Cheese.](#)

Wisconsin

- *WDJT-TV*: [Upward trend in COVID-19 cases a 'concern' for state, community health leaders as neighboring states struggle](#)
- *WJFW-TV*: [Vaccinations hit all-time high in Wisconsin, but COVID variants are on the rise](#)
- *U.S. News and World Report*: [Wisconsin reports almost 25 percent of population fully vaccinated](#)

National/International

- Yahoo! Finance: ['Unvaccinated folks' are driving coronavirus surges as American society slowly reopens](#)
- CBS News: [Michigan officials request help as COVID-19 cases surge](#)

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 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

SIGNATURE EVENTS

CHEESE EXPO

GLOBAL ONLINE

CheeseExpo Global Online Content Available On

Demand Now Through October 8

CheeseExpo Global Online welcomed more than 1,250 attendees last week to take part in our Virtual Exhibits, Keynote Addresses, educational seminars, Ideas Showcase, and celebrations of industry excellence. **Now, our programming is available to you [on demand!](#)**

**Register Now to
Watch CheeseExpo
Global Online On
Demand**

Dairy manufacturers continue to enjoy Free Registration to Virtual Exhibits, Ideas Showcase presentations, and the Virtual Awards Banquet.

Upgrade to Full Registration to learn from industry leaders and market analysts in our Keynote Addresses, and check out a dozen seminars focused on 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!

Here's what CheeseExpo Global Online attendees are saying about the show:

- *"I always have high expectations for WCMA events, but this even surpassed my expectations for quality. I liked the platform. It was easy to learn & navigate. I thought the content of the sessions was good and pertinent and the keynotes and recognition events were exceptional!" - **Mike Sipple** of Agropur, Inc.*
- *"Best interactive information gathering I could imagine!" - **Dr. Tom Everson**, formerly of Grande Cheese Company*
- *"This conference was fantastic! It was well organized and professional. I enjoyed being a part of it." - **Erika Gayhart**, Chr. Hansen, Inc.*

Check out all of the CheeseExpo Global Online content - and make new connections with dairy processors and trusted suppliers! - now through October 8.

**Join Us at
CheeseExpoGO.org!**

Championship Cheese Auction Raises \$39K for Industry Scholarships, Education



The live, virtual Championship Cheese Auction, part of the Chr. Hansen Spotlight Event on Wednesday, April 7 at CheeseExpo Global Online, raised \$39,125 for Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) scholarship programs and industry educational opportunities, as well as the World and U.S. Championship Cheese Contests.

WCMA thanks these successful bidders: Great Lakes Cheese Company, Kelley Supply, Inc., DSM Food Specialties USA, Inc., Brian Eggebrecht and the B-Team, Nelson-Jameson, Inc., Chr. Hansen Inc. and ALPMA USA. We appreciate your support!



WCMA SCHOLARSHIPS

WCMA Announces New Eggebrecht Scholarship, Names Two Recipients

The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) announced last week the establishment of the Brian Eggebrecht Student Scholarship Supporting Skilled Trades for the Dairy Industry, as well as the two inaugural recipients.

Longtime WCMA Contest Committee Chairman and “B-Team” Contest volunteer group founder Brian Eggebrecht of Welcome Dairy has donated funds to support scholarships for technical college students in Wisconsin learning a variety of skills applicable to careers in dairy manufacturing.



Brian Eggebrecht

In the program’s first year, WCMA is awarding two students with \$2,000 each to further their studies:

- **Blake Hill**, a sub-lead in packaging at WCMA member Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery, will pursue an associate degree in Applied Sciences-Business Management at Chippewa Valley Technical College beginning in August 2021.
- **Tarran Janz**, a maintenance technician at WCMA member Sartori Company, is pursuing an associate degree in Electro-Mechanical Automation Technology at Lakeshore Technical College.



Blake Hill



Tarran Janz

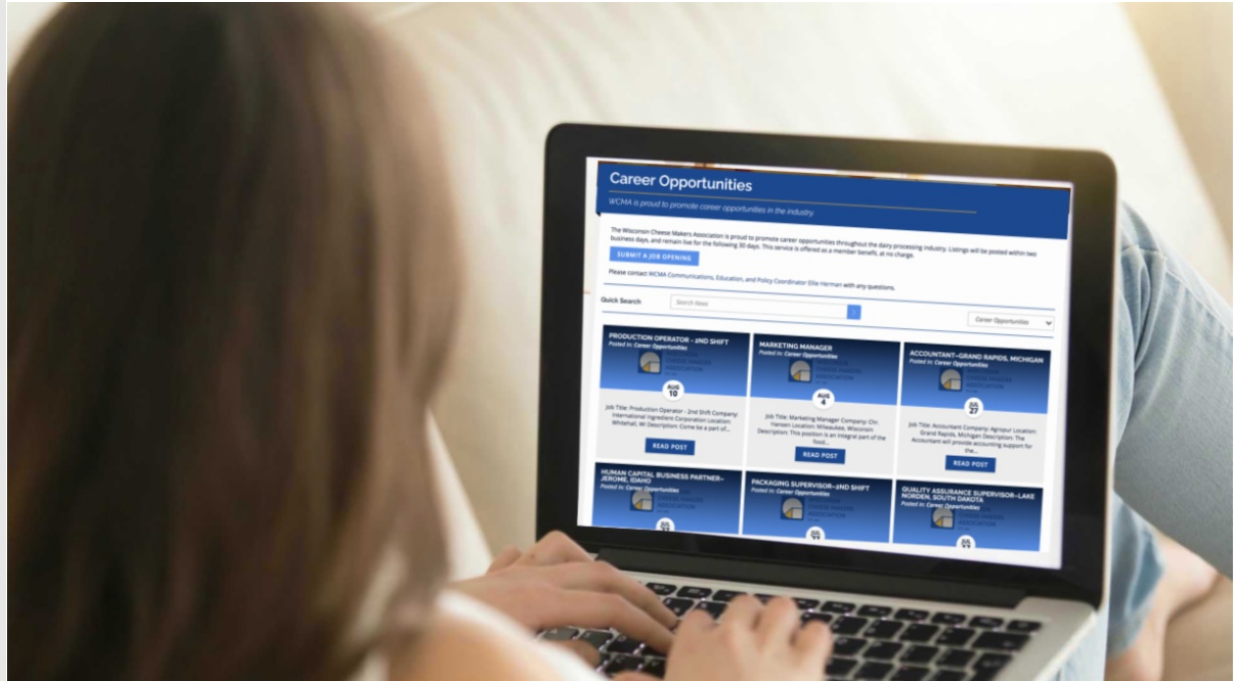
The Brian Eggebrecht Student Scholarship Supporting Skilled Trades for the Dairy Industry will be offered annually along with WCMA’s other scholarship programs, the Myron P. “Mike” Dean Cheese Industry Scholarship and Supplier Member Scholarship. For more information, visit [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org).

Register Now for 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:

- April 29: [Butter Science 101 Livestream \(Free Webinar\) | Center for Dairy Research](#)
- May 5-6: [Food Safety Workshop \(HACCP\) Online | Center for Dairy Research](#)
- May 10-14: [Advanced Cheese Technology Short Course Online | Center for Dairy Research](#)
- May 25: [Cheesemaking 101 What a Licensed Cheesemaker Should Know - On](#)

WORKFORCE



View Career Opportunities on WCMA Jobs Board

WCMA's [online jobs board](#) is featuring 16 industry career opportunities from member companies Agropur, Baker Cheese, Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery - Wohlt Cheese, Inc., Emmi Roth USA, Lactalis American Group, Masters Gallery Foods, Saputo Cheese USA Inc. and Springside Cheese. Check out listings for cheesemakers, maintenance mechanics, IT summer interns, production associates 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

IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: [Crave Brothers farm makes award-winning cheese, powered by a bio-energy system](#) (Featuring WCMA member Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese)
- *Wisconsin State Journal*: [DNR to withhold data on PFAS in wastewater; agreement with WMC allows sampling to continue](#)
- *WXPR-Radio*: [Business group, DNR agree not to release PFAS tests for now](#)
- *WTMJ-TV*: [Wisconsin Supreme Court weighs state power to protect water from farm pollutants](#)

National/International

- *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*: [Cheese, every which way](#) (Featuring WCMA members Crystal Farms and Specialty Cheese Company)

- *Burlington Free Press*: [Look out Kraft. Cabot is getting into the mac and cheese business](#) (Featuring WCMA member Cabot Cooperative Creamery)
 - *Dairy Herd Management*: [\\$93 million in Dairy Margin Coverage payments distributed thus far](#)
 - *Dairy Herd Management*: [Class III futures continue to soar](#)
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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

