



# WCMA NEWS

Your source for the latest  
in dairy processing

April 15, 2025

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## NEWS

### China Announces Retaliatory Tariffs on All U.S. Products



Chinese officials responded to President Donald Trump's tariff escalation on Friday, imposing [duties of 125 percent](#) on American goods, including dairy. President Trump last week increased tariffs on Chinese products to 145 percent. China's Foreign Ministry also signaled the country would not engage in any further "tit-for-tat" action, noting in a statement, "Given the current level of tariffs, U.S. goods exported to China are no longer market-viable."

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### Wisconsin Shares Plan for H5N1 Milk Testing Participation



On Monday, April 14, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) officials shared that they have submitted a [draft of a cooperative agreement](#) to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to enable the start of the state's active participation in the National Milk Testing Strategy (NMTS) program.

WDATCP Secretary Randy Romanski noted that while the state awaits USDA sign-off, his agency will begin to [inform producers](#) of what to expect in the weeks to come. The state's plan is to use milk samples that are already sent in for lab testing to monitor for H5N1, with farms to be notified only if a positive result is found. Processors would not receive a notification of a positive automatically, though producers would be encouraged to communicate findings. WDATCP staff has already shared [a protocol](#) for action if H5N1 is confirmed. Pasteurization continues to be emphasized as an effective method for deactivating the virus.

The expected cost of Wisconsin's participation in the NMTS is \$1.2 million, with the federal government set to reimburse that amount.

H5N1 has not yet been detected in Wisconsin dairy herds, in spite of 6,000 tests conducted already via other programs. Nationwide, more than [1,000 herds](#) have been infected in 17 states.

Members with questions may contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

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# Dairy Business Innovation Alliance

## New DBIA Report Offers Valuable Info for Specialty Cheesemakers

Specialty cheesemakers can grow their market share through consumer education, sampling and trial size products, and creative promotional campaigns, according to a [report released last week](#) by the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA).

DBIA partners WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research partnered with market intelligence firm Ipsos to conduct a survey in Fall 2024 and produce the report. The final document reveals a wealth of valuable insights, including:

- Sampling opportunities and trial sizes are key to encouraging consumer exploration within the specialty cheese category.
- One-third of Americans say sales and promotions are the top avenue of increasing their specialty cheese consumption, making discounts and promotions especially important.
- Over 40 percent of specialty cheese consumers indicated that education displayed on packaging, social media, and other online avenues would encourage them to consume specialty cheese more often and branch out beyond familiar varieties.

The DBIA is supported by funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and was created in the 2018 federal Farm Bill. Since then, the Alliance has awarded over \$20 million in more than 250 grants to small and medium-sized dairy businesses.

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## California Hearing on Dairy Quota System May 5

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) will hold a [public hearing](#) on Monday, May 5, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. (PT) to gather input on a [petition to terminate the Quota Implementation Plan](#) (QIP) initially filed in August 2024. All California market milk producers and processors may attend and provide testimony, with those wishing to speak signing up upon arrival. The hearing is the next step in a referendum process, and questions may be directed to [CDFA staff](#).

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## Headlines

### Wisconsin

- WFRV-TV: [Enjoy Wisconsin cheeses during every meal with Pine River Cheese Spread](#) (Featuring WCMA member Pine River Pre-Pack)
- Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: [Designer creates limited-edition Kentucky Derby hats for charity with a special ingredient: Wisconsin cheese](#) (Featuring Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin)

### National & Global

- USA TODAY: [Escalating trade war between the U.S. and China is set to impact the global dairy market](#)
- Reuters: [Denmark's Arla plans dairy tie-up with Germany's DMK](#) (Featuring WCMA member Arla Foods)

- KCUR Radio: [USDA ended its local food programs. A look at how farmers, schools and food banks are coping](#)
- Stamford Advocate: [This Connecticut cheese exporter hopes to meet with and get tariff exemption from Trump team](#)
- WGRZ-TV: [Local dairy giant unveils new brand to boost national recognition](#)
- The Raleigh News Observer: [These NC lawmakers drink raw milk. But their push to allow it for all comes with risks.](#)
- Brownfield Ag News: [Dairy has long history of food safety training](#)

## FEATURED: CHEESECON

### Grow, Learn, and Celebrate at CheeseCon



Join thousands of colleagues, peers, and friends this week in Madison, Wisconsin for the dairy processing industry's premier gathering: [CheeseCon 2025!](#)

Online pre-registration is now closed and is **up nearly 20 percent from 2023!** On-site [registration](#) is fast and easy this week at the Alliant Energy Center Exhibition Hall.

[VIEW THE ONLINE DIRECTORY](#)

Network with CEOs, sales and marketing staff, quality assurance and food safety personnel, plant managers, and more. Learn from the industry's brightest minds in a full slate of [engaging educational opportunities](#). Grow your business with [over 350 tabletop exhibits](#) from the industry's most trusted supplier businesses. Celebrate excellence in dairy processing and meet the next generation of leaders. You'll find it all at [CheeseCon!](#)

### DOWNLOAD THE OFFICIAL CHEESECON MOBILE APP!



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Scan the QR code or click below to download the [free CheeseCon mobile app](#), available for Android and iPhone. Sponsored by WCMA member Membrane Process & Controls, the app offers complete exhibitor information, an exhibit floor map, a list of educational seminars, and schedule alerts.

[APP STORE](#)

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## EVENTS & CONNECTION

### RSVP for May 15 WCMA Workforce & Education Committee

Register now to join the [next hybrid meeting of WCMA's Workforce & Education Committee](#) on



Thursday, May 15, at 11:00 a.m. (CT). This engaging educational opportunity is open to all WCMA members, who can participate remotely or in-person at WCMA's training center in Madison.

Here's a look at our agenda:

- 11:00 a.m.: Call to Order & Introductions
- 11:15 a.m.: Navigating New Immigration Policy: Rights, Enforcement & Practices
  - Presenter: Kelly Fortier, Michael Best & Friedrich
- 12:00 p.m.: WCMA Workforce Resources
  - Presenter: Sara Schmidt, WCMA Membership Director
  - Topics: Upcoming Educational Opportunities, Wage Survey Results, and Employer of the Year Award
- 12:15 p.m.: Networking Lunch (*In-Person Only*)
- 1:00 p.m.: Navigating Trends in Total Compensation for Talent Attraction and Retention
  - Presenters: Pete Dewar, Client Executive and Grant Argall, Director of Retirement Plan Services, M3 Insurance
- 2:00 p.m.: From Conflict to Connection: Tackling Incivility and Building Resilience at Work
  - Presenter: Beth Ridley, Ridley Consulting Group
- 3:00 p.m.: Adjournment



**Kelly Fortier**  
Michael Best &  
Friedrich



**Pete Dewar**  
M3 Insurance



**Grant Argall**  
M3 Insurance



**Beth Ridley**  
Ridley Consulting  
Group

Thanks go to meeting sponsor [M3 Insurance](#) for its generous support! Looking to connect with WCMA members? [Limited sponsorships remain available](#) for this meeting.

Questions may be directed to [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

## Upcoming WCMA Events

April 15-17	April 24	May 1	May 13	May 15
<a href="#">CheeseCon 2025</a> (Advance registration closed April 7; register on-site)	<a href="#">Free Webinar: Dairy Exporting - Navigating Economic Cycles in a Changing World</a>	<a href="#">Health &amp; Safety Group Meeting</a> (Hybrid)	<a href="#">Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors</a> (In-Person)	<a href="#">Workforce &amp; Education Committee Meeting</a> (Hybrid)

[VIEW ALL & REGISTER](#)

## Sign Up for Free WCMA Dairy Export Webinar April 24

### WCMA Webinar

*Dairy Exporting: Navigating Economic Cycles in a Changing World*

**REGISTER NOW**

History shows that the global economy moves in cycles, shifting between openness and protectionism. Join WCMA's [next free member webinar](#) on Thursday, April 24 at 1:00 p.m. (CT) to explore past economic transitions, how businesses have adapted, and what today's exporters can do to thrive amid tariff wars and shifting trade policies.

Featured speakers Dr. Andy Novakovic, Emeritus Professor of Dairy Economics of Cornell University, Dr. Chuck Nicholson of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Jacqueline Cook of Ausfine Foods and Cook Alpine Ltd. will offer insights on navigating uncertainty, finding opportunities, and accessing reliable resources to stay ahead in a rapidly evolving economic landscape.

Thanks go to webinar sponsor [Global Dairy Trade](#) for their generous support! Interested in connecting with WCMA members? Limited sponsorships are [still available](#).

## Register for May 13 WCMA Basic Safety Training



Ensure your valued team members have the knowledge and skills needed to stay safe on the job. [Register them now](#) for the May 13 in-person offering of WCMA's Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors class, exclusively sponsored by [Nelson-Jameson](#). Just 24 spaces are available, so reserve yours now!

**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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