



WCMA NEWS

Your source for the latest
in dairy processing

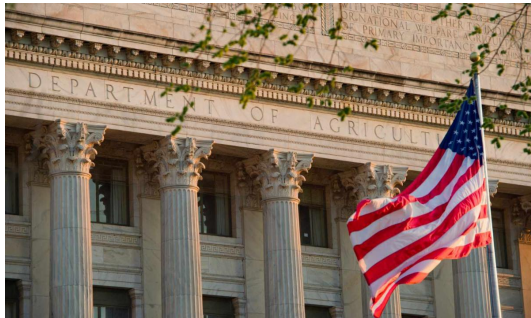
April 8, 2025

news@wischeesemakers.org



NEWS

USDA Planning Mass Layoffs, Encourages "Deferred Resignation"



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) [notified agency personnel](#) via email last week that another round of layoffs is coming, encouraging workers to accept a "deferred resignation program" by close of business today, offering them paid leave through September. The agency is also offering early retirement to certain employees. [READ MORE...](#)

USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins has not yet provided details on the layoffs, saying instead that the agency cannot offer "full assurance regarding which positions will remain—or where they will be located—after USDA's restructuring." Nearly 6,000 probationary workers were fired at the USDA in February and then brought back in recent weeks under court order.

Proposed New Tariffs Trigger Global Escalation Against U.S.



President Donald Trump's [sweeping new tariffs](#) on U.S. imports, announced Wednesday, April 2 and detailed in a [WCMA member alert](#), are triggering responses from some of the nation's key trading partners – which may also mean an escalation of action from the White House.

Trump today proposed an additional 50 percent tariff on Chinese goods, on top of the 34 percent he announced last week against the world's second-largest economy. [His message](#) is a reaction to [Chinese officials' announcement](#) on April 4 of a matching 34 percent blanket tariff on all U.S. imports, including dairy, an amount matching Trump's original tariff on goods from China. China is vowing a ["fight to the end"](#) on tariffs.

The 27-country European Union rolled out its [first set of counter-measures](#) last night, offering a "zero-for-zero" tariff deal to Washington, but also proposing retaliatory tariffs of 25 percent on a range of U.S. imports, notably excluding dairy.

Mexico and Canada were [left off](#) Trump's new global tariffs list but levies up to 25 percent have already been [imposed](#) on automobiles, steel, aluminum, as well as on goods that do not comply with the USMCA trade pact. While Mexican officials are not ruling out retaliatory tariffs, they are working to negotiate first with the U.S. Canada has, however, imposed 25 percent tariffs on \$50 billion worth of U.S. goods, plus new auto tariffs on all imports from the U.S.

Brazil's Congress [reacted](#) to Trump's tariffs by passing a law enabling trade retaliation, with action yet to come. Great Britain, India, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam have announced no immediate counter-measures, instead sending teams to negotiate concessions from the U.S.

Members are encouraged to contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#) with information about how tariffs - both imposed by the U.S. and by trading partners - are impacting their business, for use in advocacy efforts.

Join WCMA in Advocating for Annual DBI Funding in Congress



WCMA has submitted Congressional appropriations requests for \$36 million in annual funding for Dairy Business Innovation (DBI) Initiatives. This USDA-based program provides direct-to-business grants, technical assistance, market analysis, and business consulting services for dairy farmers and processors.

With future federal funding in question, your direct advocacy for DBI Initiatives is needed to secure this impactful program. Use [WCMA's e-advocacy tool](#) to support DBI Initiatives today! [Click here](#) to contact your federal lawmakers with a DBI Initiative appropriations request by close of business on Monday, April 14. Please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#) with any questions

Headlines

Wisconsin

- Hoard's Dairyman: [Foremost Farms CEO Greg Schlafer announces resignation](#) (Featuring WCMA member Foremost Farms USA)
- WMTJ Radio: [Celebrating all things cheese: Plymouth announces third annual cheese festival](#) (Featuring WCMA members Great Lakes Cheese, Masters Gallery Foods, Sargento Foods, and Sartori Company)
- WFRV-TV: [Meet the Wisconsin maker: Renard's Cheese](#) (Featuring WCMA member Renard's Cheese)

National & Global

- USA TODAY: ['Going to be a lot of hungry people': Food banks, farmers across U.S. decry federal cuts](#)
 - Wall Street Journal: [Parmesan prices in the U.S. to jump, Italian cheese makers warn](#)
 - News24: ['Boycott USA' stickers, Philadelphia cream cheese pranks in European stores amid Trump fallout](#)
 - Civil Eats: [How a Vermont cheesemaker helps local farms thrive](#)
 - Ames Tribune: [Making cheese is a 'gouda' thing for ISU Creamery. How a \\$25K grant will double production](#)
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EVENTS & CONNECTION

Grow, Learn, and Celebrate at CheeseCon Next Week



Join thousands of colleagues, peers, and friends next 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 on April 15, 16 and 17 at the Alliant Energy Center Exhibition Hall.

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!



Sponsored by:



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

GOOGLE PLAY

Register for May 1 WCMA Health & Safety Group Meeting



Employee health and safety professionals in dairy processing know the importance of staying connected and informed to keeping their valued team members safe on the job. Join the [next meeting of WCMA's Health & Safety Group](#) on Thursday, May 1 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. (CT) to connect with peers and hear from special featured speakers on a range of timely topics. [READ MORE...](#)

RSVP NOW

Thanks to meeting sponsor [Nelson-Jameson](#) for their generous support! Limited sponsorships of this meeting are [available now](#).

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). Connect with your peers in human resources, and learn from guest experts on timely topics in dairy processing and personnel management.

Looking to connect with WCMA members? [Limited sponsorships are also available](#) for this meeting.

Upcoming WCMA Events

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

[VIEW ALL & REGISTER](#)

EDUCATION

Sign Up for Free WCMA Dairy Export Webinar April 24



[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. 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

Join Dairy Innovation Hub for May 14 Symposium



Registration is open now for the [Dairy Innovation Hub's annual Dairy Symposium](#), set for Wednesday, May 14. Learn about the latest Hub-funded research across three University of Wisconsin campuses, and enjoy a Morning Plenary Session by Mike Brown of WCMA member T.C. Jacoby & Company focused on the impact of research in the dairy supply chain.

Have questions? Contact [Dairy Innovation Hub staff](#).



FEATURED: MEMBERSHIP

Maintain CheeseCon Connections: Update Your Contact Info Now



Next week, the dairy processing industry will flock to Madison, Wisconsin for unbeatable networking at CheeseCon. Don't lose your valuable business connections after the event: make sure your contact information is up-to-date in [WCMA's online Member Directory](#)! This searchable database, available exclusively to logged-in members, updates in real time with the names and details you need to grow your network and your business.

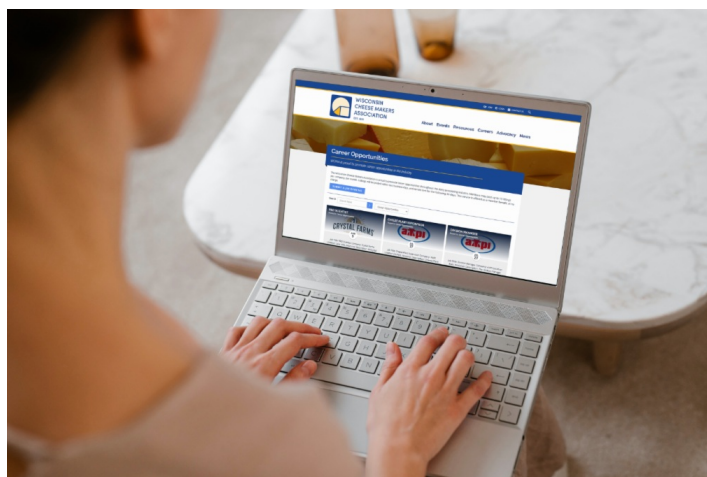
WCMA Welcomes New Members



Join WCMA in welcoming new supplier members [SouthTek Nitrogen Systems](#), [Hilker Warehousing LLC](#), [Custom Stainless Solutions](#), [Guthrie & Frey Water Conditioning LLC](#), [BAADER Food Systems USA Inc.](#), [Trident Automation, Inc.](#), [Chemtrade](#), [Disruptive Process Solutions](#), [Avebe America](#), [Transworld Technologies Inc.](#), [INEX solutions](#), [Two Rivers Enterprises](#), [Indue Sales & Services](#), [Tony Belden Co. LLC](#), [MDE Corporation](#), [ChemDAQ](#), [Continental Datalabel](#), [Corporación FIBOSA Internacional](#), [Bila Group](#), [Cambrian Innovation](#), and [DuPont](#).

View these and hundreds of other WCMA members now in our searchable [online directory](#). Have questions about WCMA membership? Contact [WCMA Membership Director Sara Schmidt](#).

Take Advantage of WCMA's Free Online Jobs Board



Share your career openings on [WCMA's online jobs board](#), available to members only - for free! Members can post up to 10 job openings per month. Each posting is published within two business days and remains live on our website for 30 days after submission. Currently, the Jobs Board features openings from members Bassett Mechanical, Foremost Farms USA, and Masters Gallery Foods.

Have questions or need assistance? Please contact [WCMA Communications Director Grace Atherton](#).

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