



# WCMA NEWS

Your source for the latest  
in dairy processing

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## NEWS



# H5N1 *Response*

## New Guidance for Raw Milk Cheesemakers on H5N1



The National Association of Dairy Regulatory Officials (NADRO), together with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA), and state leaders, is sharing [best practices and resources for raw milk cheesemakers](#), to facilitate detection of H5N1 virus.

The guidance, which is voluntary and should not be considered regulatory, follows the release of preliminary results of research conducted by Cornell University that suggests that H5N1 may survive the 60-day aging process required for raw milk cheese sold in retail settings.

Raw milk cheesemakers may choose to pay a fee to have [samples of finished products tested for H5N1 at Cornell University](#), if they wish. Researchers at the University of Wisconsin also expect to offer this service in the weeks ahead.

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## Organic Milk Handlers Request Exemption from FMMOs

As revisions to federal milk marketing orders (FMMOs) are set to take effect June 1, three organic dairy processors, including WCMA member CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley, have filed petitions requesting to be



exempted from FMMOs.

In the petitions, [Aurora Organic Dairy Corp.](#), [CROPP Cooperative](#), and [Horizon Organic Dairy](#) contend that FMMOs disproportionately regulate organic milk in comparison to conventional, resulting in significantly higher costs for organic milk handlers. Under the June and December 2025 FMMO pricing changes, the petitioners estimate that their payments into the producer settlement funds will increase by 60 to 70 percent annually.

The filings are a required step set forth in the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act, which governs FMMOs, and are not expected to impact implementation of the updated FMMOs in June.

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## USDA Reports 15,000 Staff Resignations



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reports at least [15,000 employees](#) have now taken the Trump administration's offers to resign, accounting for 15 percent of the agency's total workforce. The program allows employees to quit and be paid through September, avoiding potential USDA is targeting [as many as 30,000 job cuts](#), and detailed reduction-in-force plans are expected later this month.

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## Survey Shows DBIA Grants Spur Business Growth, Resilience



A [recent survey](#) commissioned by the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA) found that 94 percent of responding businesses created jobs or retained employees thanks to their DBIA grant, and 63 percent saw increased sales and revenue as a result of their DBIA-funded projects.

WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer noted, "This data proves...the Alliance's targeted investments generate sustainable, meaningful success for individual dairy businesses, their rural communities, and the broader industry." [READ MORE...](#)

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## WCMA Voices Support for Child Care Funding in Wisconsin Budget





In response to member concerns, WCMA is engaged in a coalition campaign to advocate for child care investments in Wisconsin's state budget, and this week signed on to a [letter detailing associated funding needs](#). Individual Wisconsin businesses are encouraged to [sign on to this petition](#) by May 9.

In Wisconsin, a lack of accessible, affordable child care coverage is already estimated to cost more than \$1.1 billion per year in lost economic productivity, earnings, and revenue. With pandemic-era child care relief funding set to expire this coming June, and absent a state investment, many child care providers may be forced to close their doors or raise fees, further straining the workforce and creating challenges for businesses.

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

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## Andy Hatch Appointed to WDATCP Board



WCMA applauds Wisconsin Governor Tony [Evers' appointment of Andy Hatch](#) of member company Uplands Cheese to serve a six-year term on the [Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection \(WDATCP\) Board](#).

Hatch is WCMA's Policy Committee chair, and a strong advocate for dairy processors. On the WDATCP Board, he will oversee policy decisions. WCMA will support Hatch's confirmation process in the State Legislature.

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## USDA Awards Cheddar, Fluid Milk Contracts to WCMA Members

The U.S. Department of Agriculture awarded [contracts](#) to WCMA members Associated Milk Producers Inc., Masters Gallery Foods, and Winona Foods to provide more than 407,000 pounds of cheddar cheese for use in federal food distribution programs. USDA also awarded [contracts](#) to WCMA members Dairy Farmers of America and Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc. to provide over 290,000 gallons of fresh fluid milk.

A list of [open USDA solicitations](#) and information on how to [become an approved vendor](#) is available [online](#).

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## Headlines

### Wisconsin

- WORT Radio: [The annual Cheese Makers convention: The artistry of cheese making](#) (Featuring WCMA and members Cedar Grove Cheese and Klondike Cheese Company)
- WXPB Radio: [The potential impact of tariffs on Wisconsin's dairy industry](#)
- Midwest Living: [How to spend 24 hours in Door County, Wisconsin](#) (Featuring WCMA member Renard's Cheese)

### National & Global

- Dairy Herd Management: [Strengthening dairy bonds: U.S. and Indonesia chart a cooperative future](#)
- Dairy Processing: [Actus Nutrition buys Foremost Farms plant](#) (Featuring WCMA members Actus Nutrition and Foremost Farms USA)
- Food Business News: [Gellert Global acquires specialty cheese manufacturer](#)
- The Chaffee County Times: [Colorado Farmhouse Cheese Co. sets up shop in Buena Vista](#)
- Oregon Public Radio: ['The Evergreen': How cheese has shaped Oregon](#)

## FEATURED: WEBINARS

### Focus on Worker Wellness in Free WCMA Webinar May 22

## WCMA Webinar

### *Mental Health Resources for Dairy Processing Employees*

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and it's the perfect time to ensure your business is prepared to support your valued team members. Join WCMA's next [free, members-only webinar](#) Thursday, May 22 focused on the growing prevalence of mental health challenges in the workplace, and the critical role employers play in fostering workers' well-being.

### Interested in connecting with attendees?

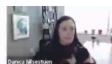
Limited sponsorships of this webinar are [available now](#) through May 20, including recognition in promotions and during the session. Benefits include:

- Written mentions in advance webinar promotions and follow-up
- Verbal recognition during the webinar
- Access to attendee list
- Recognition with logo display during webinar

Don't miss this opportunity to reach dairy processors and show your support for ongoing industry education! [Secure your sponsorship today.](#)

**SPONSOR WEBINAR**

### Free WCMA Export Webinar, Resources Available Online Now



A recording of WCMA's latest free webinar, focused on dairy exporting and navigating economic cycles in a changing world, is [now available online](#). This session features presentations from Dr. Andy Novakovic of Cornell University, Dr. Chuck Nicholson of University of Wisconsin-Madison and Jacqueline Cook of Ausfine Foods and Cook Alpine Ltd., as well as a Q&A with presenters. Thanks go to [Global Dairy Trade](#) for sponsoring this webinar.

## EDUCATION

## Enhance Safety Culture with May 13 WCMA Basic Safety Training



Act now to [register your valued team members](#) for the May 13 in-person offering of WCMA's Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors class, exclusively sponsored by [Nelson-Jameson](#). Limited time remains to ensure your valued team members have the knowledge and skills needed to stay safe on the job. Take advantage of this affordable opportunity today!

**REGISTER NOW**

## May 15 Workforce & Education Committee Meeting to Cover Immigration Policy, Compensation Trends, and More



**Kelly Fortier**  
Michael Best & Friedrich



**Pete Dewar**  
M3 Insurance



**Grant Argall**  
M3 Insurance



**Beth Ridley**  
Ridley Consulting Group

RSVP today to join the [next hybrid meeting of WCMA's Workforce & Education Committee](#) on Thursday, May 15, at 11:00 a.m. (CT). Members are welcome to join online or in-person for networking and presentations from leading experts on navigating immigration policy, current compensation trends, and tackling incivility in the workplace.

Thanks go to meeting sponsor [M3 Insurance](#) for its generous support! Looking to connect with WCMA members? [Limited sponsorships](#) are available now until May 13 for this meeting.

## EVENTS & CONNECTION

### Secure Premier Level Golf Sponsorships by May 9 to Skip the Registration Rush



Just days remain to pair impactful marketing opportunities at the WCMA Golf Outing & Trap Shoot with top-notch registration benefits. Become a [Premier Level sponsor](#) by Friday, May 9, and WCMA will hold up to 12 golfer spots for purchase by your company. Don't wait - [secure yours now](#) to skip the rush on registration day!

**SPONSOR TODAY**

## Upcoming WCMA Events



May 13	May 13	May 15	May 22	May 29
<a href="#">Golf Outing &amp; Trap Shoot Registration Opens</a> 10:00 a.m. (CT)	<a href="#">Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors</a> (In-Person)	<a href="#">Workforce &amp; Education Committee Meeting</a> (Hybrid)	<a href="#">Free Webinar: Mental Health Resources for Dairy Processing Employees</a>	<a href="#">Dairy Food Safety Alliance Meeting &amp; Tour</a> (Hybrid)

[VIEW ALL & REGISTER](#)



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