



WCMA NEWS

AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION



INDUSTRY UPDATES

Breaking News: Lactalis Group to Buy Kraft Heinz Cheese Businesses in \$3.2 Billion Deal

In a \$3.2 billion deal reported this morning, Lactalis Group has agreed to buy Kraft Heinz's natural, grated, cultured and specialty cheese businesses in the United States, its grated cheese business in Canada and entire international cheese business outside North America.

Lactalis is set to acquire multiple brands, including Cracker Barrel, Breakstone's, Knudsen, Polly-O, Athenos, Hoffman's, and - outside the U.S. and Canada only - Cheez Whiz. Kraft Heinz will also partner with Lactalis on a perpetual license for Kraft in natural, grated, and international cheeses and Velveeta in natural and international cheeses.

Lactalis will acquire Kraft Heinz production facilities in Tulare, California; Walton, New York; and Wasusau, Wisconsin, as well as a distribution center in Weyauwega, Wisconsin.

Lactalis announced that 750 Kraft Heinz employees will be joining their company. It expects to add more jobs after the sale is completed, in the first half of 2021.

For more on this breaking news, see the articles linked below:

- *CNBC*: [Kraft Heinz to sell part of cheese business to Lactalis in \\$3.2 billion deal](#)
- *Wall Street Journal*: [Kraft Heinz to sell part of cheese business for \\$3.2 billion](#)
- *Yahoo! Finance*: [Kraft Heinz revamps business structure, sells parts of cheese business to Lactalis](#)

Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery Building New Plant



Congratulations go to the team at WCMA member company Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery, as they begin construction of a new production facility in Menomonie, Wisconsin. The project will focus on manufacturing specialty cheese, in addition to a retail store with a full grill, deep-fryer and pizza oven. The facility is expected to be completed in Fall 2021.

Specialty Cheese Breaks Ground on Plant Expansion

Congratulations go to the team at WCMA member company Specialty Cheese which last week broke ground on a plant expansion project. The expansion



will increase capacity for production of its fresh cheeses and snack line, Just the Cheese.

Pictured, left to right, are Matt Smith, Jeanie Korth, Paul Scharfman, Mike Margelofsky, Jim Schwartz, and David Scharfman, all of Specialty Cheese.

Dairy Business Innovation Alliance Awards Grants

The Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA), a partnership between the Center for Dairy Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and WCMA this week announced the [13 companies and cooperatives which have been selected to receive 2020 grants](#) totaling \$230,000.

DBIA encompasses the dairy industry in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin, seeking to support farms and processors who are innovating with new products, technology and niches to grow the industry and keep the farm community strong.

2020 DBIA grant recipients, listed alphabetically by company name, are: Bennett Valley Cheese of Gilmanton, Wisconsin; Carr Valley Cheese of La Valle, Wisconsin; Country View Dairy of Hawkeye, Iowa; Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese of Waterloo, Wisconsin; Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery of Ellsworth, Wisconsin; Farm Life Creamery of Ethan, South Dakota; Marcoot Jersey Creamery of Greenville, Illinois; McCluskey Brothers of Hillpoint, Wisconsin; Metz's Hart-Land Creamery of Rushford, Minnesota; Redhead Creamery of Brooten, Minnesota; Royal Guernsey Creamery of Columbus, Wisconsin; Taste and See Creamery of Boyceville, Wisconsin; and Yodelay Yogurt of Madison, Wisconsin.

In the next funding period, running through 2023, the DBIA will distribute over \$3.4 million in grants to dairy farm and processing businesses, in potential increments between \$5,000-\$250,000. DBIA will also provide funding across market research, product development, training workshops, and consultative services to industry. Program support comes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Current and future announcements regarding [DBIA grants and trainings can be found online](#).



USDA Solicits Bids for Purchase of 82.6 Million Pounds of Mozzarella in 2021

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is now soliciting bids for the purchase of [82.6 million pounds of mozzarella cheese](#) for delivery throughout 2021. The cheese will be distributed nationwide via seven food assistance programs. Bids are due September 22 at 9:00 a.m. (CT), and questions may be directed to [USDA staff](#).

A complete listing of USDA open solicitations is [available online](#).

USTR Seeks Comments on Trade Barriers

The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) is [accepting comments](#) through October 29 on the topic of significant barriers to U.S. exports of goods and services. Note, the docket number is USTR-2020-0034. Submissions will be included in the annual National Trade Estimate Report on

IN THE NEWS

Wisconsin

- *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation:* [How Trump's dairy deal with Canada is viewed in swing-state Wisconsin](#)

National/International

- *Feedstuffs:* [Trump and Biden: What solutions do they bring to ag?](#)
- *Dairy Herd Management:* [Dairy becomes sticking point in trade deal with India](#)
- *Politico:* [Taiwan's top U.S. diplomat presses for free trade agreement](#)
- *Trade Financial Global:* [UK and Japan agree historic free trade agreement](#)
- *Bloomberg:* [Virus and trade woes set to cut Australian farm exports by 10 percent](#)

CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Research Shows Vitamin D May Offer Some Protection Against COVID-19 Infection

A new study from University of Chicago Medicine has found an [association between vitamin D deficiency and the likelihood of becoming infected](#) with coronavirus.

The research team looked at 489 patients whose vitamin D level was measured within a year before being tested for COVID-19. Patients who had vitamin D deficiency that was not treated were almost twice as likely to test positive for COVID-19 compared to patients who had sufficient levels of the vitamin.

Some of the associated news coverage of the study's release note milk, cheese, yogurt and other dairy products as excellent sources of Vitamin D. See more below.

- *WMAQ-TV:* [UChicago Medicine study finds possible link between vitamin D deficiency and contracting COVID-19](#)
- *Chicago Tribune:* [Lack of vitamin D might increase risk of COVID-19](#)
- *WKRC-TV:* [New research shows vitamin D may help fight COVID-19](#)
- *KMBC-TV:* [Health experts say more evidence showing vitamin D important to surviving COVID-19](#)

Coronavirus Headline News

Dairy Industry

- *Dairy Reporter:* [DFA donating refrigeration to rural food banks](#)
- *St. Cloud Times:* [Why fewer Minnesota dairy farmers are going out of business](#)
- *NPR:* [The pandemic's ripple effect on northern California businesses](#)
- *Bloomberg:* [COVID is clobbering America's farm workers](#)
- *The Counter:* [Should states require food and farm businesses to test their employees for COVID-19?](#)
- *The Counter:* ["Someone's profiting off this": New public records reveal COVID-19 hunger relief contractors get handsome payouts for mediocre food boxes](#)

Wisconsin

- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel:* [Coronavirus in Wisconsin: Nearly 20% of tests are positive as state reports fewer tests than usual](#)
- *Wisconsin Public Radio:* [Wisconsin sets new daily record for COVID-19 cases on Sunday](#)
- *WISC-TV:* [La Crosse County added to New York Times COVID-19 hotspot list](#)

- WEAU-TV: [State of Wisconsin, La Crosse County reports record high cases of COVID-19](#)
- U.S. News & World Report: [University of Wisconsin-La Crosse halts classes for two weeks due to virus](#)
- WFRV-TV: Number
- Daily Citizen: [COVID deaths on the rise in Dodge County](#)
- USA Today: [Wisconsin asks unemployed residents to return \\$300 in jobless aid if Congress passes new relief](#)

National/International

- NBC News: [COVID death rate slows slightly as U.S. nears grim 200,000th fatality milestone](#)
- FOX News: [Pfizer CEO says coronavirus vaccine could be distributed to Americans before year's end](#)
- FOX News: [Trump in 'Fox & Friends' interview claims coronavirus vaccine coming 'in a matter of weeks'](#)
- Wall Street Journal: [Democrats, Republicans point fingers over lack of coronavirus aid bill](#)
- Reuters: [Retirements, layoffs, labor force flight may leave scars on U.S. economy](#)

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 always 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

EDUCATION

WCMA Spotlight: Deadline September 17 to Register for Next Step Leadership Training



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Just two days remain to register for WCMA's newest industry training offering: [Next Step Leadership](#), set for Tuesday, October 6. This engaging online class offers a refresher on essential leadership skills and a deep dive on one topic, determined by our members. This year, Next Step Leadership focuses on diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Tuition costs \$135 per person, and just six spots remain - so [reserve your space today!](#)

Here's a look at WCMA's other Fall 2020 leadership trainings:

- **September 24:** Front-Line Leadership Training: Essential Skills **SOLD OUT!**
- **October 15:** [Front-Line Leadership Training Part B: Positively Impacting Performance](#) **ONE SPOT REMAINS**
- **November 4:** Front-Line Leadership Training: Cultivating a Team **SOLD OUT!**

- November 5: [Front-Line Leadership Training Part C: Cultivating a Team](#) **SIX SPOTS REMAIN**

REGISTER NOW

Register for Other Industry Training Opportunities

WCMA is proud to promote opportunities for training and enrichment hosted by our partners in industry. Consider registering to participate in these upcoming events:

- September 28: [Master Artisan Short Course Series, Swiss Cheese | Center for Dairy Research](#)
- October 1: [Cheesemaking 101 | Center for Dairy Research](#)
- October 27-29: [Dairy Protein Beverage Applications Online Course | Center for Dairy Research](#)
- November 16-20: [Advanced Cheese Tech Short Course | Center for Dairy Research](#)

Register for Education Committee Meeting October 6

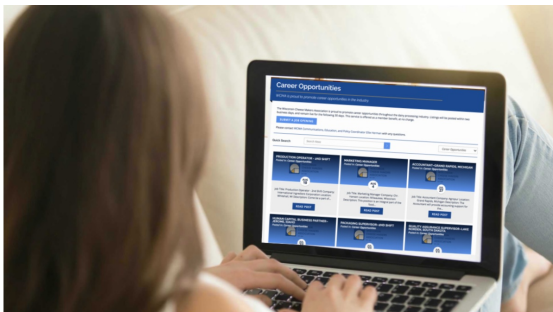
[Register now for a virtual meeting](#) of the [WCMA Education Committee](#) set for Tuesday, October 6 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. (CT). Committee members will discuss current pandemic-related training needs and evaluate WCMA leadership trainings. For more information, see the [full meeting agenda](#).

All WCMA members are welcome to join in this free, open meeting. Register by Friday, October 2 to join us for the meeting, held via Zoom. Questions? Contact [WCMA Communications, Education, and Policy Director Rebekah Sweeney](#).

REGISTER NOW

WORKFORCE

Submit Openings, Consider New Opportunities on WCMA Jobs Board



WCMA's [industry-specific online jobs board](#) is currently featuring career opportunities at WCMA member companies Agropur, Caloris Engineering, Chr. Hansen, International Ingredient Corporation, and Springside Cheese. Check out what's [posted right now!](#)

All WCMA members, including manufacturers, processors, marketers, and suppliers, are invited to [submit job openings](#) at any time. It's free and easy. Have questions? [WCMA staff](#) can help.

Register for Workforce Committee Meeting October 20

Register now to join in a virtual meeting of **WCMA's Workforce Committee** set for Tuesday, October 20 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. (CT). Meeting goals include discussing pandemic-related workforce challenges - and how WCMA can help, current training offerings and unmet needs, changes to WCMA's annual Wage & Workforce Survey, and various employee attraction and retention resources.

All WCMA members are welcome to join in this free, open meeting, and those with human resources responsibilities are especially encouraged to participate. Register by Friday, October 16. Questions? Contact **WCMA Communications, Education, and Policy Director Rebekah Sweeney**.

REGISTER NOW

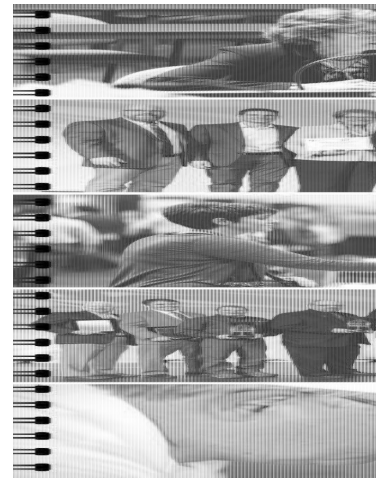
MEMBERSHIP

Reserve Ad Space for 2021 WCMA Member Directory

Preparations are now underway for the 2021 Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association Member Directory, and we're pleased to offer supplier members **an early opportunity to reserve ad space**.

Advertising in the WCMA Member Directory connects your company with more than 100 dairy manufacturers, processors, and marketers, operating out of 275 facilities in 22 states and 11 countries.

Advertising spots will be allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis - and the deadline to reserve space is Monday, October 19. To reserve your space, contact **WCMA Office and Member Service Manager Sara Schmidt**.



Sign Up Colleagues for WCMA E-Newsletters

Thanks for subscribing to WCMA's weekly electronic communications! 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 this or other communications products.

WisCheeseMakers.org

