



# WCMA NEWS

Your source for the latest  
in dairy processing

September 23, 2025

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## NEWS

### Government Shutdown Looms as Negotiations Break Down



President Donald Trump today [cancelled planned meetings](#) with top Congressional Democrats, a troubling sign that appropriations negotiations have halted in the nation's Capital. If Congress cannot reach agreement over long-term spending plans – or temporary stopgap bills – by September 30, a government shutdown would occur. The Trump Administration has yet to announce federal agencies' contingency plans for how they'd manage operations until Congress approves their funding for the coming fiscal year. [READ MORE...](#)

Amid many other priorities, WCMA is leading advocacy efforts to continue funding for the [Dairy Business Innovation \(DBI\) Initiatives](#), providing both technical assistance and direct-to-business grants across the country. The current House appropriations plan offers \$8 million for DBI programs, while the Senate proposal offers \$12 million.

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### WCMA Opposing Federal Effort to Define UPFs

WCMA this week [submitted comments](#) in the [Federal Register](#) in opposition to a government push to define “ultra-processed foods.” This comment, drafted with input from many WCMA members, focuses on three key arguments: current regulatory systems already offer consumers clarity; nutritional value, not processing methods, should be the chief consideration in any food classification; and some food processing is essential for safety, quality, and innovation. WCMA is also emphasizing dairy's



tremendous health benefits, proven over decades in scientific studies.

The deadline for public comments on the concept of a UPF definition is now October 23. If you have questions or would like support in submitting your own message, please contact [WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney](#).

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## Advocacy Alert: Take Action to Oppose Wisconsin Labeling Bill



On September 22, two Wisconsin lawmakers circulated a bill draft, [LRB-2577](#), that would impose new ingredient disclosure and labeling mandates on food manufacturers. Dairy plants already meet rigorous FDA and USDA standards, and this bill creates a duplicative state-only scheme that would raise costs, mislead consumers, and damage Wisconsin's food economy.

This morning, WCMA sent a [strong message to lawmakers in opposition to LRB 2577](#). **Now, we need your voice.** If you have any operations in Wisconsin, please [contact lawmakers today via WCMA's easy e-advocacy tool](#) and urge them not to sign on to LRB-2577. Tell them Wisconsin should stand for science-based regulation, support for food processors and farmers, and policies that strengthen - not weaken - America's Dairyland. Have questions or concerns? Contact [Rebekah Sweeney](#).

**CONTACT WI LAWMAKERS**

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## USTR Seeks Comments on USMCA, Foreign Trade Barriers

The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) is [seeking public comment on the operation](#) of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, ahead of a Joint Review on the agreement set for July 2026. Comments are due November 3 by 10:59 p.m. (CT). USTR is also [requesting comment on significant foreign trade barriers](#) for its upcoming National Trade Estimate Report. Comments are due Thursday, October 30 by 10:59 p.m. (CT).





WCMA will submit a comment on both topics on members' behalf. To share input, please contact [Rebekah Sweeney](#).

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## Trump H-1B Visa Order Adds \$100K Fee



Effective Sunday, September 21, all new H-1B visa applications are subject to a \$100,000 fee, according to a [proclamation issued by the White House](#) last Friday. The proclamation also [outlined additional steps](#) to be taken by the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Labor to revise the H-1B program to prioritize higher-paid, higher-skilled applicants. WCMA is seeking further detail about how the proposal may affect members. Questions may be directed to [Rebekah Sweeney](#).

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## WCMA Advocates Whey Inclusion in SAF Tax Credit Bill



WCMA is closely tracking Wisconsin [Assembly Bill 222/Senate Bill 284](#), which would create a \$1.50-per-gallon tax credit for the production of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) made from energy crops grown in the U.S. WCMA is advocating to ensure whey is explicitly recognized as an eligible energy crop. The bill is gaining momentum, with a [legislative hearing held on September 16](#). WCMA will continue working with lawmakers and monitoring the bill's progress to secure whey's inclusion in the final version. [READ MORE...](#)

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## USDA Seeks Cheese, Updates Master CRD

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has issued solicitations for a variety of cheese products to be used in domestic



food distribution programs:

- [Processed Cheese](#) - Deadline: September 24, 1:00 p.m. (CT)
- [Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity \(IDIQ\) Process Cheese](#) - Deadline: October 6, 1:00 p.m (CT)
- [IDIQ Cheddar Cheese](#) - Deadline: October 8, 1:00 p.m. (CT)

USDA also released an updated [Master Solicitation for Domestic Commodity Procurements](#), effective September 18, 2025, which provides general guidance for potential bidders. [READ MORE...](#)

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## Headlines

### Wisconsin

- WISC-TV: [In the 608: The Wisconsin Cheese Ball returns for Art of Cheese Festival 2025](#) (Featuring Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin)
- FoodDive: [Lifeway to double production capacity at Wisconsin kefir factory](#)

### National & Global

- Dairy Herd Management: [The Dairy Boom: 2025's Year of Milk, Momentum and More](#)
- Bloomberg: [American farmers are feeling the pain of Trump's policies](#)
- Dairy Processing: [Darigold appoints its next CEO](#)
- USA TODAY: [Trump admin cancels food security survey](#)
- Albuquerque Journal: [Saputo's string cheese operation in Las Cruces stretches expectations](#) (Featuring WCMA member Saputo Cheese USA)

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## EVENTS & CONNECTION

### WCMA Launches CheeseExpo 2026 Registration, Sponsorships



Registration is now open for [CheeseExpo 2026](#)! Grow your business, enhance your knowledge, and get engaged in the global dairy processing industry April 14-16, 2026 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Don't miss out: [act now for special early-bird pricing](#). Looking to make an impact and show your support for the dairy processing industry? High-visibility sponsorships are also available for [CheeseExpo](#) and the [2026 World Championship Cheese Contest](#), hosted March 3-5 in Madison, Wisconsin.

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## Upcoming WCMA Events

October 8	October 9	October 22	October 23	October 28
<a href="#">Health &amp; Safety</a>	<a href="#">Free Webinar:</a>	<a href="#">Annual Member</a>	<a href="#">Dairy Food</a>	<a href="#">Workforce &amp;</a>

## FEATURED: MEMBERSHIP

### Stay Connected: Update Your Details in WCMA Member Directory



Stay connected to WCMA's global network—and help the industry stay connected to you. [Update your member listing](#) and [reserve ad space](#) in our Annual Member Directory by October 9 to ensure inclusion in the next printed edition. Choose from a variety of [impactful marketing options](#) to highlight your business. Update your profile and contact information at [WisCheeseMakers.org](#). Need a hand? [Watch our quick video tutorial](#) for a step-by-step guide.

### WCMA Welcomes New Members



BW Design Group



Join WCMA in welcoming new supplier members [BW Design Group](#), [Van Ert Electric Company, Inc.](#), [Garratt-Callahan Company](#), [Badger State Western, Inc.](#), [Espera Cooper Inc.](#), [DRS Trucking](#), [Green Steel Environmental](#), and [Polygon U.S.](#)



ESPERA COOPER



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](#).

## EDUCATION

### Boost Collaboration & Drive Success with WCMA's HR Workshop

Sign up now for WCMA's [Human Resources Workshop](#) on October 28, offered both in person in Madison and online via Zoom. This interactive training will equip participants with practical tools to strengthen organizational collaboration and drive business success.

The day features networking opportunities,





the WCMA Workforce & Education Committee meeting, and an afternoon of skill-building sessions focused on creating a collaborative workplace, resolving conflict, and leveraging team strengths. [READ MORE...](#)

Interested in connecting with attendees? [Exclusive sponsorship](#) of this training is available until October 21.



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