

WCMA NEWS

Your source for the latest
in dairy processing

September 2, 2025

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FEATURED: WCMA NOTES

Dairy Needs Immigration Reform Now



For decades, dairy manufacturers and other food processing industries vital to American food security have urged Congress to create a year-round agricultural visa for immigrant workers. But, says WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer in this month's [WCMA Notes column](#), Congress – under the leadership of both political parties – has failed to act. Now, the need for reform is more apparent than ever, and dairy processors nationwide have clearly spelled out the work they need from Congress. [READ MORE...](#)

NEWS

Apply Now for Dairy Processor Grants



Applications for the [2026 Wisconsin Dairy Processor Grants](#) are open now! In our newest video, hear from [Andy Hatch of WCMA member Uplands Cheese](#) on how Dairy Processor Grants helped expand and grow his business. Thanks to the advocacy efforts of WCMA and members to boost program funding, grants of up to \$50,000 each will be awarded. A 20 percent match is required for all approved projects. Applications must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. noon (CT) on September 17.

Click the ["Play" button](#) to view our new video highlighting Wisconsin's Dairy Processor Grants, featuring Andy Hatch of WCMA member Uplands Cheese.

APPLY NOW

Wisconsin Fast Forward Grant Application Period Open



The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development has announced a new round of [Wisconsin Fast Forward Industry Sector Training Grants](#), and WCMA members are encouraged to apply. These grants support innovative, customized worker training programs, with awards ranging from \$5,000 to \$400,000. Funding will go towards innovative and collaborative customized worker training programs in all industry sectors. Applications are due October 16. [READ MORE...](#)

Headlines

Wisconsin

- WKBT-TV: [Wisconsin's only cottage cheese plant announces \\$14 million expansion](#) (Featuring WCMA member Westby Cooperative Creamery)
- Wisconsin Examiner: [Crackdown on immigrant workers at a Wisconsin cheese factory triggers backlash, solidarity](#) (Featuring WCMA member Dairy Farmers of America)

National & Global

- CNN: [E-Verify was supposed to make it easy for companies to follow immigration law. Now even the feds say it can't be trusted](#)
- Dairy Foods: [Kraft Heinz to split into two companies](#)
- Dairy Processing: [Uncharted waters: Dairy processors try to handle trade uncertainty](#) (Featuring WCMA and member Ausfine Foods)
- Minneapolis-St. Paul Business Journal: [Bongards Creameries CEO Larson to retire, COO Thomas tapped as successor](#) (Featuring WCMA member Bongards Creameries)

EVENTS & CONNECTION

Join WCMA for Annual Member Meeting & Awards Ceremony

Featured Panelists



Brenda Dehart
Foremost Farms USA



Shawna Nelson
Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative



Kevin Pieh
Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery

Join us in Green Bay on October 21 for [WCMA's Annual Member Meeting & Awards Ceremony!](#) This special event offers valuable networking opportunities and an engaging seminar featuring a panel of respected dairy processing leaders:

- Brenda Dehart, President & CEO, Foremost Farms USA
- Shawna Nelson, CEO, Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative
- Kevin Pieh, CEO, Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery
- Fourth CEO invited

Our program will also include the first-ever WCMA Member Impact Awards Ceremony. [Register today](#) to be part of this dynamic gathering of fellow WCMA members!

Thanks go to meeting sponsors [ProAction International](#), [Tweet Garot](#), [Grande Cheese Company](#), [BIOIONIX](#), and [Fromagex](#) for their generous support. Additional sponsorships are [available now](#) through October 14.

Register Now for WCMA Health & Safety Group Meeting



Join us Wednesday, October 8, from 11 a.m.–3 p.m. (CT) for WCMA's next [Health & Safety Group meeting](#), available both in-person in Madison and online via Zoom. Dive into vital topics like confined space safety and communicating safety standards to non-English speaking workers - and participate in the annual WCMA-OSHA-WisCon meeting. Thanks go to [Nelson-Jameson](#) for sponsoring this gathering. Additional sponsorships are available through October 6. [READ MORE...](#)

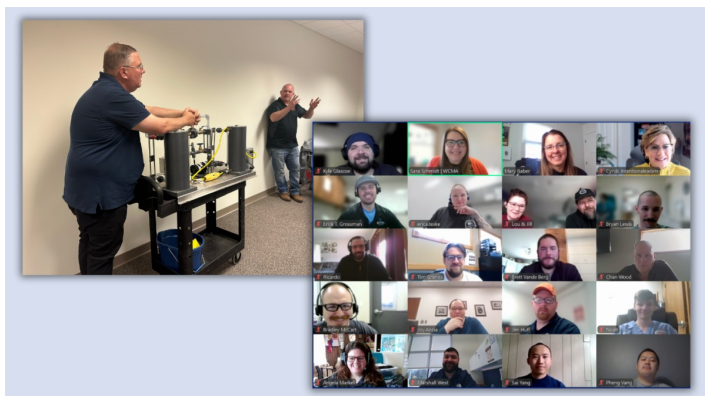
RSVP TODAY

Upcoming WCMA Events

September 9	September 11	September 17	October 8
Train the Safety Trainer (In-Person)	Free Webinar: Discover the Power of WCMA Membership	Front-Line Leadership Part A: Essential Leadership (In-Person)	Health & Safety Group Meeting (Hybrid)

EDUCATION

Sign Up Today for WCMA Fall Trainings



Looking for opportunities to boost your employees' confidence and skills? Register your team members (or yourself) for [WCMA's assortment of top-notch trainings](#) this fall. From safety education to leadership and more, there's an offering to suit your training needs and budget. These courses are tailored to the dairy processing industry, taught by instructors with familiarity and experience in dairy processing plants.

Safety Trainings

- September 9: [Train the Safety Trainer](#) (In-Person)
- November 6: [Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processors](#) (Virtual)

Front-Line Leadership Trainings (In-Person) (exclusively sponsored by [Nelson-Jameson](#))

- September 17: [Part A: Essential Leadership Skills](#)
- October 22: [Part B: Staff Performance](#)
- November 20: [Part C: Cultivating a Team](#)

NEW: Human Resources Workshop

- October 28: [Strengthening Organizational Collaboration](#) (In-Person)

Visit WisCheeseMakers.org/Trainings to learn more and register.

Unlock More of Your WCMA Member Benefits with Free Webinar



REGISTER NOW

Register now for [WCMA's September webinar: Discover the Power of WCMA Membership!](#) This free session on September 11 will highlight the many benefits and opportunities available through WCMA. Learn how to maximize your membership and take full advantage of the programs, services, and connections designed to support your success. Don't miss this chance to [unlock the full value](#) of your WCMA membership!



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