



**WISCONSIN
CHEESE MAKERS
ASSOCIATION**

EST. 1891

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NEWS RELEASE

June 9, 2021

WCMA Applauds Unanimous Senate Passage of Plan to Boost Agricultural Exports

MADISON, WI — Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) applauds members of the Wisconsin State Senate, following the body's unanimous approval of Senate Bill 325, investing \$5 million to boost agricultural exports over the next five years.

"With new trade agreements in place and household incomes rising in emerging markets, there is tremendous opportunity to grow sales of Wisconsin agricultural products abroad," said John Umhoefer, WCMA Executive Director. "This targeted investment will provide dairy processors with the support they need to navigate the logistics of export endeavors and grow their global customer base, building a stronger, more stable dairy industry."

SB 325, authored by Sen. Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan) and Rep. Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc), supports a new five-year-long initiative led by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) in partnership with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, to boost the export of dairy, meat, and other agricultural products by 25 percent. The bill specifies that \$2.5 million, or half the total funds appropriated, will be used to increase the export sales of milk, cheese, yogurt, whey and other dairy products.

Governor Tony Evers ignited the conversation over investments in dairy exporting endeavors, first proposing increased support as part of his call for a special legislation session in 2020, and again including a similar proposal in his 2021 budget plan.

"Bipartisan support for targeted, smart investments in Wisconsin's dairy industry is most welcome news to farmers and processors this June Dairy Month, as we address the continued challenges of market volatility and a workforce shortage," said Umhoefer. "Collaboration remains the key to success for America's Dairyland."

SB 325 now awaits consideration by the Wisconsin State Assembly and Gov. Evers.

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