

Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association: Applauds governor's plans to boost agriculture, rural communities

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MADISON, WI - The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) tonight cheered Governor Tony Evers' 2020 State of the State Address, which set forth ambitious goals to boost Wisconsin's \$45 billion dairy industry and strengthen rural communities.

"Governor Evers clearly understands the challenges dairy farmers and processors face today, and we were thrilled that he used his speech to outline the plans he has to partner with our industry and rural community leaders to create a stronger, more prosperous future," said John Umhoefer, WCMA Executive Director.

Evers announced he is tasking agency officials with building Wisconsin's dairy brand internationally, and increasing Wisconsin's dairy exports 20 percent by 2024. He is also establishing the Office of Rural Prosperity at the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, led by CEO/Secretary Melissa Hughes, formerly of Organic Valley. Evers also announced the launch of a Blue Ribbon Commission on Rural Prosperity to promote agriculture.

WCMA First Vice President Steve Bechel of Eau Galle Cheese in Durand applauded the Governor from the Assembly Gallery. Evers toured Eau Galle Cheese late last year.

“The Governor has been listening to cheesemakers like me, and my farmer partners in industry, and it’s encouraging to see those conversations lead to action. We welcome the opportunity to work together to build up rural communities and strengthen Wisconsin’s dairy industry now and for generations to come,” said Bechel.