

# Sen. Ballweg: Comprehensive agriculture export program signed into law

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Madison... Senator Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan) and Representative Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc) authored Assembly Bill 314, which was recently signed into law as [2021 Wisconsin Act 92](#). This bill creates a joint agricultural and agribusiness export initiative.

“Agriculture is a key driver of economic growth and contributes over \$100 billion annually to our state’s economy,” said Ballweg. “Exports are essential in providing stability to this industry, increasing access to talent and allowing for elevated profit margins. Wisconsin is in the top ten states for agriculture production, yet ranks 13<sup>th</sup> for the export of our food, forestry and agricultural products. There is ample opportunity for Wisconsin to find new footholds in emerging markets.”

In partnership with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is tasked with creating a plan to achieve certain export initiatives by June 30, 2026.

Objectives of this program include, spending \$2.5 million on increasing the value of Wisconsin’s milk and other dairy products, \$1.25 million to increase the value of Wisconsin’s meat exports and \$1.25 million to increase the value of Wisconsin’s crop exports.

“Three of the past five years saw declines in agribusiness exports. From 2016 to

2020, Wisconsin saw an aggregate loss of over \$64 million. Now more than ever, it is important we do everything we can to secure the vitality of our markets into the future,” said Ballweg.

To ensure this program is creating real outcomes for Wisconsin’s agriculture economy, DATCP and WEDC are required to submit a report on the program’s progress. Additionally, the Legislative Audit Bureau is required to conduct an evaluation of the program’s effectiveness no later than December 31, 2026.

“I want to thank Representative Kurtz and all of the stakeholders who worked with me to get this opportunity past the finish line. I look forward to hearing the successes of Wisconsin’s agricultural and agribusiness exports. Supporting farmer success is supporting the success of our state,” said Ballweg.