

# WCMA: Applauds unanimous Assembly passage of bill to increase agricultural and dairy exports

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MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) today applauded members of the Wisconsin State Assembly for their unanimous approval of legislation to invest \$5 million to increase the state’s agricultural exports, including dairy. Authored by Representative Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc) and Senator Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan), Assembly Bill 314 (AB 314) continues a conversation around dairy exports that was ignited by Governor Tony Evers in early 2020.

“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,” said John Umhoefer, WCMA Executive Director. “We thank Representative Kurtz for co-authoring this bill, and we urge the State Senate to take swift action to approve it.”

AB 314 supports a new five-year-long initiative led by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) 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.

Last week, the Joint Finance Committee passed AB 314 in a unanimous vote

following supportive testimony from multiple industry stakeholders, including WCMA members Mike Neu of Chr. Hansen, Inc.; Kim Heiman of Nasonville Dairy; and Jack Heinemann of Specialty Cheese Company.

Following today's Assembly vote, the bill now awaits action by the state Senate and Governor Evers.