

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

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MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) today cheered the Wisconsin Senate’s unanimous vote to invest \$5 million to increase the state’s agricultural exports, including dairy. Authored by Senator Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan) and Representative Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc), Assembly Bill 314 (AB 314) achieves a goal to elevate dairy exports set by Governor Tony Evers in early 2020. WCMA has been a vocal advocate in support of the bill.

“This significant investment will provide dairy processors with the tools and support they need to expand their presence in global markets and bolster our dairy industry here at home,” said John Umhoefer, WCMA Executive Director. “We thank Senator Ballweg for her leadership in spearheading this proposal in the Senate.”

AB 314 supports a new five-year 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.

The Senate vote comes after unanimous passage in both the Assembly and the Joint Finance Committee, following supportive testimony from multiple industry stakeholders, including WCMA members Chr. Hansen, Inc.; Nasonville Dairy; and Specialty Cheese Company.

Following today’s Senate vote, the bill advances to Governor Evers for his consideration.