

# Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association: Applauds Baldwin reintroduction of dairy pride act

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MADISON, WI – Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) today applauded U.S. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisconsin) as she reintroduced the [DAIRY PRIDE Act](#), requiring products made from nuts, seeds, plants, and algae to no longer be mislabeled with dairy terms such as milk, cheese or yogurt. Current Food and Drug Administration (FDA) standards define dairy products as being made from the milk of dairy animals, but the agency has not enforced its own regulation, enabling a rapid rise in the mislabeling of plant-based imitation dairy products.

“Americans deserve clear, truthful labels as they choose the foods they buy and serve to their families,” said John Umhoefer, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association Executive Director. “We are grateful for Sen. Baldwin’s work to ensure greater transparency in the marketplace.”

A [consumer study](#), sponsored in part by WCMA, showed that one-quarter of people believe real milk is present in plant-based foods that mimic cheese. One-third of those studied think plant-based mimics contain protein, though some imitators have little to no protein. One-quarter think plant-based mimics are lower in calories or fat, and have fewer additives, but neither perception is true.

“The makers of cheese imitations would like you to think their products offer better nutrition, but that’s simply not the case,” said WCMA President Dave Buholzer of Klondike Cheese Company in Monroe, Wisconsin. “Milk and cheese naturally deliver nutrients like calcium and protein and potassium like none of the imitation products can.”

“Dairy farmers and processors have worked for generations to develop our reputation for delivering nutritious, delicious foods. It’s no wonder that the makers of plant-based imitators would want to label their foods with dairy names – but that doesn’t make it right,” said Marieke Penterman, owner and cheesemaker at Marieke Gouda in Thorp, Wisconsin. “Thanks go to Sen. Baldwin for standing up for consumers, farmers, and cheesemakers like me.”

“When consumers buy foods labeled as cheese, yogurt and ice cream at the grocery store, they’re expecting those products to be made with real milk, and not a plant-based imitator,” said Jeff Schwager, President of Sartori Company in Plymouth, Wisconsin. “Current labeling is misleading to many, and we encourage members of Congress to join Sen. Baldwin in her important effort to deliver truth in food product labeling.”

The DAIRY PRIDE Act is a bipartisan, bicameral proposal with U.S. Senator Jim Risch (R-Idaho) joining Sen. Baldwin in its reintroduction. U.S. Representatives Peter Welch (D-Vermont) and Mike Simpson (R-Idaho) are introducing companion legislation in the House.