

# Gov. Evers: Joins DATCP and WEDC to celebrate funds for agricultural exports initiative

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Secretary Randy Romanski, and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Secretary and CEO Missy Hughes today celebrated the release of funds to promote Wisconsin's agricultural and agribusiness products. Under 2021 Wisconsin Act 92, [signed by Gov. Evers in December of last year](#), DATCP will work with the WEDC to increase the export of Wisconsin's dairy, meat, and crop products by 25 percent over their 2021 levels by June 30, 2026. The Joint Finance Committee released funds for the initiative today.

"Agriculture not only plays a vital role in Wisconsin's strong and thriving economy but is a part of our state's heritage," said Gov. Evers. "This investment in agricultural exports will further strengthen Wisconsin's agricultural industry, reinforce Wisconsin as a leader in agriculture, and support the farmers, producers, and agribusinesses that have dedicated their lives to providing agricultural products to the world."

Gov. Evers has long advocated for strategic investments in Wisconsin's agricultural exports, starting in his 2019-21 biennial budget when he proposed a \$200,000 investment to develop the Wisconsin Initiative for Dairy Exports. Unfortunately, that provision was rejected by the Legislature during the budget process. Following this, the governor introduced the legislation 2021 Wisconsin Act 92 was modeled after during his [2020 State of the State Address](#), during which the governor announced a package of legislation and a [special session](#) of the Legislature as part of a three-pronged plan to support and invest in Wisconsin's farmers and rural communities. After the Legislature failed to pass Gov. Evers' special session proposal, the governor again proposed investing in Wisconsin's agriculture exports in his [2021-23 biennial budget](#). Gov. Evers signed the 2021-23 budget [this summer](#),

marking the first time that state funding has been allocated to DATCP's International Agribusiness Center to help promote Wisconsin agriculture exports. 2021 Wisconsin Act 92 later provided metrics for this investment.

"Trade is a critical piece of Wisconsin's economic success," said DATCP Secretary Romanski. "While Wisconsin exports continue to gain strength, there is work to be done in creating opportunities and reducing barriers for agribusiness exports. This funding will allow us to continue building our state's agricultural brand internationally and encourage more Wisconsin agribusinesses to start or continue exporting their products."

"Wisconsin exports grew more than 18 percent last year," said WEDC Secretary Hughes. "There's a growing global demand for Wisconsin goods, and our agricultural products are a key part of that strategy."

In collaboration with WEDC, DATCP submitted a strategic five-year plan for the funding, the [Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports](#), to the Wisconsin Legislature on Dec. 31, 2021. DATCP will receive more than \$558,000 this fiscal year to promote Wisconsin products, cultivate and train Wisconsin agricultural exporters, and elevate the Wisconsin brand across the world. Planned activities include creating grant and scholarship opportunities for Wisconsin agribusinesses and organizations to coordinate trade promotion activities that facilitate positive connections between Wisconsin agribusinesses and potential buyers.

For additional information on the Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports, sign up for [DATCP email updates](#).