

ICYMI: Gov. Evers kicks off first week of dairy month in Wisconsin

Posted on Wednesday, Jun 8, 2022

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers kicked off the first week of Dairy Month, visiting with dairy farmers, processors, and producers, as well as local community and agricultural industry leaders in Plymouth, Lake Geneva, Jefferson, Neosho, Hilbert, and Thorp. Throughout the week, the governor highlighted the strength of Wisconsin's dairy industry and state's investments in the dairy and agricultural industries.

"We're not called America's Dairyland for nothing, and as the number one cheese producers in the country, Wisconsin's dairy industry is not only a vital part of our economy, but it's core to our Wisconsin heritage and who we are as a state," said Gov. Evers. "This past week, I was proud to visit with many of our state's incredible dairy farmers, processors, and distributors, and celebrate their hard work, as well as the investments we've been able to make to support their businesses and ensure this industry continues to grow and thrive for years to come." To kick off June Dairy Month, on Tue., June 2, Gov. Evers visited the Cheese Counter and Dairy Heritage Center in Plymouth with Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Secretary and CEO Missy Hughes, where he [announced](#) the state is supporting a major expansion of Masters Gallery Foods with up to \$1.5 million in performance-based state tax credits from WEDC. Masters Gallery Foods, a national cheese supplier based in Plymouth, is investing \$60 million into expanding their cheese packaging and distribution facility in Oostburg with plans to create 105 new jobs. Photos of the governor's visit are available [here](#) and [here](#).

In addition, on Tuesday, the governor visited Hill Valley Dairy in Lake Geneva, a recipient of the [Main Street Bounceback Grant Program](#). During his visit, the governor met with owners Ron and Josie Henningfeld to learn more about their business and how they were able to utilize their Main Street Bounceback grant to open their cheese shop. A photo of the governor's visit is available [here](#).

On Sat., June 4, the governor attended the Jefferson County Dairy Breakfast, hosted at the Jefferson County Fair Park Activity Center, where he met with members of the community, including local farmers and producers, and helped serve a breakfast consisting of goods from across the Jefferson area. Jefferson County was a recipient of the governor's Tourism Capital Investment Grant Program [announced](#) earlier this year, and during his visit, the governor saw updates the county has made to the Activity Center using grant funding. A photo of the governor's visit is available [here](#).

On Tue., June 7, the governor visited High-Gem Holsteins and Normandes, a small dairy farm in Neosho, and a recipient of the [Wisconsin Farm Support Program](#). During his visit, the governor heard from owners Chris and Brenda Conley about the farm's practices raising Holstein and Normande cattle and about their involvement in their local watershed group and community. Photos of the governor's visit are available [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

Following this, the governor visited Holsum Elm Dairy, one of two sustainable dairy farms in Hilbert operated by Holsum Dairies. During his visit, the governor learned about the farm's various watershed and stewardship initiatives. Photos of the governor's visits are available [here](#) and [here](#). Finally, to conclude his statewide tour, the governor, together with Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Secretary Randy Romanski, visited Holland's Family Cheese in Thorp, a [recipient](#) of the Dairy Processor Grant program. During their visit, the governor and secretary met with CEO Marieke Penterman and General Manager Kim Rabuck who took them on a tour of the facility and shared their plans to utilize grant funding to continue growing the business. Photos of their visit are available [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

The governor has, to date, [directed](#) \$100 million to support more than 20,000 Wisconsin farmers through the Wisconsin Farm Support Program, with direct support to farmers exceeding \$1 million in more than half of Wisconsin's 72 counties. In addition, earlier this year, the governor [announced](#) 19 recipients of the Dairy Processor Grant program, which aims to foster innovation, improve profitability, and sustain the long-term viability of Wisconsin's dairy processing facilities. As part of the 2021-23 biennial budget, Gov. Evers increased the annual funding for dairy processor grants from \$200,000 to \$400,000 to provide additional support to Wisconsin's dairy industry. Gov. Evers has also signed legislation to support Wisconsin's dairy exports, including [Assembly Bill 314](#), which was modeled after legislation originally proposed by Gov. Evers during his 2020 State of the State address as part of a three-pronged plan to support and invest in Wisconsin's farmers and rural communities. Under Assembly Bill 314, now 2021 Wisconsin Act 92, DATCP will work with the WEDC on a plan to increase the value of Wisconsin's milk and dairy, meat, crop, and other product exports by 25 percent by June 30, 2026. The governor also signed [Senate Bill 827](#), now 2021 Wisconsin Act 207, which supplements these efforts by investing more than \$880,000 to support the promotion of dairy exports.

The governor proclaimed June 2022 as "June Dairy Month" in the state of Wisconsin and events celebrating the dairy industry will continue throughout the month. A copy of the governor's June Dairy Month proclamation is available [here](#).



An online version of this release is available [here](#).