

# Dairy Business Association: Dairy farmers voice priorities during Dairy Day at the Capitol

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MADISON, Wis. – Dairy Business Association held its fifth annual Dairy Day at the Capitol event Wednesday. Twenty-three members, both farmers and other dairy professionals, had the opportunity to hear from various legislators and advocate for issues impacting producers and the broader dairy community.

The Association's membership advocated for several priority issues in the upcoming state budget. Key issues discussed include funding for ag road improvements, the state's producer-led watershed grant program, farmland preservation program, Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports, Cover Crop Insurance Premium Rebate program, Nitrogen Optimization Grant program and other programs to help drive the state's signature dairy industry forward.

"DBA remains focused on working with lawmakers to identify solutions to improve the livelihoods of our farmers," said DBA Director of Government Affairs Chad Zuleger. "It's so critical for our state's leaders to hear from farmers on what helps drive success — not only for our farms but for the rural communities they support."

The event started at the Concourse Hotel with a presentation from Randy Romanski, State Secretary of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection; followed by legislative leaders, including Robin Vos, 75<sup>th</sup> Speaker of the Assembly; Sen. Joan Ballweg, Chair of the Senate Agriculture and Tourism Committee, Senate Minority Leader Melissa Agard; Assembly Minority Leader Greta Neubauer and Rep. Peter Schmidt. Each discussed the importance of investment in infrastructure, agriculture and conservation and urged members to invite legislators to their farms.

During a panel discussion moderated by Shawn Pfaff, DBA's contract lobbyist, members also received an inside perspective from three political reporters representing written, televised and radio broadcast media forms. Reporters Scott Bauer of the Associated Press, Emilee Fannon of Channel 58 News in Milwaukee and Shawn Johnson of Wisconsin Public Radio gave insight into how their teams decide what legislative news gets shared with the public and the current state of affairs.

Zuleger wrapped up the morning's discussions with a reminder of the current budget priorities for the association and a brief coaching on how to speak with your legislator. Members then made their way to the capitol building, separating into groups and meeting with 25 legislative offices, advocating for the group's budget priorities.

In addition, the Dairy Innovation Hub staff and researchers from three UW campuses held their Research in the Rotunda event to discuss their work to advance dairy innovation in Wisconsin with legislators and capitol staff.

"This is an exciting time for Wisconsin agriculture," said Zuleger. "As America's Dairyland, we are enhancing support for programs that help our dairy community and keep Wisconsin a world-class leader for dairy innovation ."

**Images:**

[Chad Zuleger photo](#)

[Dairy farmers and professionals at Dairy Day 2023](#)

[DBA logo](#)

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## **About DBA:**

The Dairy Business Association is Wisconsin's leading dairy advocacy group, championing smart and sensible regulations affecting the dairy community. The nonprofit organization is comprised of farmers, milk processors, vendors and other business partners who work collaboratively to ensure that dairy farms of all sizes have the support they need to keep America's Dairyland strong. More information: [www.dairyforward.com](http://www.dairyforward.com)