

# U.S. Sens. Baldwin, Johnson: Introduce CURD Act to support Wisconsin dairy industry and provide clarity for consumers

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) joined Senators Ron Johnson (R-WI) and Ron Wyden (D-OR) in introducing the *Codifying Useful Regulatory Definitions (CURD) Act*, bipartisan legislation to help better inform consumers' cheese purchasing decisions and provide clarity for Wisconsin's dairy industry. The CURD Act would codify a formal definition of "natural cheese," a term commonly used on food packaging that currently has no official definition.

"Wisconsin's dairy farmers and cheesemakers work hard to produce high-quality cheese products that are known across the globe and move our Made in Wisconsin economy forward," **said Senator Baldwin.** "This legislation honors their celebrated products and makes sure consumers know what products on the shelf meet the definition of 'natural cheese' and what do not."

"Wisconsin is known for its cheese, in all its forms and varieties," **Senator Johnson said.** "Codifying the definition of 'natural cheese' will allow consumers the necessary information to make informed decisions when purchasing and enjoying the great products of our state."

Cheesemakers have long used the term "natural cheese" to distinguish products that use basic ingredients and are made directly from milk – like cheddar, swiss, cream, parmesan and string – from processed cheeses that incorporate extra steps, including cleaning, blending, and melting. Under the CURD Act, "natural cheese" would be defined as cheese that is produced from animal milk or other dairy

ingredients and is produced in accordance with established cheese-making practices.

“The dairy processing industry has used the term ‘natural cheese’ for decades to help differentiate cheese made with fresh milk and dairy ingredients from pasteurized processed cheese,” **said John Umhoefer, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association Executive Director.** “We thank Senators Johnson and Baldwin for codifying the definition of this commonly-used term in the CURD Act, and demonstrating their support of the dairy industry and transparency in the marketplace.”

Senator Baldwin recently led the introduction of bipartisan legislation to combat the unfair practice of mislabeling non-dairy products using dairy names, the Defending Against Imitations and Replacements of Yogurt, milk, and cheese to Promote Regular Intake of Dairy Everyday Act ([DAIRY PRIDE Act](#)) of 2023. The legislation followed the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s proposed guidance allowing nut, oat, soy, and other non-dairy products to use the name “milk.”

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