

Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: Celebrate Wisconsin's agriculture industry this National Ag Day

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MADISON, Wis. – National Ag Day is coming up on March 24, with this year's theme being "Together We Grow." In advance of this national day of recognition, I encourage all Wisconsinites to take time to thank their local producers for the hard work they do every single day to feed, clothe, and power the State of Wisconsin and beyond. Governor Evers declared 2026 the Year of the Neighbor, which is a theme the agriculture industry knows well. Without the collective work of producers across the state, Wisconsin's \$116.3 billion agriculture industry wouldn't be the internationally-recognized powerhouse that it is.

Alongside producers, we're equally as grateful for our state's processors, packers, and for the consumers who help to grow the economy by promoting quality food, sound use of land and water resources, healthy plants and animals, and a fair marketplace.

Since last National Ag Day, DATCP has prioritized strengthening our food programs. Earlier this year, DATCP awarded \$5 million in funding to hunger relief organizations through the [Food Security and Wisconsin Products Grant Program](#), allocated through Governor Evers' 2025-2027 Biennial Budget. Another round of this grant program will open later in the year. In addition, DATCP will award up to \$1.5 million through the [Tribal Elder Community Food Box Program](#), a food security program supporting Tribal members in Wisconsin. Food security is a top priority at DATCP, and we're proud to continue providing the connections between quality food products and those who need them most.

Through the adoption of responsible land and water stewardship practices, Wisconsin farmers produce high quality crops and raise healthy animals. Thanks to Gov. Evers and the legislature's continued support, \$1 million is awarded annually to farmer-led groups through DATCP's Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant Program (PLWPG). This program aids more than 50 farmer-led groups in implementing and promoting methods for improving soil health and water quality in their respective communities. Farmers are key partners in natural resource protection, and programs like PLWPG help ensure they can continue to deliver quality food, fiber, and fuel for future generations.

A big hurdle of the past year has been several animal disease detections that have occurred in the state, including Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in poultry and dairy. The vigorous response across the ag supply chain to these detections has been astounding. Due to the tireless work and collaboration between producers and DATCP's Division of Animal Health, we've been able to navigate these events successfully. Since May 2025, DATCP has tested over 38,000 milk samples for HPAI, and only one has been positive. This tremendous achievement is a testament to the cooperation of dairy farmers, the diligence of animal health staff, and our focus on traceability across the board.

Investing in Wisconsin's agribusinesses and exports has been more vital than ever, especially in the face of trade headwinds like retaliatory tariffs. National Ag Day is a fitting day to reflect on how Wisconsin's food, forestry, and agriculture product exports reached \$2.97 billion in the first three quarters of 2025 —the third highest Q3 to date. While final export data for 2025 is still being compiled, in 2024, the state exported \$3.97 billion to 151 countries. These metrics prove that Wisconsin agriculture is diverse and strong, and our sustained production of high-quality goods is paying off.

So, this National Ag Day, take pride in both our state's agricultural heritage and its continued success. From producers and manufacturers to distributors and consumers, I encourage every Wisconsinite to celebrate this March 24 by purchasing local, Wisconsin-made products, and by learning more about our state's food supply chain.

For more information on Wisconsin's vibrant agriculture industry, visit DATCP's website at datcp.wi.gov. For more on National Ag Day, visit AgDay.org.