



# WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION

EST. 1891

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## NEWS RELEASE

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## **WCMA Applauds Evers' Budget Plan to Invest \$43 Million in Wisconsin Agriculture**

MADISON, WI — Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) members are applauding Governor Tony Evers' plan to invest \$43 million in Wisconsin's agricultural industries as part of his 2021-22 state budget proposal.

"With this budget, Governor Evers is working to stabilize and strengthen Wisconsin agriculture now and for decades to come," said John Umhoefer, WCMA Executive Director. "We applaud smart plans to address the market volatility and food insecurity triggered by the pandemic - concerns we hope are short-lived – and to ensure that Wisconsin farmers and food processors discover growth through export endeavors and innovation."

With the full budget address set for February 16, the Evers Administration today previewed plans to boost the state's \$104.8 billion agricultural economy, including provisions to:

- Direct \$20 million to support food banks and pantries partnering with Wisconsin food processors to combat hunger;
- Create and fund the Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports, which will build Wisconsin's dairy brand and boost sales of cheese and other value-added dairy products in emerging global markets;
- Boost state support for the Dairy Processor Grant Program by \$1.2 million to support plant modernization and industry innovation to keep Wisconsin at the forefront of the global dairy industry;
- Create and fund a Value-Added Agricultural Grant Program, providing education and technical assistance to support the production of value-added agricultural goods;
- Fund the Farm-to-School Grant Program;
- Create and fund the Farm-to-Fork Program;
- Increase funding for the Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin Program; and
- Boost Something Special from Wisconsin™, a branded marketing program.

"A stronger agricultural economy means a stronger Wisconsin," said John Umhoefer, WCMA Executive Director. "Governor Evers' budget proposal will help dairy farmers and dairy processors continue to build their businesses, providing family-supporting jobs and critical infrastructure for our state's rural communities."

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