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WFU Members Speak Up on Rural Issues at Farm & Rural Lobby Day

Over eighty family farmers and rural advocates gathered in Madison on January 14 for Wisconsin Farmers Union's annual Farm & Rural Lobby Day.

Participants advocated for policy priorities set by the grassroots membership at the family farm organization's state convention in Wisconsin Dells in December 2025. They spoke with legislators on issues related to dairy, agricultural concentration and rural development, immigration, healthcare, and conservation.

Members shared their support for a Beginning Farmer Tax Credit (SB 723/ AB 721) which creates a 5% income tax credit for beginning farmers who buy assets from an established farmer, and for established farmers who sell their assets. WFU is also backing a bill (SB 560/ AB 554) that would set labeling requirements for lab-grown food.

During their meetings, WFU members expressed concerns about a new bill (SB 739/ AB 748) that would establish a regulatory system for Cottage Foods by setting unfair and arbitrary limitations on baked-good businesses that are operating out of a home kitchen. Again this session, WFU is opposing Alternative Agricultural Health Benefit Plans (SB 450/ AB 448) from being offered on the Wisconsin insurance market. These health plans would remove the healthiest individuals for the insurance risk pool, driving up insurance costs for all. The plans would also be unavailable to those with pre-existing conditions, like many aging farmers.

"The Farm and Rural Lobby Day is an inspiring opportunity to see democracy in action." Wisconsin Farmers Union Government Relations Director, Michelle Ramirez-White, said. "Not only is this event an opportunity for Wisconsin legislators to meet the hardworking farmers of our state, but it also gives WFU members a chance to make change in their rural communities."

Before heading into the Capitol for over 50 legislative meetings, WFU members heard from Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul on the Department of Justice's antitrust work. Speakers from the Wisconsin Cottage Food Association, Kids Forward, and Voces de la Frontera also shared insight on the issues that WFU members would be advocating for.

Governor Tony Evers welcomed the group to Madison, highlighting the critical role that family farmers play in Wisconsin.

“Regardless of what happens in Washington, here in America’s Dairyland, we’re going to keep fighting for Wisconsin farmers and producers and their families because Wisconsin’s agricultural industry isn’t just core to our economy, it’s core to our culture, core to our heritage, and who we are as a state,” Evers said.

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Wisconsin Farmers Union, a member-driven organization, is committed to enhancing the quality of life for family farmers, rural communities, and all people through educational opportunities, cooperative endeavors, and civic engagement. For more information visit www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com.

Photo cutline 1 (Capitol steps group photo): Over eighty Wisconsin Farmers Union members gathered in Madison on January 14, 2026 for the annual Farm & Rural Lobby Day.

Photo cutline 2 (Tony Evers): Governor Tony Evers welcomed Wisconsin Farmers Union members to Madison on January 14, 2026 for the organization’s annual Farm & Rural Lobby Day.