

Governor Kicks Off June Dairy Month

Written by GOV Press Wisconsin
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<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/dairy-farm-plateville-s448.jpg>



Gov. Evers will be visiting with dairy farmers, processors, and producers, as well as local community and agricultural industry leaders across the state all month.

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today kicked off June Dairy Month in America’s Dairyland, sharing a video message celebrating Wisconsin’s strong dairy tradition and proclaiming June 2023 as “June Dairy Month” across the state. The governor’s Dairy Month video message is available [here](#), and a transcript of the message is available below. A copy of the governor’s June Dairy Month proclamation is available [here](#).



Throughout the month of June, the governor will be visiting with dairy farmers, processors, and producers, as well as local community and agricultural industry leaders across the state, to celebrate the strength of Wisconsin’s dairy industry and to highlight the state’s investments in the dairy and agricultural industries, including the governor’s proposed 2023-25 biennial budget initiatives.

As America’s Dairyland, Wisconsin’s dairy industry is a significant part of the state’s cultural

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heritage and a central driver of the state's economic future. According to the [Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection](#) (DATCP), Wisconsin is home to nearly 6,000 dairy farms—more than any other state—and the dairy industry contributes \$45.6 billion annually to Wisconsin's economy.



Since taking office, Gov. Evers has prioritized investing in the long-term success of Wisconsin's agricultural industry. The governor was recently awarded a 2023 Cheese Champion award by the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association for his efforts to support Wisconsin's dairy industry. Photos of the event are available [here](#).

To date, Gov. Evers has [directed](#) \$100 million to support Wisconsin farmers in all 72 counties through the Wisconsin Farm Support Program. In addition, last month, the governor and DATCP [announced](#) 21 recipients of a 2023 Dairy Processor Grant. This program aims to foster innovation, improve profitability, and sustain the long-term viability of Wisconsin's dairy processing facilities. As part of the 2021-23 biennial budget, Gov. Evers increased the annual funding for dairy processor grants from \$200,000 to \$400,000 to provide additional support to Wisconsin's dairy industry. Gov. Evers has also [signed legislation](#) and supported initiatives that advance the state's agricultural export program, including funding [specifically targeted](#) at promoting dairy exports, and worked to help bolster the long-term viability of the dairy industry by investing in programs and projects like the [Dairy Innovation Hub](#) and the brand-new [Center for Dairy Research](#) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Building upon the work of the governor's previous budgets and efforts during his time in office, Gov. Evers' 2023-25 biennial budget proposed an additional \$1.6 million in funding for the Dairy Processor Grant Program and significant investments in other areas that impact daily life for dairy and other agricultural producers, including investments to:

- Provide a historic investment of \$750 million for the Broadband Expansion Grant Program to expand access to high-speed internet, including in Wisconsin's most rural communities;

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- Build on the positive momentum created by the Evers Administration to fix more than 5,800 miles of roads and nearly 1,600 bridges throughout the state by providing the highest level of funding ever for general transportation aids, which go directly toward helping local counties and local communities repair and maintain local roads;
- Continue the popular Food Security Initiative Grant Program and increase total funding to \$15 million annually to connect local nonprofit food assistance programs with local food production companies, like cheesemakers, meat processors, and vegetable growers;
- Provide more than \$2.8 million for the Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports to help build Wisconsin's agricultural brand in international markets and increase agricultural exports;
- Provide \$200,000 to continue farmer mental health assistance programming, including tele-counseling services and counseling vouchers to be redeemed by farmers and their family, among other services;
- Provide an additional \$1.6 million to increase the available funding for the Meat Processor Grant Program;
- Make the Meat Talent Development Grant Program permanent with a more than \$1.2 million investment to support meat industry workforce development needs by providing funds for curriculum development and tuition assistance to individuals pursuing meat processing programming at Wisconsin universities, colleges, and technical schools;
- Provide \$200,000 for grants to help farms hire business consultants to examine their farm business plans;
- Create the Value-Added Agriculture Grant program with \$800,000 to help farmers expand agricultural practices that produce value-added products;
- Create the Farm to Fork Grant Program with \$800,000;
- Continue the Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin Grant Program and increase funding for the Something Special from Wisconsin Program to promote local food products;
- Convert four project positions that were approved in the 2021-23 biennial budget to permanent positions for the meat inspection program at DATCP and provide more than \$950,000 for supplies and services related to meat inspections;
- Provide \$167,500 and one agricultural economist position at DATCP; and
- Provide \$4 million Tribal gaming revenues for a Tribal Food Box program to support producers and those requiring sustainable food in Tribal Nations.

Last week, the Joint Finance Committee [voted](#) to adopt several budget proposals based on recommendations made by the governor, including providing \$1.5 million annually on a one-time basis to support food insecure Tribal elders, an additional \$300,000 annually for the Dairy Processor Grant Program on a one-time basis, bringing funding for the program to \$500,000 each year, as well as investing \$1 million annually for the Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports and providing additional funding to support farmer mental health assistance programming at DATCP.

Unfortunately, the Committee has also rejected or reduced multiple crucial proposals made by the governor, including rejecting \$15 million in annual funding to continue the popular Food

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Security Initiative grant program and refusing to expand the Wisconsin Farm Center to better serve farmers across the state.

Below is a transcript of the governor's Dairy Month video message to Wisconsinites:

Hey there, folks. Governor Tony Evers here.

It's National Dairy Month! If there's one thing we all know for sure, it's that they don't call Wisconsin America's Dairyland for nothing.

As a kid from Plymouth—which is the Cheese Capitol of the World, by the way!—who spent time in one of my first jobs scraping mold off of cheese, it's safe to say that I've been a big fan of Wisconsin cheese and our dairy industry all my life.

As one of the nation's top producers of dairy and supplier of over a quarter of the country's cheese, no one does dairy quite like us.

That's why I've been proud to support our dairy industry over the past four years with increased investments in our Dairy Processor Grant Program, support for farmers during tough times through our Wisconsin Farm Support Program, and our work to increase the value of Wisconsin dairy exports by 2026.

Wisconsin's dairy industry is our past and our present, and it will be a key part of our future.

So, whether it's a fried or fresh cheese curd, custard or ice cream, chocolate milk or regular milk, this Dairy Month, join me in supporting Wisconsin's dairy farmers and producers and all that makes Wisconsin, Wisconsin.

Happy Dairy Month!