



State of Wisconsin  
Governor Tony Evers

**Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection**  
Secretary Randy Romanski

**WISCONSIN AGRICULTURAL EXPORT ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**May 4, 2022**

The Wisconsin Agricultural Export Council (WAXC) met in the Lake Michigan/Lake Superior Conference Room at the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, 201 W. Washington Ave., Madison, WI 53703 and via zoom on May 4, 2022. The meeting was preceded by public notice as required by Wis. Stat. § 19.84.

Members present: Brian Cummins, Jackie Fett, Charles Wachsmuth, Ryan Wucherer, Keith Heikes, Kevin Lipps, Larry Krueger, Jeff Schwager, Craig Briess, Bob Wilson, Brandon Bickham, Chad Vincent, Bob Fitzgerald, Amy Radunz, Sen. Joan Ballweg, Rep. Dave Considine, Sen. Tony Kurtz, Secretary Randy Romanski, Secretary Missy Hughes, and Lisa Stout

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Secretary Romanski and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Chief Executive Officer and Secretary Hughes gave a welcome and opening remarks. The members introduced themselves as did the attendees.

**Organization of Wisconsin Agricultural Export Advisory Council**

Aaron O'Neil, DATCP legal counsel, provided information on council responsibilities and structure. WAXC advises DATCP's Secretary on the Wisconsin Initiative for Agriculture Exports (WIAE) plan. The Export Advisory Council will advise on strategies, make recommendations and evaluate the progress towards the objectives in s. 93.425, Stats. The council includes 15 members appointed by the DATCP Secretary, which represent the dairy, crop and meat sectors, four legislators, and WEDC and DATCP staff. Aaron provided a legal overview of Open Meetings, Public Record Law, and the State Ethics Code.

Aaron conducted the election of Chair and Vice Chair and called for nominations. Charles Wachsmuth was nominated for Chair, and Chad Vincent was nominated for Vice Chair. Charles Wachsmuth was elected Chair and Chad Vincent was elected Vice Chair.

**Public Comments**

No public comments were provided.

**Overview of Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports (WIAE)**

Secretary Romanski presented on the origins of the WIAE. In the 2021-2023 state budget, Governor Tony Evers made a historic investment in Wisconsin's ability to export its agricultural products to international marketplaces. This investment called for up to \$1 million each year for five years to support efforts by DATCP and WEDC to promote Wisconsin products, cultivate and train Wisconsin agricultural exporters, and elevate the Wisconsin brand. On December 3, 2021, Governor Evers signed additional legislation into law honing these requirements, 2021 Wisconsin Act 92 (Wis. Act 92). Among other requirements, this law requires DATCP and WEDC to submit a plan to the Legislature outlining a strategy for increasing agricultural exports over the next five years.

Mark Rhoda-Reis, DATCP bureau director, presented information on the WIAE, which requires DATCP and WEDC to work together to increase Wisconsin exports by 25 percent over the December 31, 2021 value of the following product categories: dairy and dairy products, meat and meat products, and crop and crop products by June 30, 2026. Funding will be split by the following percentages: 50% to dairy and dairy products, 25 percent to meat and meat products, and 25 percent to crop and crop products.

*Wisconsin - America's Dairyland*

2811 Agriculture Drive • PO Box 8911 • Madison, WI 53708-8911 • [Wisconsin.gov](http://Wisconsin.gov)

An equal opportunity employer

The WIAE also requires a plan for at least 15 percent of the money appropriated for the WIAE to be provided to Wisconsin exporters in grants by December 31, 2022.

DATCP will submit a request for FY 23 funds to the Joint Finance Committee and include request in the DATCP budget proposal for FY 24-25.

Planned Expenditures for FY22:

Total Trade Promotion Activities	\$192,914	24% of the total.
Total Grants (IMAG & Export Expansion)	\$624,584	76% of the total.
Total Act 92 and Act 207 Planned Expenditures	\$817,498	
Estimated Companies Impacted	158	

Target country markets are selected by evaluating export data from the U.S. Census and utilizing industry market reports from the USDA Foreign Agriculture Service, U.S. Commercial Service, and more. Trade promotion activities will include outbound trade missions, trade shows, incoming buyers missions, social media campaigns, and export education.

These are the metrics used to track results:

- Wisconsin agricultural export sales and year-on-year percent of growth by product group.
- Number of companies assisted, including unique companies and new exporters.
- Initial export sales reported from companies participating in trade promotion activities.
- Anticipated first-year sales from companies participating in trade promotion activities.
- Five-year export percentage of growth of participating companies.

Aaron Zitzelsberger, WEDC Director of Global Trade and Investment, gave an overview of the Global Trade and Investment team and activities. WEDC's market development directors work with other state agencies and trade representatives covering 95 countries to provide Wisconsin manufacturers the insights and contacts needed to develop and execute market-specific business development strategies. WEDC organizes trade missions, led by Governor Evers, and trade ventures, led by WEDC market development directors, to key export markets. International Market Access Grants (IMAG) are available for Wisconsin manufacturers to apply for on yearly basis. Companies that qualify can apply for up to \$10,000. If a company has participated in the ExporTech™ program, these companies can apply for up to \$25,000, up to six times. WEDC provides scholarships to qualifying companies that register for the ExporTech™ program, which is offered by the University of Wisconsin-Stout Manufacturing Outreach Center and Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership.

### **Future Agenda Items & Discussion Topics**

- Mapping of export resources network, 'Easy Button', show overlap
- Covering trade promotion activity airfare, hotel, and other travel expenses for companies that do not fall under Food Export or a commodity group that supports international promotional events.
- Large companies, qualifying for export services
- Membership meetings – share information on export opportunities
- Match calendar to communication plan
- Show results
- Companies/organizations
- Quantity # units commodities
- Number of exporters
- Mature exporters
- Export to Africa
- Steamship line
- Additional meetings, 1-2 meetings, more discussion time
- Doodle poll for next formal meeting