



Continued Investments Grow Wisconsin's Meat Industry

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Editor's note: A photo of Secretary Randy Romanski can be found [here](#)

A commentary by Secretary Randy Romanski of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)

MADISON, Wis. – Spring is a time for growth and opportunity. Throughout the season, farmers across Wisconsin work to plant seeds that we hope will lead to a bountiful harvest. Wisconsin's meat industry is growing in a similar manner, and investments that have been made in the industry in recent years are already paying off.

Thanks to programs championed by Gov. Evers, we've been able to make important investments in our state's meat processors, infrastructure, and workforce over the last several years. These programs are already having a positive effect on the industry and are yielding results, including the ability for higher capacity and throughput for processors, and an increase in products for consumers.

One example is the Meat Processor Infrastructure Grants (MPIG) program, which Gov. Evers created in 2021, receiving support from the legislature, to grow Wisconsin's meat industry and improve the long-term viability of the state's livestock industry. Since then, 23 projects have been funded and completed through the program. According to processor reports to DATCP, through those projects, 14 full-time jobs and 11 part-time jobs have been created, bolstering careers in the state's meat industry.

Not only are more jobs being created because of this program, but according to MPIG recipients, processors have experienced an increase in their profits, too. Wisconsin meat establishments that have received MPIG funding have collectively reported over \$6.6 million in increased revenue. This means that each grant dollar has increased meat processor sales by \$7.87, and each grant dollar further spurred \$237.37 in industry investment. These investments are proving to be effective and meaningful.

Another grant program having a profound effect on Wisconsin's meat industry is the Meat and Poultry Supply Chain Resiliency program, which Gov. Evers created in 2022 with federal funds as another way to support the growth of Wisconsin's meat processing and livestock industries. In the three years since the program was announced, \$8.1 million in grant funding has been awarded to meat processors across the state, with recipients collectively reporting investing over \$41.1 million of their own money to complete grant projects.

As a direct result of this program, recipients report that 218 full-time jobs and 68 part-time jobs in Wisconsin's meat industry have been created. And just like with the MPIG program, Meat and Poultry Supply Chain Resiliency grant recipients have also experienced a rise in gross profits. Grant projects carried out through the program have resulted in a reported profit increase of \$32.4 million, meaning that each grant dollar has increased meat processor gross sales by \$3.97 and has spurred \$5.04 in industry investment overall. The positive outcomes from these programs will continue to pay off in the coming years.

The Governor's biennial budget is currently being reviewed by the state legislature. In addition to programs to support conservation programs and farmers, the Governor's budget continues and strengthens programs to support Wisconsin's diverse meat processing industry. It also provides state funding to provide training and workforce development opportunities for those in the meat processing industry. Now is the time to continue those investments and increase them to support Wisconsin farmers and businesses into the future.

Wisconsin is home to 452 meat establishments, 224 of which are licensed by the state. Through these grant programs and other statewide initiatives, such as the Meat Talent Development Program, Meat Industry High School Curriculum, and the Humane Handling Institute, Wisconsin is experiencing continued advancements and innovation in Wisconsin's meat industry. I encourage you to check out your local meat processors and all that they have to offer.

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