



Reflecting on Wisconsin's Dairy Industry This June

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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. – June is a special month in Wisconsin for many reasons, including the beautiful weather, the end of the school year, and on top of it all, it's June Dairy Month! Wisconsin's economy, history, and culture are steeped in an appreciation for all things dairy, and it's during the month of June that we can be especially thankful for dairy farmers, haulers, processors, distributors, consumers, and everyone who keeps the industry strong in America's Dairyland.

There are many links in the dairy chain, and during June Dairy Month we take the time to appreciate every link, including processors. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Dairy Processor Grant program continues to foster innovation, improve profitability, and sustain the long-term viability of Wisconsin's dairy processing facilities. In 2024, thanks to investments from Gov. Evers and the legislature, DATCP funded additional Dairy Processor Grants, with the total of awarded proposals in the millions over the history of the program. Grant dollars support Wisconsin's dairy processing plants with development in food safety, staff training, plant expansion or modernization, and professional consulting services.

While the budget process is ongoing, Gov. Evers has continued to prioritize Wisconsin agriculture, and he included investing in Wisconsin farmers and farm families, producers, and processors in his 2025-27 Executive Budget. If the legislature agrees with these investments for agriculture, it will benefit dairy across the board, including funding for the Dairy Innovation Hub to boost dairy research and innovation. The 2025-27 Executive Budget also would provide \$1.5 million to create a new pilot Dairy Agriculture Resilience Investment Now Grant (DARING) program aimed at supporting on-farm projects that improve resilience and efficiency of farm operations, as well as continued funding of DATCP's Dairy Processor Grant program. I am hopeful that the budget will continue to support agriculture and benefit Wisconsin dairy's future.

June Dairy Month is about more than just being grateful. It's also a time to reflect on the Wisconsin dairy industry as a whole. DATCP has partnered with Wisconsin's dairy industry to strengthen surveillance of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI/H5N1) and, since March 2024, has tested more than 7,000 samples of milk for H5N1. DATCP is also holding meetings with stakeholders, publishing biosecurity resources, and working with state and federal partners, as Wisconsin implements the mandatory U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Milk Testing Strategy. We are fortunate that pasteurization keeps our dairy products safe and nutritious in stores across the state so citizens can support the dairy farms that house Wisconsin's 1.28 million cows.

There is much more to be said about the continued progress the dairy industry has made in the past year. After reaching the halfway point in a decade full of change and challenges, Wisconsin's dairy industry has continued to showcase its strength and flexibility. DATCP will

continue to serve as a resource for Wisconsin's dairy industry now and into the future. This June Dairy Month, I encourage you to enjoy Wisconsin's rich heritage and celebrate the dairy industry by enjoying a cold glass of Wisconsin milk, a generous scoop of Wisconsin ice cream, or any of our state's many delicious dairy products.

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