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FDA's Guidance For Plant-Based Milk Labels Draws Dairy Criticism

Dairy Industry Organizations Views Guidance As Inadequate; Plant-Based Industry Supports It

Rockville, MD—The US Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) recently released draft guidance on the naming of plant-based foods that are marketed and sold as alternatives to milk has drawn considerable criticism from the dairy industry but support from the plant-based foods industry.

Under FDA's draft guidance, which was released in February, a plant-based milk alternative may be labeled with the term "milk," "beverage" or "drink." In the names of plant-based milk alternatives, the term "milk" should be qualified by the plant source of the food.

FDA's draft guidance recommends that plant-based milk alternatives that use the term "milk" in their name and have a nutrient composition that is different than milk bear an additional nutrient statement on the product label describing how it is nutritionally different. The use of these statements is voluntary, under the draft guidance.

FDA accepted comments on its draft guidance through Monday, July 31. The agency received over 900 comments.

The draft guidance "does not adequately address" the concern that consumers believe plant-based milk alternatives (PBMA) are healthier than milk, the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) noted in its comments. IDFA doesn't agree that the voluntary declaration of up to nine select nutrient differences between PBMA and cow's milk sufficiently addresses FDA's concern that consumers believe plant-based milk alternatives are healthier than milk and expect that products labeled with the term "milk" in the name are comparable in nutrition to milk.

Also, the draft guidance does not consider the bioavailability of the nutrients in milk as compared to plant-based milk alternatives PBMA, IDFA continued. And IDFA doesn't agree with FDA's proposed approach of including

the specific nutritional differences between PBMA and milk on the principal display panel of a product's label.

While FDA's guidance takes a step in the right direction by recommending that PBMA companies voluntarily disclose the nutritional inferiority of their products, FDA's draft guidance fails on two important legal grounds, according to the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF).

First, the draft guidance "rewrites and contradicts FDA's existing regulation" on misbranding and imitation labeling, and second, it violates the US Constitution as Congress itself drafted the misbranded and imitation labeling requirements and misbranding provisions in the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, NMPF stated.

In the absence of a full resolution of this issue that is focused on standards of identity, "NMPF urges that any legally sound guidance, if such a thing is even possible, be focused on address

• See **Plant-Based Milk**, p. 10

Milk Supply Is 'Very Inelastic' To Price Changes; Demand Is Also Inelastic

Washington—Milk supply is "very inelastic" with respect to price changes, and price and income demand elasticities for dairy products are also estimated to be inelastic, according to the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) Dairy Sector Model.

A report recently released by ERS provides documentation for the Annual US Dairy Sector Model used by the agency. Using econometric estimation, this model provides projections for supply, demand, and prices for US milk and dairy products over a 10-year period.

Each year, USDA publishes 10-year annual conditional supply, use, and price projections for major agricultural commodities (including projections for the dairy industry), in the *USDA Agricultural Projections* report. These projections are also referred to as "baseline projections."

The Annual US Dairy Sector Model provides support for US dairy projections published in that report each year, and is also used to analyze changes in market conditions and the impacts of changes in various federal government policies on the dairy sector.

The USDA Dairy Interagency Commodity Estimates Committee (Dairy ICEC) determines the projections for the dairy sector

• See **Dairy Inelasticity**, p. 9

Milk Specialties Global Completes New Plant In Jerome, ID, That Will Produce Casein

Eden Prairie, MN—Milk Specialties Global (MSG), a manufacturer of protein and other food ingredients, this week announced the completion of its new production facility in Jerome, ID, that will produce acid casein and rennet casein products for food and industrial applications.

Europe and Oceania are currently the epicenters for casein manufacturing, Milk Specialties Global noted.

The US is a significant importer of casein; according to figures from USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), US casein

• See **MSG's Casein Plant**, p. 5

Cheese Consumption Has Neutral To Moderate Health Benefits: Review

Rockville, MD—Cheese consumption has neutral to moderate benefits for human health, according to a recent study published in *Advances in Nutrition*, a journal of the American Society for Nutrition.

This umbrella review provided a systematic and comprehensive overview of current evidence on the association of cheese consumption with 47 major health outcomes through 35 updated, four de novo, and eight previous meta-analyses of prospective observational studies.

Cheese is generally a nutrient-dense and well-tolerated fermented dairy product consumed worldwide, but the health effects of cheese consumption remain a matter of controversy, the American Society for Nutrition review pointed out.

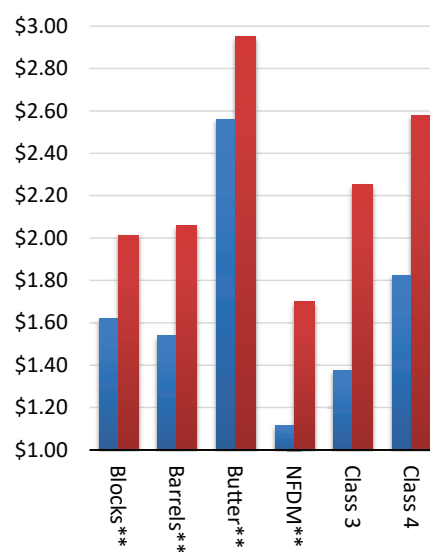
On one hand, cheese is a rich source of high-quality protein (mainly casein), lipids, minerals (e.g., calcium, phosphorus, and magnesium), and vitamins (e.g., vitamin A, K, B2 and B12, and folate), and probiotics and bioactive molecules (e.g., bioactive peptides, lactoferrin, short-chain fatty acids, and milk fat globule membrane), which may provide various health benefits.

On the other hand, the review continued, cheese contains relatively high contents of saturated fat and salt, which are perceived as unfavorable dietary components for cardiovascular health.

Currently, most dietary guidelines recommend consuming dairy products as part of a healthy

• See **Cheese & Health**, p. 13

July Avg Prices - 2023 vs 2022
Average CME Prices**
Class 3 and Class 4 Milk Price x 10





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Denied FMMO Hearing Proposals Not Likely To Just Go Away

No doubt about it, the US Department of Agriculture's recent request for proposals to be considered at a possible hearing on the pricing provisions in all federal milk marketing orders revealed a pretty high level of dissatisfaction with the "status quo."

In its recently issued hearing notice, USDA included a total of 21 proposals, not including Proposal 22, which was submitted by Dairy Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, and basically calls for making such changes "as may be necessary to make the respective marketing orders conform with any amendments thereto that may result from this hearing."

Those 21 accepted proposals came from a total of eight entities, who submitted proposals that ranged anywhere from three to 183 pages in length (that 183-page proposal was a revised proposal submitted by the Milk Innovation Group; MIG's original proposal ran 205 pages).

What the upcoming hearing will focus on is, of course, the proposals that are included in USDA's hearing notice. And those proposals included a lot of detail about ongoing problems with the federal order program, ranging from a lack of updated make allowances to inadequacies in the products included in the protein price formula.

Suffice it to say that these proposals, and the problems they purport to address, will all get a significant "airing" at the upcoming hearing. After all, USDA's schedule for submitting exhibits starts on Monday, Aug. 21, for the first set of hearing proposals (milk composition), but doesn't end until Sept. 13 for the fifth and final set of hearing proposals (Class I and II differentials).

Based on that schedule, USDA obviously expects several days to be devoted to each set of proposals.

But what about the proposals that were denied? While USDA accepted 21 proposals to be considered at the hearing, it also denied a total of 18 proposals as well as a portion of a 19th proposal (USDA accepted a proposal from California Dairy Campaign to hear testimony on including Mozzarella cheese in the Class III price formula, but because the agency doesn't currently have the legal authority to conduct a mandatory cost survey, that portion of the CDC's proposal was denied).

So, what can be concluded about these denied proposals? For one thing, it's probably safe to conclude that, although they won't be included in the upcoming hearing, they all expose a problem or problems (real or perceived) that potentially could be addressed in the future, through various means.

For three specific proposals, USDA noted that amendments on the subject could be explored through the informal rulemaking process. Two of these proposals, one each from the American Farm Bureau Federation and Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative, recommended providing dairy producers with additional market information by creating universal milk check transparency requirements.

The third proposal for which USDA recommended exploring the informal rulemaking process was a Farm Bureau proposal to extend the 30-day limit to 45 days for nonfat dry milk in the National Dairy Products Sales Report.

This USDA recommendation got us thinking about the informal rulemaking process, which isn't used all that often but is certainly a simpler, shorter process than the formal rulemaking process.

As USDA explains on its federal order website (in a "brochure" entitled *Federal Milk*

it's probably safe to conclude that, although they won't be included in the upcoming hearing, they all expose a problem or problems (real or perceived) that potentially could be addressed in the future, through various means.

Marketing Order Program: Understanding the Milk Order Amendment Process), for federal order provisions that do not directly affect milk prices, USDA may elect to use informal rulemaking procedures to amend federal orders. Such procedures typically shorten the rulemaking process.

Informal rulemaking, USDA explained, is a three-step process in which: USDA recognizes that a regulation needs to be issued or changed; USDA publishes a proposed rule and provides time for public comment; and USDA considers the submitted comments and issues a final rule.

Looking around USDA's federal order website, there don't appear to be many examples of this informal rulemaking process being used. There was one recent request: back in June 2021, Lamers Dairy and several other small distributing plants requested an amendment to expand and clarify the regulatory exemption of small distributing plants through the informal rulemaking procedure.

But USDA denied that rulemaking request, stating that its preliminary economic analysis indicated that increasing the exempt plant limit could impact milk prices received by dairy farmers.

But given that both AFBF and Edge are interested in more milk check transparency, it seems likely that we'll see at least one attempt in the not-too-distant future to alter federal order rules via the informal rulemaking process.

USDA denied the other proposals for a variety of reasons, which means at least some of these proposals could resurface in the future. And in at least some cases, that's a positive for the dairy industry, because some of these denied proposals address federal order issues that aren't going away any time soon.

Global Dairy Trade Price Index Falls 4.3%; Only Buttermilk Power Rises

Auckland, New Zealand—The price index on this week's Global Dairy Trade (GDT) dairy commodity auction declined 4.3 percent from the previous auction, held two weeks ago.

That was the third consecutive decline in the GDT price index.

In this auction, which featured 157 participating bidders and 124 winning bidders, prices were higher for buttermilk powder and lower for Cheddar cheese, skim milk powder, whole milk powder, butter, and anhydrous milkfat.

Results from this week's GDT auction, with comparisons to the previous auction, were as follows:

Cheddar: The average winning price was \$3,910 per metric ton (\$1.77 per pound), down 1.4 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1 (September), \$3,800 per ton; Contract 2 (October), \$3,885 per ton, up 1.0 percent; Contract 3 (November), \$3,910 per ton, down 1.0 percent; Contract 4 (December), \$3,915 per ton, up 0.1 percent; Contract 5 (January 2024), \$4,103 per ton, up 3.7 percent; and Contract 6 (February), \$3,856 per ton, down 11.8 percent.

Skim milk powder: The average winning price was \$2,454 per ton (\$1.11 per pound), down 1.4 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$2,425 per ton, down 0.5 percent; Contract 2, \$2,438 per ton, up 0.2 percent; Contract 3, \$2,441 per ton, down 2.4 percent; Contract 4, \$2,491 per ton, down 2.1 percent; and Contract 5, \$2,519 per ton, down 3.3 percent.

Whole milk powder: The average winning price was \$2,864 per ton (\$1.30 per pound), down 8.0 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$2,912 per ton, down 14.2 percent; Contract 2, \$2,817 per ton, down 7.8 percent; Contract 3, \$2,829 per ton, down 7.5 percent; Contract 4, \$2,897 per ton, down 6.4 percent; and Contract 5, \$3,023 per ton, down 4.5 percent.

Butter: The average winning price was \$4,680 per ton (\$2.12 per pound), down 0.7 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$4,730 per ton, down 3.5 percent; Contract 2, \$4,650 per ton, down 2.0 percent; Contract 3, \$4,665 per ton, down 0.3 percent; Contract 4, \$4,680 per ton, up 0.9 percent; Contract 5, \$4,775 per ton, up 2.1 percent; and Contract 6, \$4,660 per ton, down 0.6 percent.

Anhydrous milkfat: The average winning price was \$4,705 per ton (\$2.13 per pound), down 0.5 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$5,120 per ton, up 2.9 percent; Contract 2, \$4,570 per ton, down 3.2 percent; Contract 3, \$4,610 per ton, down 2.0

percent; Contract 4, \$4,763 per ton, up 1.4; Contract 5, \$4,935 per ton, up 3.5 percent; and Contract 6, \$4,826 per ton, up 1.0 percent.

Buttermilk powder: The average winning price was \$2,207 per ton (\$1.00 per pound), up 9.9 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$2,455 per ton, up 11.8 percent; Contract 2, \$2,060 per ton; Contract 3, \$2,400 per ton, up 11.9 percent; Contract 4, \$2,425 per ton, up 10.0 percent; and Contract 5, \$2,380 per ton, up 4.8 percent.

Fonterra today reduced its 2023/24 season forecast farmgate milk price range from \$7.25 to \$8.75 per kilogram of milk solids with a midpoint of \$8.00 per kilo-

gram of milk solids, to \$6.25 to \$7.75 per kilogram of milk solids, with a midpoint of \$7.00 per kilogram of milk solids.

Miles Hurrell, Fonterra CEO, said the revised forecast farmgate price range reflects ongoing reduced import demand for whole milk powder from China.

When Fonterra announced its opening 2023/24 season forecast farmgate milk price in May, it noted that the forecast reflected an expectation that China's import demand for whole milk powder would lift over the medium term, Hurrell noted. Since then, overall GDT whole milk powder prices have fallen by 12 percent, and China's share of whole milk powder volumes on GDT events has tracked below average levels.

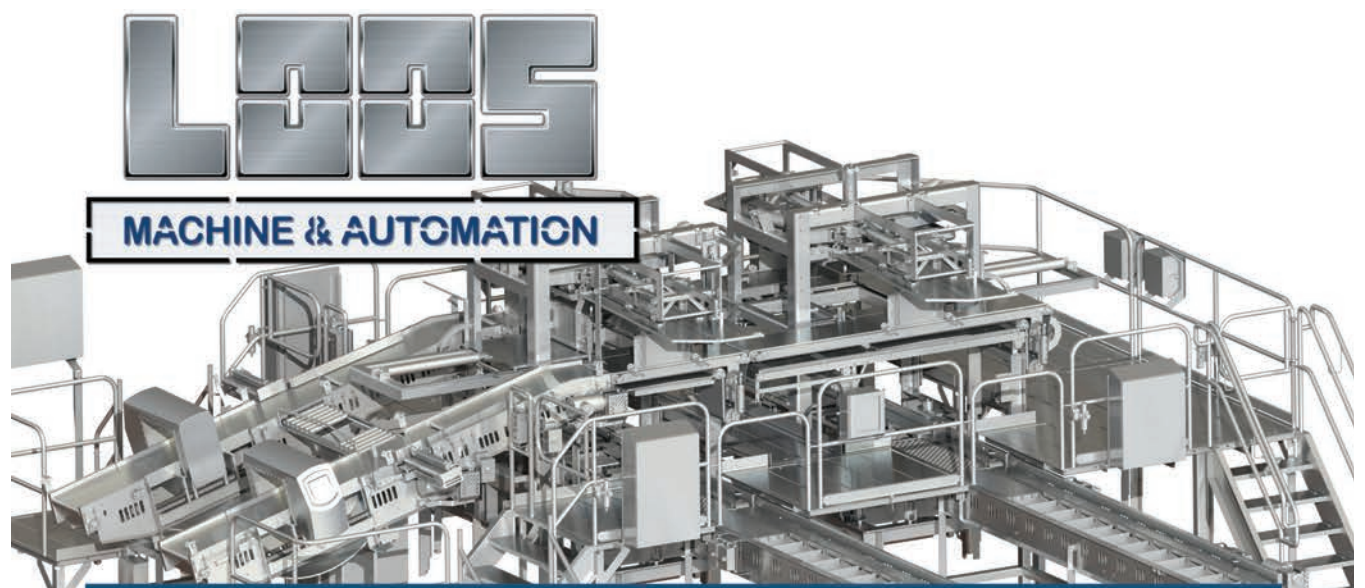
"This reflects a current surplus of fresh milk in China, resulting

in elevated levels of local production of whole milk powder, and reducing near-term whole milk powder import requirements," Hurrell said.

ASB Bank, in its "Commodities Weekly" report, noted that the drop in the whole milk powder price on this week's GDT auction took WMP prices to their lowest level since early 2019.

While the WMP contract curve had developed an upward slope, with shipments in the distant future now trading at a premium, prices for all contracts are sharply lower versus a fortnight ago.

ASB's forecast farmgate milk price for the 2023/24 season remains unchanged at \$7.25 per kilogram of milk solids. Most forecasters and the futures market have lowered their milk price expectations over recent weeks.



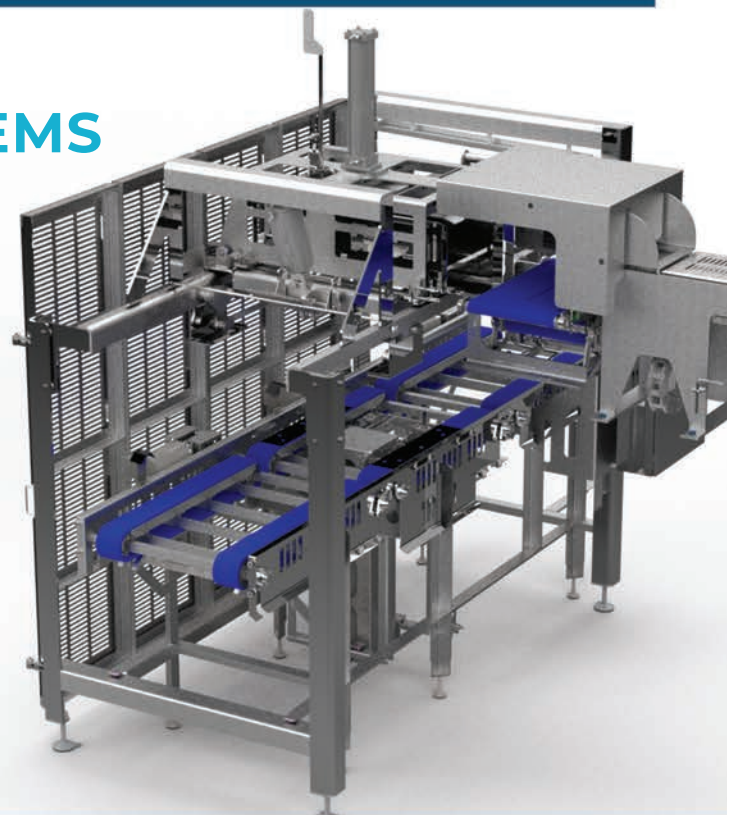
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Milk Price Innovation is Inevitable

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The future of the dairy industry shone clearly beside a gravel road outside Muscoda, Wisconsin last week. There, under a blue July sky, Larry Harris described use after use he'd discovered for nanobubble technology in every stage of the diverse wastewater treatment system at Meister Cheese.

"We're looking at so many applications for this tech, I wish I was 20 years younger," Harris, Technical Director at Meister Cheese, told attendees at a technology field day Meister hosted for WCMA members.

Innovation, discovery, development, and implementation — this is the future of the dairy industry.

Nanobubbles, invisibly small air bubbles blown into the anaerobic treatment ponds at Meister Cheese, destroy surfactants in wastewater, vastly improving the functionality of the microbes in the system, producing more captured methane gas, eliminating the need for buffering chemicals and allowing the system to treat a higher volume of wastewater flow.

Innovation is alive and well at the Center for Dairy Research in Madison, Wisconsin, where Director John Lucey, PhD, sees a bright future for dairy's lowest value byproducts — manure of the farm side and whey permeate on the processing side.

"Our vision is to use these by-products as feedstocks for microbial biotransformation into

chemicals and chemical precursors that are needed by society. Success in this endeavor will provide additional revenue to farmers and local communities while generating new products or low-carbon substitutes for fossil fuel derived materials," Lucey wrote in a funding petition to the National Science Foundation. The outputs of bio-fermentation can include renewable, and biodegradable bioplastics, sustainable fuels, and green chemicals.

The future of milk pricing is cost-based pricing or cheese yield pricing, backed with hedging and tweaked for oscillations in supply and demand.

Mullins Cheese in Knowlton, Wisconsin, is innovating and implementing — cooling its natural block cheeses in their plastic liner only, eliminating all cardboard packaging. It's a savings for the factory, for the environment, and for the end users who have less packaging to remove and manage.

Panhandle Cheese is innovating, operating its new cheese factory near Dumas, Texas, by procuring the vast majority of its fresh farm milk solely via pipeline

from modern dairy farms surrounding the facility. In addition to the highly marketable "green" manufacturing this provides, any dairy plant with this innovation would realize nearly \$2 million in estimated annual savings for each one million pounds of milk per day processed, by removing hundreds of semi tanker load trips from the cost equation.

These are just a few examples of sustainable, competitive, groundbreaking innovations that are breathing life into the future of the dairy industry. Only one impediment holds dairy back; only one key element seems to defy innovation: government-set milk pricing.

This sentiment may only apply to dairy manufacturing west of the Ohio River, but federal milk pricing and pooling cannot innovate, discover, develop and implement nimble adaptations to the growing role of dairy products exported overseas, the explosion in dairy farm size and rise of single-farm-business processing, the new era of mega-volume cheese and milk powder operations, the long-distance transportability of fresh milk, the challenge of finding carriers for the long-distance transportability of fresh milk, the utter differentiation of Cheddar barrel and block markets, the dominance of whey protein concentrates, the consolidation of dairy buyers and subsequent volatility of cash markets at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, volatility in energy and labors costs, the decline in fluid milk consumption and accordant decline in Class 1 pool dollars, the cross-talk from FDA green lighting any nut or seed slurry as "milk," the economic sensitivity of the sit-down dining industry, the structural disconnect between milk pricing and risk management tools, or even friction between the international desire for unbleached whey and the dairy pricing infatuation with colored Cheddar.

In the next several months, the dairy industry will spend countless hours and dollars putting new tires on the old Model T that is government-set milk pricing formulas. Yes, we have to change the tires, because this old system is still driving the dairy economy.

But the dairy industry can apply innovation even to milk pricing to meet every change and marketplace challenge described above. And west of the Ohio, innovation in milk pricing is already taking root. The future of milk pricing is cost-based pricing or cheese yield pricing, backed with hedging and tweaked for oscillations in supply and demand. And like Larry Harris, we may all wish we were 20 years younger, so we could see free market innovation, rather than a government program, price milk across the US. ¹⁰

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

50 YEARS AGO

Aug. 3, 1973: Madison—The Universal Product Code and the automation it entails will have a vast impact on food distributors and the way business is done now and in the future. With computerization of grocery stores, retailers will have tighter controls over inventory, while turnover rates will be available almost instantly.

Pullman, WA—Americans have a serious drinking problem, according to UC-Berkeley nutrition science professor George Briggs. Fluid milk consumption is in decline — a drop of 25 percent over the last 20 years, while soft drink consumption has jumped 100 percent in 12 years.

25 YEARS AGO

July 31, 1998: Franklin Park, IL—Dean Foods has reached an agreement to sell its vegetable operations to Agrilink Foods for roughly \$400 million in cash, plus Agrilink's aseptic foods business. The sale reflects Dean Foods' decision to concentrate on its three core businesses: dairy, pickles and specialty foods.

Madison—Next year's 35th Marshall Italian & Specialty Cheese Seminar will be held in California for the first time ever. The announcement by Doug Willrett of Rhodia, Inc., said the move is a great opportunity to bridge the dairy industry east of the Rocky Mountains with a growing dairy industry in the West.

10 YEARS AGO

Aug. 2, 2013: Chesterton, IN—Urschel Laboratories recently broke ground on a new manufacturing facility and global headquarters here. The \$80 million construction project will take roughly 18 months to complete, and will encompass 71 acres.

Madison—The Cellars at Jasper Hill, Greensboro, VT, took top honors at the American Cheese Society's annual Cheese Competition, winning Best of Show with its washed rind Winnimere. Grafton Village earned second place for its Bear Hill, and Bleu Mont Dairy won third for Bandaged Cheddar and Big Sky Grana.

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MSG's Casein Plant

(Continued from p. 1)

imports between 2013 and 2022 ranged from 93.0 million pounds in 2017 to 120.7 million pounds in 2022. Imports of caseinates during that period ranged from 42.9 million pounds in 2019 to 86.5 million pounds in 2013.

Over the 2013-2022 period, the value of US casein imports ranged from a low of \$229.8 million in 2018 to a high of \$515.0 million in 2022, while the value of caseinate imports ranged from a low of \$123.5 million in 2018 to a high of \$269.8 million in 2022.

In 2022, New Zealand, Ireland and France accounted for almost 80 percent of US casein imports on a volume basis, FAS figures show.

MSG's new Jerome facility will process 2.5 million pounds of milk per day and offer North American customers an alternative supply of domestically produced casein products, the company said.

"Our customers asked, and we listened," said David Lenzmeier, CEO of Milk Specialties Global. "We have the knowledge and the network to create more value out of the high-quality milk produced in Idaho, so it just makes sense for us."

Milk Specialties will work in tandem with Magic Valley Quality Milk (MVQM), a raw-milk cooperative that will supply skim milk for casein production. MSG's state-of-the-art Jerome facility is built adjacent to MFQM's milk processing facility. The two facilities are connected by a pipeline to move skim milk between facilities, greatly reducing carbon emissions over the long term by eliminating the need for truck transportation, MSG said.

"This is an exciting opportunity for our patron farmers," said Alan Stutzman, MVQM's CEO. "Our farmers produce some of the best milk in the world and Milk Specialties is an ideal partner to convert that milk into value-added ingredients."

"We're looking forward to getting to work with Magic Valley Quality Milk and our customers," Lenzmeier said.

MSG is a manufacturer of nutritional ingredients for the health and wellness, performance nutrition and functional food industries, with facilities in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Nebraska, Illinois and California.

The core of MSG's business is in high-percentage protein ingredients (whey protein concentrates, isolates and hydrolysates, as well as milk protein concentrates, isolates and micellar casein), lactose and permeate as well as value added ingredients.

For more information about, visit www.milkspecialties.com.

USDA Buys String, Cheddar Cheese, UHT, Evaporated Milk For 4th Quarter

Washington—The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) last Friday announced the awarding of a contract to **Winona Foods, Inc.**, for a total of 470,400 pounds of shredded yellow Cheddar cheese for delivery between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31, 2023.

The price of the Cheddar cheese being purchased under this award is \$2.45 per pound; the total contract price is \$1,152,480.00. The cheese is being purchased in support of child nutrition and other related domestic food distribution programs.

USDA on Tuesday announced the awarding of a contract to **Sargento Foods Inc.** for a total of 908,730 pounds of low moisture part skim Mozzarella String cheese for delivery between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31, 2023.

The price of the String cheese being purchased under this award ranges from \$2.9110 to \$3.2906 per pound; the total contract price is \$2,791,604.57. The String cheese is being purchased in support of child nutrition and other related domestic food distribution programs.

Finally, USDA on Thursday announced the purchase of a total of 10,746,084.24 pounds of UHT and skim evaporated milk for delivery from Oct. 1 through Dec. 31, 2023.

These UHT and evaporated milk products are being purchased in support of child nutrition and other related domestic food distribution programs.

The USDA is also purchasing a total of 10,671,726.24 pounds of UHT milk and 74,358 pounds

of skim evaporated milk. The total price of the purchases is \$4,557,839.45.

Contracts were awarded as follows:

Gossner Foods, Inc.: 3,667,026.24 pounds of UHT milk, at a price of \$1,753,407.55.

Naturally Brand Inc.: 7,004,700 pounds of UHT milk, at a total price of \$2,731,724.74.

O-AT-KA Milk Products Cooperative: 74,358 pounds of skim evaporated milk, at a total price of \$72,707.26.

The US Department of Agriculture issues solicitations on an ongoing basis for over 200 different USDA Foods, including a variety of different dairy products, including cheese, fluid milk, butter, high protein yogurt, UHT milk and evaporated milk.

For more information on selling dairy and other food products to USDA, visit www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food.

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Protein Was Upper Midwest Order's Most Valuable Component In 2021

Minneapolis, MN—In 2021, protein was the most valuable component on the Upper Midwest federal milk marketing order, according to a recent study.

Analysis of Component Levels and Somatic Cell Count in Individual Herd Milk at the Farm Level, 2021, was written by Dr Corey Freije, an agricultural economist with the market administrator's office in Minneapolis.

The study analyzes the component levels and values comprising milk production for the Upper Midwest order for 2021. The payroll data for producers who were associated with the order were examined. On average, 9,553 dairy producers were associated with the Upper Midwest order every month.

Multiple component pricing on the order allows for component levels to be viewed in terms of the value of producer milk given its composition. Milk values, for the purpose of this study, were calculated on an annual basis using monthly federal order component prices applied to producer milk associated with the Upper Midwest order during 2021.

These values reflect the aggregated value of butterfat, protein and other solids only. Other solids, for purposes of federal milk order pricing, are defined as solids-not-fat (SNF) minus protein. Therefore, other solids consist primarily of lactose and ash. Ash traditionally has been considered a constant in SNF, while lactose does vary somewhat in the SNF.

The values don't include monthly producer price differentials (PPDs) for the Upper Midwest order, or premiums and/or deductions that handlers pooling

milk under the order may apply to producer pay prices.

In 2021, the cumulative value of butterfat, protein, and other solids, with an adjustment for somatic cell count (SCC), averaged \$19.00 per hundredweight for the Upper Midwest order. The value of each component was \$7.74 per hundred for butterfat, \$8.87 per hundred for protein and \$2.25 per hundred for other solids. The SCC adjustment for the year was 14 cents per hundred.

Last year was the second straight year in which protein was the most valuable component on the Upper Midwest order, although, at \$8.87 per hundred, the protein value was down \$3.05 from its record-high value in 2020. The butterfat value last year was up 95 cents from 2020.

Prior to 2020, the butterfat value of producer milk on the Upper Midwest order had been higher than the protein value for five straight years. By contrast, during the first 15 years that the Upper Midwest order was in effect (2000-2014), butterfat contributed more to the value of milk than protein just once, in 2001, when the butterfat value was \$6.83 per hundred and the protein value was \$5.92 per hundred.

Seasonal Component Variation

Many factors, such as weather, feed quality and feeding practices, cattle breed and others, may impact component levels and relationships among components in milk. No attempt was made in this study to estimate the specific effects of such factors on milk composition, but average component levels were examined for seasonal or within-year variation.

While widespread use of artificial insemination, freestall barns, and total mix rations have reduced milk production swings, seasonality is still present, the study pointed out. Seasonal production "spring flush" and the winter drop in production also lead to seasonal movements in component tests.

Butterfat, protein and SNF tests generally have their lowest levels in July and peak in November, while somatic cell counts peak in the warm summer months and reach a low point in November. Other solids tests show little variation but usually peak in the spring or summer months.

Seasonal changes in component levels for 2021 appeared to be relatively normal, the study noted. During the year, butterfat levels rose from 4.18 percent in January to 4.21 percent in February, gradually declined to 3.93 percent in July, then gradually increased to a high of 4.26 percent in December. The weighted average butterfat level for 2021 was 4.09 percent, up from 3.99 percent in 2020.

Protein levels increased from 3.26 percent in January to 3.28 percent in February, gradually declined to 3.10 percent in July, then gradually increased to 3.31 percent in both November and December. The weighted average protein level for 2020 was 3.31 percent, up from 3.16 percent in 2020.

Other solids increased from 5.78 percent in January and February to 5.82 percent in October before falling to 5.79 percent in December. The weighted average other solids last year was 5.79.

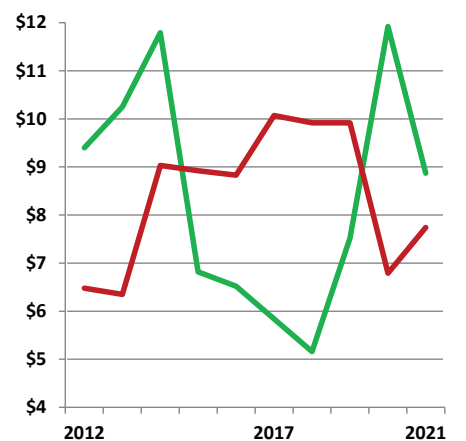
Jan - Oct 2021, SNF ranged from 8.90 percent in July to 9.06 percent in February. SNF increased to 9.11 percent in November, then declined to 9.10 percent in December. The weighted average SNF level in 2021 was 9.00 percent, up from 8.94 percent in 2020.

SCC levels during the first half of 2021 ranged from 168,000 in January to 186,000 in June. During the second half of 2021, levels were above 200,000 for three straight months, peaking at 205,000 in August, then fell for five straight months, reaching 169,000 in December. For 2021, SCC averaged 182,000, up from an average of 178,000 in 2020.

In 2021, the simple averages for butterfat, protein, other solids, and SNF were lower than the weighted average, indicating that larger producers (in terms of monthly milk deliveries) tended to have higher levels of these components than smaller producers.

The simple average SCC of 232,000 was higher than the weighted average of 182,000, indicating that larger producers on average tended to have lower SCC than their smaller counterparts. The median SCC level of 208,000

Protein, Butterfat Values:
for Milk on the Upper Midwest Federal Order
Value per cwt: Source; Upper Midwest market



was lower than the simple average, indicating that the distribution of SCC levels for the market was skewed toward higher levels.

The range of component levels observed in the data was fairly wide. Monthly average individual producer butterfat levels were as low as 2.13 percent and as high as 7.21 percent; protein levels ranged from 1.61 percent to 4.97 percent; other solids levels ranged from 3.09 percent to 6.94 percent; SNF levels ranged from 4.71 percent to 11.43 percent; and SCC ranged from 21,000 to 1,718,000.

Variations By State

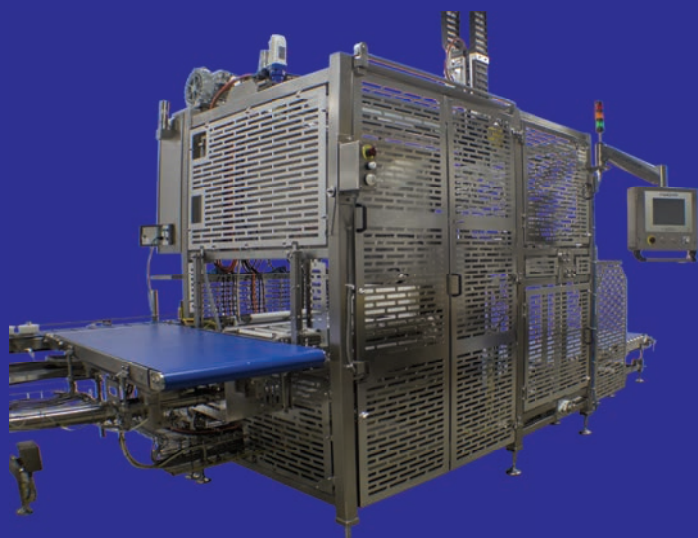
The study examined milk component levels for the seven states that have counties within the Upper Midwest marketing order.

Of the states that are wholly or partially located in the Upper Midwest marketing area, South Dakota had the highest weighted average butterfat, protein, and SNF tests, at 4.45 percent, 3.45 percent and 9.25 percent, respectively. Iowa and South Dakota had the highest weighted average other solids test, at 5.81 percent.

Wisconsin had the lowest weighted average SCC, at 172,000, while Michigan's Upper Peninsula had the highest, at 231,000.

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Grocery Shoppers Buy On Recession Budget; Retailers Need To Push Value

Middleton, WI—Recession or not, more than 30 percent of grocery shoppers think the US is in the midst of a recession, and are purchasing dairy and food products accordingly.

The International Dairy Deli Bakery Association (IDDBA) this week hosted Kathy Risch of Acosta Group to re-visit predictions the Group made in December 2022 on grocery trends for 2023. One of the major forecasts was “Recession or Not, Perception is Reality.”

The latest numbers show that inflation rates are tapering, but consumer buying habits are the same.

“Recession is still a real possibility in the news,” Risch said. “We track what consumers think, and they already think we’re in a recession.”

Acosta Group data found that 33 percent of shoppers think the US is in a recession, and 38 percent think one is coming soon.

Higher gas and food prices are the most important metric to consumers when evaluating the current economic climate.

Gas prices have come down an average of \$1.50 from June 2022, so that gives consumers a bit of confidence, Risch said. On the other hand, the Consumer

Price (CPI) is still higher compared to 2022.

“Only 10 percent of shoppers noticed any prices dipping at all,” she continued.

Shoppers are buying and behaving like the US is in a recession – there’s less eating out, less spending on discretionary items, and canceling or postponing major purchases, Risch said.

This means changing shopping behavior in middle- and even higher income levels. Stores like Walmart and Dollar General are seeing increased sales from the \$100,000-plus income group.

“I’ll say this is the most depressing prediction of all,” Risch said. “Even though gas prices are coming down, shoppers are cautious, and they’ll need time to catch up financially as prices continue to increase at the grocery store and other parts of their life like bills.”

To that end, food and dairy retailers need to focus on value, opening price point and promotions, she said. Communicate your entire value position.

“Speak about food quality, and the story behind the brand – all the efforts and investments involved,” Risch said, adding

that sustainability and premium attributes should be highlighted.

Packaging and size options are likewise important. A growing percentage of single households is Boomers – that single-serve trend is becoming very relevant.

“Many people also find fresh, prepared food in the perimeter of the store is at restaurant-quality levels,” Risch said. “The affordable meal solution is also big.”

It’s likewise important to remember total cost when selecting recipes for shoppers, with fewer ingredients, the better.

Hybrid shopping is growing in 2023, with virtual reality technologies increasingly being adopted to enhance in-store experiences.

“Think about walking down an aisle and feeling like you’re in a showroom that provides 3-D product interaction,” Risch added.

“Many retailers are participating in live sales, where the products are for sales via live-stream video. This took off in China a few years ago, and the global trend is really picking up pace in the US.”

It started with apparel and beauty, but now its hitting CPG in a really big way, Risch said.

The Fresh Market is expanding its partnership with video commerce solution provider Firework, creating a retail media network where there’s shoppa-

ble content live, she continued. It provides recipes and tutorials, all through the grocer’s digital channel.

At the same time, post-pandemic shoppers are back in brick-and-mortar in a big way.

“Expectation of enjoyment needs to be met, but also convenience and value in a big way,” Risch. “Shopping anywhere, any time is another big trend.”

“There’s great investments going on at retail across the country, bringing shoppers back to their store,” she said.

H-E-B stores launched H-E-B Fresh Bites Convenience Stores in April, offering greater selections of produce, prepared foods and convenient meal options.

Food Lion is in the process of upgrading 47 stores in North Carolina.

The \$77 million investment will provide shoppers with more ready-to-eat, ready-to-heat foods, and a larger assortment of convenient meal solutions.

The idea of “flex stores” is also big, with retailers able to change counters, displays and departments on the fly – all to better serve food buyers.

“Not just renovations, but the design of new stores where they’re factoring that into the plumbing and electrical from the start,” Risch said. “These will be the plug-and-play stores of the future, if you will.”



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American Cheese Society Honors Bates, Kindstedt, Stephenson



In the photo above are, left to right: Dr. Paul Kindstedt and Jeremy Stephenson, recipients of the American Cheese Society's Lifetime Achievement Award; and Marc Bates, recipient of the ACS's Meritorious Service Award. Photo by American Cheese Society/Dan Welk.

Des Moines, IA—The American Cheese Society (ACS) honored three long-time cheese industry leaders and contributors at its conference here last month.

Marc Bates, owner of Bates Consulting, received the Meritorious Achievement Award, which is presented to ACS members who have distinguished themselves by outstanding meritorious achievement or service to ACS or the cheese industry as a whole.

Bates spent 27 years as the creamery manager at Washington

State University before heading to Oregon State University to manage the creamery there.

In his "semi-retirement," Marc Bates continues to work as a food safety auditor and consultant, and also serves as a judge in a variety of cheese contests, wrote in honoring the leaders.

Bates has devoted most of his life to encouraging and mentoring anyone who shared his passion and desire to make the best cheese, no matter the scale, the ACS noted.

Bates has helped hone the cheesemaking skills of hundreds of cheese makers, including many ACS members, and has helped improve the quality of American-made artisan and farmstead cheeses.

Dr. Paul Kindstedt and Jeremy Stephenson received Lifetime Achievement Awards, which were created to honor individuals whose professional accomplishments have made a lasting impact on the American cheese industry, and whose life and character have earned the respect and admiration of their professional colleagues.

Kindstedt retired in May as a food science professor at the University of Vermont, where he served as a faculty member since 1986.

During his career, Kindstedt authored numerous research articles and invited papers for conferences on dairy chemistry and cheese science.

His research focused on crystal formation in cheese, and their effect on cheese appearance and flavor.

He is also the author of *Cheese and Culture, A History of Cheese and Its Place in Western Civilization*; and the coauthor of *American Farmstead Cheese*, with the Vermont Cheese Council.

Jeremy Stephenson's extensive history in cheese includes years in a leadership role with the Vermont Cheese Council, and with the American Cheese Society, where he served on the board of directors as well as president, said the ACS.

Stephenson served as the cheese program director at Springbrook Farm/Farms for City Kids Foundation, and most recently, working with the Vermont Farm and Cheese Collaborative.

PCC-DBII Accepting Applications For Dairy Farm Innovation Grants

Fresno, CA—The Pacific Coast Coalition Dairy Business Innovation Initiative (PCC-DBII), hosted by California State University, Fresno, is now accepting applications for Dairy Farm Innovation Grants.

The PCC-DBII will award funding to dairy producers and processors in California, Oregon and Washington who want to become more innovative in today's dairy industry.

"In this round for new or used equipment, we encourage applications up to \$50,000 so more businesses may benefit," said Carmen Licon Cano, Ph.D., PCC project director "Past grant winners have purchased items like butter churns, pasteurizers, and other items that have increased the profile of dairy while filling a demand for local and artisanal products."

To help potential applicants, PCC will host two 2023 virtual "Office Hours" on Thursday, Aug. 10, from 4:00-5:00 p.m., and Friday, Sept. 8, from 4:00-5:00 p.m.

For more information, visit www.dairypcc.net.

Susan Pheasant, Ph.D., PCC "Cowkeeper," noted that a larger funding opportunity will begin in January, 2024, with at least \$4.1 million available for more states, including Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington.

This fourth round of funding will include pandemic recovery, as the majority of those monies are derived from the federal CARES Act.

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Dairy Inelasticity

(Continued from p. 1)

through a combination of econometric modeling and judgment of the committee members. The Dairy ICEC is represented by several USDA agencies including ERS, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), and the Farm Production and Conservation Business Center.

ERS maintains and uses a dynamic econometric model of the US dairy industry to support USDA baseline projections. The model is comprehensive, simultaneously projecting milk production, fluid milk sales volume, manufactured dairy product consumption, dairy manufacturing allocation, dairy product prices, and milk prices received by dairy farmers sequentially along a 10-year projection period, the ERS report explained.

While the Annual US Dairy Sector Model assists the Dairy ICEC in its deliberations for the baseline projections, model results are adjusted during the process based on committee judgment. The final baseline model results each year represent the consensus judgment of the committee.

The Annual US Dairy Sector Model, as calibrated to the baseline projections, is a tool to analyze alternative projected outcomes for the dairy sector due to impacts of changes in market conditions or impacts of changes to various federal government policies.

Macroeconomic assumptions, feed prices, foreign export prices for dairy products, various federal government policy parameters, and other types of variables can be altered to analyze changes of supply, demand, and price variables for the dairy sector.

The scenario model projections resulting from the altered inputs can be compared to the baseline projections in order to estimate impacts of the changes. An example is provided to demonstrate how the model can be used to analyze the effects of a change in feed prices on the dairy sector.

While scenario analyses from the model would be of interest to agricultural economists, policy makers, and private decision-makers, the parameters used in the model would also be of interest, the report noted.

Prices and income are key signals of economic decision-making. Prices are determined by the interaction of supply and demand, reflecting the willingness of producers to supply goods and consumers to buy these goods. Income changes affect the relative demand for these same goods.

Key measures of producers' and consumers' responsiveness

to changes in prices and income are price elasticities and income elasticities, respectively. Price and income elasticity estimates are provided in this report for many of the supply and demand variables included in the model.

The model estimates milk production via average milk per cow and average annual number of cows.

The year-over-year difference in average number of cows is estimated as a function of the milk-feed price ratio of the previous year, the ratio of a cull cow price proxy to the all-milk price, and trend variables.

Milk production per cow is estimated as a function of the previous year's milk-feed price ratio and trend variables.

Per capita demand quantities for fluid milk and manufactured dairy products are estimated as functions of product prices, real

per capita income, and other factors. For the most part, dairy product prices are deflated by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all products.

Total consumption for each specific product or product aggregate is specified as per capita demand times the projected population for each year.

Fluid milk demand responds to the CPI for fresh whole milk and real per capita disposable income. Domestic demand quantities for hard manufactured products (butter, cheese, dry skim milk products, and dry whey) respond to associated wholesale prices included in the model.

Income responses are found to be significant for butter and cheese but not for dry skim milk products and dry whey, the report noted.

Price and income demand elasticities are all inelastic, which is

typical for food products, the report explained. Price elasticities estimates range from minus 0.035 for fluid milk to minus 0.868 for other Class II products.

Staple products such as fluid milk would be expected to be very price inelastic, the report said. Products that are considered less essential, or luxury goods, are not as inelastic.

Some Class II products may fall in this category.

Income elasticity estimates range from 0.069 for fluid milk to 0.604 for butter.

This ERS technical bulletin is intended to provide transparency concerning how the model is used (along with judgment of the Dairy ICEC) to produce *USDA Agricultural Projections* for the dairy sector and how the model is used for analyzing changing market conditions and various federal government policies.

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Plant-Based Milk

(Continued from p. 1)

ing consumer confusion and be forcefully implemented by the agency and taken seriously by the plant-based beverage community, so that we may at least improve consumers' understanding in the marketplace."

FDA's draft guidance to "formally sanction" its current practice of nonenforcement of its standard of identity for milk "has eroded dairy manufacturers' trust in the agency," the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) stated. More importantly, the agency's previous inaction and proposed trajectory "poses a threat to the health and well-being of the American public, via confusion over the content and nutritional offerings of plant-based dairy imitators."

Also, FDA's suggestion in its draft guidance that the manufacturers of plant-based mimics voluntarily disclose nutritional deficiencies in their products as compared to real dairy milk is "woefully inadequate," the WCMA added. "WCMA urges FDA leadership to thoroughly reexamine its position on this matter and engage in efforts to provide greater consumer clarity in the marketplace."

The American Cheese Society (ACS) supports the federal definition of milk and milk products.

The ACS also believes that nutrient statements on nutritionally different milk alternatives should be mandatory, not voluntary.

"Most consumers who purchase plant-based milk alternatives do so because they believe the products are healthier than dairy milk," the National Dairy Council (NDC) noted. "Consumers are misinformed. Plant-based milk alternatives do not provide the same nutrient profile or have the decades of scientific evidence supporting the link between their consumption and numerous health benefits as dairy milk."

FDA's recommended voluntary nutrient statement may not address consumer misinformation or advance health equity, NDC continued. If consumers substitute plant-based milk alternatives in the "mistaken belief" that nutrient content is equivalent, then an unintended consequence of allowing plant-based milk alternatives to use the term "milk" could be a widening of an "already significant gap" between the dietary recommendations for healthy eating patterns and current consumption levels.

"FDA has failed to enforce the established definition of milk as codified in standards of identity since products imitating milk first came to the market," Dairy Farmers of America (DFA) commented. "The solution is straightforward — FDA must not permit the use of dairy terms on non-dairy prod-

ucts."

The confusion FDA addresses in the guidance could be solved by establishing standards of identity for plant-based dairy alternatives, DFA said. "This would also eliminate the conflict with milk's definition while potentially improving the nutrient profile of these deficient products, depending upon how their standards of identity are promulgated."

Allowing PBMA's to use the term "milk" is inconsistent with FDA's own regulations, National All-Jersey stated. The organization urged FDA to correct this inconsistency by revising the draft guidance to make clear that PBMA's "are not permitted to use label terms restricted to dairy milk and products made from dairy milk."

While the draft guidance represents progress toward greater transparency in the labeling of plant-based milk alternatives, "it still falls short of the most obvious solution this problem, which would be for FDA to enforce its long-standing standard of identity regulation regarding use of the term 'milk' on product labels," the Midwest Dairy Coalition said.

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative urged FDA to "revise its draft guidance to halt the use of dairy terms for imitation products and enforce the standard of identity for milk and other dairy products. That is the only solution that is fair to dairy farmers and truthful to consumers."

It is Organic Valley's judgment that FDA has failed to enforce the existing standards of identity for milk and, by absence of attention, contributed to marketplace confusion especially by some consumers who believe PBMA's by and large are nutritionally equivalent or healthier than milk.

"This is a regulatory public policy failure and unfortunately the non-binding recommendations provided both for naming PBMA, and suggested use for voluntary nutrient statements are woefully insufficient, with no record or example of how such an approach would actually be adopted by brands selling the aforementioned PBMA or how such statements might be perceived by consumers," Organic Valley said.

"This is a regulatory public policy failure and unfortunately the non-binding recommendations provided both for naming PBMA, and suggested use for voluntary nutrient statements are woefully insufficient, with no record or example of how such an approach would actually be adopted by brands selling the aforementioned PBMA or how such statements might be perceived by consumers."

— Organic Valley

The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) believes that plant-based milk alternatives "should adhere to current labeling laws and regulations and that consumers should be presented with accurate information on a product's label so that they can make an informed choice about the wide range of attributes associated with milk and other dairy terms, including butter, ice cream, yogurt, etc."

Farm Bureau asked FDA to

• See **Plant-Based Milk**, p. 11



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Plant-Based Milk

Continued from p. 10

amend its draft guidance to prohibit the use of “milk” or other dairy terms on non-dairy substitutes unless products follow proper use of imitation terminology, as defined by existing law.

The National Association of Dairy Regulatory Officials (NADRO) requested that FDA reconsider the draft guidance to include requiring PBMA be labeled as beverages instead of milk or, at the very least, require the nutritional disclosure statement be required on the principal display panel on all PBMA.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) recommended that FDA require a front-of-package disclosure on plant-based milk alternatives that do not provide similar levels of certain key nutrients as the levels typically found in dairy milks.

CSPI explained that its intent is not to discourage the use of plant-based milks, nor to restrict the term ‘milk’ to dairy alone, “but rather to promote the availability of nutritionally adequate plant-based products for people who must avoid dairy milk or simply choose to avoid it.”

FMI-The Food Industry Association asked FDA to rescind or significantly revise the draft guidance on voluntary nutrient statements, and said it would be more

consistent with First Amendment principles to recommend a case-by-case review of the specific context for individual products to ensure that all claims are truthful and not misleading, and to limit recommendations about nutrient statements to material information.

Support For FDA's Guidance

The Plant Based Foods Association (PBFA) appreciates that, in its draft guidance, FDA reaffirmed its long-standing position that standards of identity, like “milk,” may be used in the names of other foods, including plant-based milks, so long as such use is not misleading.

“This has been the FDA’s position for decades, but nevertheless we are glad the FDA has confirmed that it applies to plant-based milks,” PBFA said. “We also appreciate the FDA’s recognition that plant-based milks do not purport to be, nor are they represented as, cow’s milk.”

However, the PBFA is concerned by two items in the draft guidance that impose labeling requirements on plant-based milks that depart from longstanding FDA requirements and are inconsistent with requirements imposed on any other food product. These items are the “Nutrient Disclaimers” and the “Naming Obligations.”

The Alliance for Plant-Based Inclusion (APBI) supports FDA’s

decision to allow for the continued use of the term “milk” with plant-based milk alternatives. However, APBI members believe that a voluntary comparative nutrient statement “is unnecessary.”

The Fungi Protein Association (FPA) commended FDA’s recognition that consumers are not misled from properly qualified uses of the term “milk” in the labeling of non-animal-based foods, but believes the agency should rescind its recommendations for voluntary nutrient statements for milk alternatives.

The American Beverage Association (ABA) “appreciates and supports” FDA’s decision to permit PBMA to be labeled with the term “milk” as a voluntary alternative to terms like “drink” or “beverage.” However, FDA should remove its recommendation that PBMA disclose nutrients that are present at lower levels than in traditional dairy milk.

The Institute for Justice commended the FDA for “rejecting the dairy industry’s push to ban plant-based milk terms” and for recognizing that the dairy industry’s proposed approach would raise First Amendment considerations.

But the IJ cautioned FDA against the draft guidance’s alternative approach of creating voluntary nutrient statements for plant-based foods. Although a

truly “voluntary” approach would not violate the First Amendment, this particular approach “would be poor policy and could run the risk of eventually devolving into a First Amendment violation.”

The Harvard Law School Animal Law & Policy Clinic (ALPC) commended FDA for its draft guidance and suggested an alternative approach to voluntary nutrient statements.

Specifically, ALPC recommended that FDA suggest, as an alternative to voluntary nutrient statements, that any food product label using the term “milk” in its statement of identity include an expanded Nutrition Facts label that provides compositional information for nutrients of public health concern commonly found in fluid milk from cows.

While Califia Farms, a plant-based beverage brand, commended FDA’s decision to permit plant-based milk products to continue using “milk” on product labels, the company “strongly” disagreed with the recommendation to include voluntary nutrient statements comparing the nutritional composition of plant-based milk with cow’s milk.

“Such a measure would be both discriminatory and unprecedented as it places an undue burden on plant-based milk producers to which no other products on the market are subject,” Califia Farms said.



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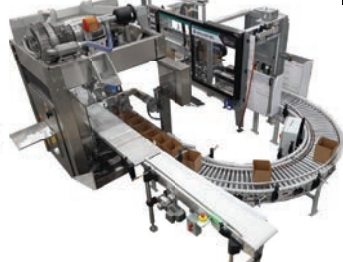
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Univar Expands Distribution Deal With Leprino Foods To Mexico, Brazil

Sao Paulo, Brazil, and Mexico City, Mexico—Univar Solutions Brasil Ltda and Univar Solutions Mexico S De, both subsidiaries of Univar Solutions, Inc., recently announced an expanded agreement with Leprino Foods Company for a broad range of its nutritional ingredients and dairy products serving food and beverage customers in Brazil and Mexico.

Leprino Foods' ingredients are found in a variety of foods and beverages, including nutraceutical blends, sports and animal nutrition products, and other commercial foods and beverages, according to Univar Solutions.

"At Leprino Foods, we are continually assessing market demands so we can offer our customers access to products and services they need to keep their business growing. We're excited about building a strong and solid partnership with Univar Solutions, which reinforces our commitment to the food ingredients and nutrition market," said Jason Eckert, senior vice president and general manager for Leprino

Nutrition.

"Aligning with our own commitment to sustainability, Univar Solutions also offers a sustainable and natural products portfolio as a differentiator in distribution as they embed these practices into each step of the supply chain," Eckert added.

"We are very pleased to expand our relationship with Leprino Foods beyond the United States and Canada and into Brazil and Mexico," said Kevin Hack, global vice president of food ingredients for Univar Solutions, a leading global specialty chemical and ingredient distributor.

"Leprino Foods is a dynamic dairy ingredients company that shares our strong commitment to environmental responsibility and sustainable product development," Univar's Kevin Hack continued.

"Our Sao Paulo and Mexico City Solution Centers and test kitchens will be a key resource as we work closely together to deliver the innovative solutions needed to help keep our communities healthy and fed now and in the future."

Deville Introduces Ultrasonic Portion Cheese Cutter

Montreal, Quebec, and Kenosha, WI—Deville Technologies has recently introduced a new ultrasonic portion cutter to facilitate the reduction of a variety of hard to extremely soft-style cheeses.

The portion cutter uses an indexing motor coupled with an ultrasonic blade that provides clean and consistent cuts or slices, the company said. Large cuts then can be fed to a downstream dicer or centrifugal shredder for additional reduction.

With a relatively small footprint, the Deville portion cutter can be integrated into a line or used as a stand-alone machine for product preparation. In the case of product preparation, the portioner can also communicate with a floor scale, the company said.

The ultrasonic blade is used to allow for the cutting of a wide array of products ranging from extremely soft and/or sticky to firm, including Parmesan, Cheddar, Swiss cheese, Mozzarella, Romano, Feta, Asiago, and analog cheeses, the company said.

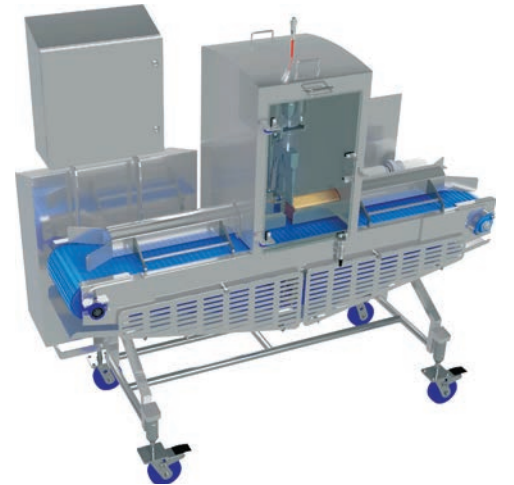
Equipped with an HMI screen for easy recipe settings, the cutter can be customized to fit customer's requirements.

The ultrasonic portion cutter offers a robust blade design for minimal maintenance and for quick change over, the company said. As with all Deville products, the company delivers ultra-

hygienic cheese cutting solutions that operate effectively and efficiently.

"We are committed to manufacturing equipment that provides increased uptime and yield without compromising cut quality and hygiene," said Anna Cappello, vice president of marketing at Deville Technologies.

Deville has two state-of-the-art Client Centers available to provide an opportunity to run products through equipment and assess the cut quality and make



an informed investment decision.

"Our consultative approach remains constant regardless of whether clients are working on shred, dice, or grate applications — no matter the size of the company," Cappello said. "Our Client Centers allow our customers to test run our equipment and their product application, without disrupting their daily operations and incurring unnecessary costs that come from halting production to run trials."

For more information on Deville's line of cutting and shredding equipment, and to see the company's equipment in action, visit www.devilletechnologies.com

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Cheese & Health

(Continued from p. 1)

healthy diet while avoiding intake of full-fat and high-sodium versions. Of note, the review explained, this recommendation is primarily based on extrapolated benefits and harms of single nutrient contained in dairy.

However, whole dairy foods are not a simple collection of isolated nutrients but have complex physical and nutritional structures (i.e., dairy matrix), which affect digestibility and nutrient bioavailability, thereby modifying the overall effects of dairy consumption on health and disease. Dairy products are a heterogeneous group of foods regarding the dairy matrix due to processing methods.

Because various types of dairy products appear to have distinct influences on specific health outcomes, merging them into one group (i.e., total dairy consumption) may blur the true association. Thus, a separate assessment of the health effects of cheese consumption is required, the review explained.

The review's authors conducted an umbrella review to synthesize the available evidence from meta-analyses of prospective studies to examine the various health impacts of cheese consumption. Further, they contextualized the magnitude, direction, and significance of the identified associations, evaluated risk of potential biases, and assessed the credibility of the evidence.

Although cheese is theorized to have detrimental effects on blood pressure and blood lipid profile based on its high sodium and saturated fat contents, a moderate quality of evidence suggest that cheese consumption does not increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases and may even have protective associations, with overall cardiovascular disease (CVD), coronary heart disease (CHD), and stroke incidence and cardiovascular and all-cause mortality in this updated meta-analyses.

Regarding cancer, this meta-analyses of prospective observational studies found null associations between cheese consumption and overall and site-specific cancer incidence and mortality and colorectal cancer.

The study's authors found a low quality of evidence for an inverse association between cheese consumption and type 2 diabetes ((T2D) risk in the highest compared with that of the lowest intake, which is in accordance with previous meta-analyses.

Dairy products are rich in calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, and protein, which are essential for good bone health. Previous meta-analyses reported both inverse and null associations

between cheese intake and the risk fracture at any site.

This updated meta-analyses including only prospective studies supports a favorable association of cheese intake with total fracture risk in the highest compared with that of the lowest intake and with hip fracture risk per 30-grams per day increase in cheese consumption. Given that the quality of evidence was low, further research is warranted.

Also, low quality of evidence showed that higher cheese intake was associated with a lower dementia risk in the authors' de novo meta-analysis of two prospective cohort studies. The beneficial association was supported by previous randomized controlled crossover trial and obser-

vational studies, suggesting that cheese consumption may improve cognitive function.

The protective association of cheese consumption with mortality, CVD, bone fracture, and dementia may be attributed to the abundance of nutrients, bioactive compounds, and probiotics in cheese, the review noted. Dairy products, especially cheese, are predominant dietary source of vitamin K2, which can improve cardiovascular health.

Probiotic bacteria in cheese may also interact with the gut microbiome, exerting various health-enhancing functions, the review continued. Also, the cheese matrix can mitigate the harmful effects of saturated fat and sodium.

Besides the components of cheese itself (i.e., protein or specific micro-nutrients), the observed inverse associations could also be owing to the fact that increased cheese intake may replace consumption of other foods (e.g., refined carbohydrates) that have been consistently associated with higher risk of incidence or mortality from chronic diseases because the studies adjusting for total energy intake hold calories constant, as in isocaloric intervention trials, the review noted.

There are some limitations in this research, the authors noted. Given that the original studies included in the review are all observational, some of their inherent limitations could not be excluded.

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Team From UW-River Falls Tops New Product Contest With RootCurd Entry

Chicago—A team of food science students from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls took first place in this year's Dairy Management, Inc. (DMI) New Product Competition with a ginger- and lavender-infused RootCurd innovation.

The contest first launched in 2012 to inspire the next generation of food scientists, and give students a taste of real-life work experience in the food industry.

The UW-River Falls team, including Kate Petersen, Yihong Deng, Rafael Larosiliere, Anna Eurele and Ashley Gruman, earned the top prize of \$8,000, and was honored at the recent Institute of Food Technologists' FIRST (Food Improved by Research, Science & Technology) conference here.

The competition has a different theme every year based on consumer trends and strategies to reach younger audiences.

Parameters for this year's competition specify each entry contain at least 89 percent dairy ingredients, and meet contest guidelines for offering a "calming aspect", organizers said.

"Calming" is a quality that Gen Z consumers are seeking from their food choices, DMI reported.

Gen X Favors 'Soothing' Food

To that end, students created RootCurd, which resembles a soft pudding with a smooth texture and slightly spicy flavor. Drawing inspiration from a traditional Chinese recipe, RootCurd is infused with ginger and lavender to help reduce physical and mental stress levels. RootCurd also provides 20 grams of dairy protein per serving.

"Our objective is to stimulate dairy product innovation to meet the changing marketplace needs with healthy and nutritious products," said DMI vice president of product research Rohit Kapoor, who manages the contest.

"More important, this competition inspires the next generation of dairy scientists and innovators," Kapoor said. "We've had more than 500 students be part of this enriching experience since its inception."

Eurele led the team's effort into identifying flavors that offered calming benefits, and discovered



The University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF) food science team celebrates winning DMI's New Product Competition. From left: UWRF professors Karalyn Littlefield and Grace Lewis; UWRF students Kate Petersen, Anna Eurele, Yihong Deng, Rafael Larosiliere and Ashley Gruman.

her Gen Z peers are looking for global options. This led to using ginger as the key ingredient, followed by lavender, a known calming agent.

"To a lot of people, the pairing of ginger and lavender was a little off-putting initially, but once they tried it, it actually marries together really, really well," Eurele said. "RootCurd plays to a lot of interesting different notes."

Team members Petersen and Deng attended the recent American Dairy Science Association (ADSA) meeting, where they sat in on a session led by DMI on consumer trends.

They learned younger consumers are seeking products that offer high protein content, clean labels and convenience.

"RootCurd hits all of those parameters," Petersen said. "Hearing that made us think, 'Wow – we made something that can actually work.'"

"Our ingredients piggyback the natural calming effects of dairy," she continued. "When I think of calming, I think of a glass of hot chocolate or a bowl of ice cream, so RootCurd is just a progression of adding our ingredients to dairy."

Venkateswarlu Sunkesula, vice president of research and product development for Idaho Milk Products, helped judge the competition and commended RootCurd for its unique attributes.

"RootCurd stood out with the highest level of dairy ingredients and met many consumer preferences," Sunkesula said. "The soothing texture, warm aroma, and flavor provided a relaxing effect, which is of great interest to Gen Z consumers."

California State University-Fresno students earned second place and a \$5,000 prize with Cottage Core – a high-protein, premium Cottage cheese-based frozen dessert.

Third place honors and a \$3,000 prize went to Kansas State University with its Sip to Soothe, which is based on a traditional

Indian dairy-based beverage known as "Chaas," made from cultured buttermilk.

The judging panel also included Joanna Shipp, chair of the National Dairy Promotion & Research Board, who said seeing this multitude of innovation is rewarding.

"It's great to have young students engage with dairy now – especially those studying food science – so they're thinking about dairy throughout their time in college and hopefully when they are in the professional world," Shipp said.

"The students are so talented and innovative, and they're creating products that Gen Z would consume. They just blew me away, and the contest continues to pull in new schools, so we're reaching more kids than ever before."

"It's great to have young students engage with dairy now – especially those studying food science – so they're thinking about dairy throughout their time in college and hopefully when they are in the professional world."

Joanna Shipp, National Dairy Promotion & Research Board

Students likewise appreciated the real-world learning opportunity that will prepare them for life after college.

"I think this contest is a great thing for food science students," Larosiliere said. "It gave us great insights into product development."

"I remember looking at our first batch of RootCurd and the texture was very thin and soft, but then the last prototypes looked like something you'd buy in the store," Larosiliere continued. "That part was very fulfilling, and I hope this contest runs as long as possible."

USDA News

A New Product that is officially accepted for use in Dairy Plants inspected by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) under the Dairy Plant Survey Program.*
*USDA Project Number 13377

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- 18-03 Multiple Use Rubber and Rubber-Like Materials.
- 20-17, currently 20-27, Multiple-Use Plastic Materials.

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- ASTM A240/A240M, Stainless Steel AISI 300 Series.
- US FDA 21CFR177.2600, Rubber Articles Intended for Repeated Use.
- US FDA 21CFR177.1550, Fluoropolymers For Use as Basic Components of Single and Repeated Use.
- USP Class VI Tests, 2004: USP 27, NF 22, 2004, <88> Biological Reactivity, In Vivo.
- USP MEM Elution Cytotoxicity, 2004: USP 27, NF 22, 2004, <87> Biological Reactivity, In Vitro.
- EU 1935/2004(3)EC, Food Contact Regulations. • EU 2011/65/EC, ReCast of EU 2002/95/EC RoHS Directive



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Tetra Pak Starts Task Force To Boost Decarbonization Of Dairy Processing

Lausanne, Switzerland—Tetra Pak has initiated the Dairy Processing Task Force, a joint coalition that aims to bring in representatives from across the dairy sector to improve approaches to decarbonization within dairy processing.

Its formation reinforces Tetra Pak's contribution to the global dairy sector's Pathways to Dairy Net Zero Initiative.

The Dairy Processing Task Force, spearheaded by Tetra Pak, will pre-competitively explore the innovative systems and technologies needed to further drive down greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across dairy production systems and regions.

Championing the implementation of more sustainable solutions, Tetra Pak will lead discussions with pivotal players in the dairy sector to drive the latest advances in processing technology and share best practices across the industry.

New innovations and technologies have the potential to reduce

energy and water consumption, as well as food waste, in dairy production.

The core deliverables of the Dairy Processing Task Force will be developed as members join, in an effort to maximize the potential value of each member's contribution.

In general, the Task Force aims to:

- Measure and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions in dairy processing;
- Create and share best practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Identify and implement credible reduction solutions; and
- Establish industry standard sustainability guidelines and reporting frameworks to encourage consistency and joint purpose.

In many parts of the world, dairy serves as a major source of nutrition, and with the global population set to hit 10 billion in 2050, its role in global food systems is vital.

However, there is an urgent need to mitigate its environmental impact, Tetra Pak said.

As such, the Task Force will look specifically at what can be done to further lower emissions without compromising outputs or nutritional value, safeguarding dairy's role in safe and resilient food systems.

"Dairy plays a vital role in contributing to livelihoods, food security and nutrition, yet sits within a food system that is not sustainable in the long run," said Charles Brand, executive vice president for processing solutions and equipment, Tetra Pak.

"At Tetra Pak, enabling the transition to sustainable dairy is a key pathway in our sustainable food systems strategy. We are continually striving to optimize performance for our customers, working with them, alongside suppliers and partners, in a bid to reduce pressures on finite resources — land, water and energy," Brand continued. "The launch of this Dairy Processing Task Force will expand this approach beyond our own operations and bring together the expertise of leaders in our industry.

"Sustainability is arguably one of, if not the, key challenge that we as an industry need to address. This can only be achieved through collaboration, and we encourage other leading members of the dairy value chain to join us on this journey," Brand continued to explain.

"Together, we can accelerate real climate change action across the dairy sector."

"Globally, the dairy industry is working to produce highly nutritious foods sustainably and responsibly to meet the demands of a growing world population," said Donald Moore, executive director, Global Dairy Platform. "However, the impact of climate change leaves the entire value chain at risk, and as an industry, it is critical we act quickly and strategically on environmental issues.

"As a global leader in innovative systems that improve the efficiency, quality, and safety of food production and processing technologies, we believe that Tetra Pak is well suited to lead the processing component of the Pathways to Dairy Net Zero Initiative," Moore added.

CDFA Announces Recall Of 'Raw Farm Cheddar' Made By Raw Farm, LLC

Sacramento, CA—Raw milk Cheddar cheese produced and packaged by Raw Farm, LLC, of Fresno, CA, is the subject of a statewide recall and quarantine order announced Tuesday by California State Veterinarian Dr. Annette Jones.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) order applies to "Raw Farm Cheddar" packaged in one-pound blocks with a code date marked on the plastic wrapper of BEST BY: 03/16/2024 and BATCH#20230517-1.

The CDFA found the Salmonella bacteria in a routine sample collected at the Raw Farm, LLC manufacturing and packaging facility.

No illnesses have been reported according to the statement.

Consumers are urged to dispose of any product remaining in their refrigerators, and retailers are to pull the product immediately from their shelves, the CDFA stated.

The current order does not include other lots or products from Raw Farm, LLC.

Symptoms of Salmonella infection include fever, stomach cramps and diarrhea that may be bloody. Some people may also have nausea, vomiting, or a headache, CDFA stated in the report.

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John Park



Travis White

Complete Filtration Resources Tabs John Park, CEO, Travis White, President

Marshfield, WI—Complete Filtration Resources, Inc. announced Tuesday that current president John Park will assume the role of CEO, effective immediately.

Travis White, current executive vice president, will now serve as president. The transition comes as part of Complete Filtration's strategic plan to strengthen its position in the market and drive its commitment to technology and innovation.

Park's decision to step into the CEO role is fueled by his dedication to advancing Complete Filtration's mission of providing value-added sustainable solutions to the dairy industry.

"I'm thrilled to take on the role of CEO and continue our journey towards shaping a greener future for the dairy industry," Park said. "Our values of tenacity, agility, integrity, stakeholder-centricity, and team play have laid a strong foundation for our success, and I am committed to upholding these principles in my new capacity."

Travis White, who currently oversees the engineering and

sales divisions as executive vice president, has been an integral part of the company's success. His leadership acumen and dedication to driving positive change have earned him the trust and confidence of the board of directors.

As president, White is poised to lead Complete Filtration forward into a new era of growth and innovation.

"I'm deeply honored to be appointed as president of Complete Filtration Resources," White said. "I look forward to building upon the strong legacy created by John and the entire team. Together, we will continue to prioritize our customers, employees, and communities, while remaining committed to delivering solutions to the dairy industry."

The Complete Filtration board of directors expressed its full confidence in White's ability to lead the organization to new heights.

White's expertise and commitment to Complete Filtration's vision aligns perfectly with the company's long-term objectives, the company said.

Vivolac Cultures Adds Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Ben Shibler To Team

Greenfield, IN—Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Ben Shibler has joined the technical service sales team at Vivolac Culture Corporation here.

Shibler, a licensed Wisconsin cheese maker who recently earned Master Cheesemaker status for Mozzarella cheese from the Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research (CDR), brings years of experience to his new position.

He most recently served as operations manager and head cheese maker for Ron's Wisconsin Cheese, which is owned by Pagel's Ponderosa Dairy. There, Shibler was responsible for all aspects of cheesemaking and sales of those products.

"Ben adds a lot of experience to our team," said Aaron Miller, sales and technical services manager for Vivolac.

"His technical knowledge of the cheesemaking process will help our customers in their everyday cheesemaking decisions, particularly in Pasta Filata and pizza cheeses," Miller said.

"With this addition to our very knowledgeable team, we can continue offering products that add value to our customers – both through our ability to supply the cheese market with quality, US-made products, but also with more cheese per pound and higher yields to their vats," he continued.

Shibler said the move is an exciting challenge, and offers the ability to continue and improve his knowledge of the cheesemaking process.

"I look forward to working with the best cheese makers in the world, and introduce Vivolac solutions wherever we can and to better assist our customers in cost, quality, and functionality," Shibler said.

Vivolac Culture Corporation, a leader in starter culture, media and bioprotective cultures, recently completed an automation upgrade and a 8,000 square-foot expansion of its freezer capacity, warehousing, and shipping operations to serve the industry more efficiently.

PERSONNEL

DAN SERNA has joined Cabot Creamery Cooperative as chief financial officer. Serna returns to Agri-Mark where he first worked as a college intern in 2004, and upon graduation in 2008 from Yale University, he spent two years as a business analyst. He has also worked for General Mills, MetLife Investment Management, and Manulife Investment Management Timber and Agriculture (MIMTA). SPENCER MCDONALD joined Agri-Mark earlier this year as senior vice president of sales. McDonald has nearly 30 years of experience in consumer-packaged goods (CPG), sales, business strategy, and development. His career includes leadership roles with Turkey Hill Dairy and Schwan's Consumer Brands. DEREK ZWEGUST has been promoted to vice president of supply chain and logistics for Cabot. He joined the co-op nearly five years ago as a financial analyst, and most recently served as director of corporate strategy. Before that, Zwegust worked for Keurig Dr. Pepper in strategy and supply chain.

Chobani has named THOMAS RANESE as its new chief marketing officer, effective Aug. 14. Ranese joins Chobani with several years of senior marketing experience, including tech leadership positions with Uber and Google. As global chief marketing officer at Uber, Ranese was

able to boost growth and sales for Uber Eats during the pandemic. He was also the first chief marketing officer for New York State's I LOVE NY campaign, designed to boost economic development Upstate.

Papa John's International, Inc. has appointed PATRICK COELHO as the company's first-ever senior vice president of development, responsible for overseeing North American restaurant real estate development activities and advancing business development goals. Coelho joins Papa John's with over a decade 10 years of experience managing business functions for global consumer brands and franchise operations.

OBITUARIES

Roger Davis, 69, of Montello, Wisconsin, passed away on July 20, 2023. Davis was long time Associated Milk Producers, Inc., (AMPI) employee, mostly as the plant superintendent at the Portage, WI, location.

Robert "Bob" Crave, 95, passed away July 22, 2023, at Riverwalk Assisted Living in Waterloo, WI. After spending 19 years as a dairy farmer in Beloit, WI, Crave served as a procurement manager at Beatrice Dairy in Beloit, WI. Robert Crave later worked for his sons on construction projects for Crave Brothers Farmstead Dairy in Waterloo, WI.

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IDFA Welcomes 30 Dairy Leaders Into NexGen Leadership Program For 2023

Washington—The International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) announced Tuesday the acceptance of 30 new dairy industry leaders into the fifth cohort of its NextGen Leadership Program.

The program, now in its fifth year, is part of IDFA's People Strategy. It's designed to guide and prepare mid- to senior-level dairy industry professionals who are poised for future leadership roles.

The year-long program helps participants expand relationships with their peers and develop leadership skills. The cohort will convene regularly over the course of the coming year with a mixture of both in-person and virtual modules.

The program focuses on three core areas: advocacy, education, and networking. IDFA's NextGen Leadership Program Cohort 5 is sponsored by Glanbia Nutritionals. Selection is based on experience and scope of responsibility within their organizations.

NMPF Names Dairy Scholarship Winners

Arlington, VA—The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) recently announced the five recipients of its 2023 National Dairy Leadership Scholarship awards.

A total of \$20,000 is awarded to outstanding graduate students currently pursuing research of interest to the overall US dairy industry.

This year's scholarship recipients represent a diverse group of talents; areas of focus span from dairy cattle management to food science technology.

Winners of the 2023 National Dairy Leadership Scholarship Program are: Alanna Staffin, Penn State University; Alyssa Thibodeau, Oregon State University; Bhaswati Chowdhury, South Dakota State University; Luke Fuerniss, Texas Tech University; and Usman Arshad, University of Florida.

NMPF also sponsors student awards through the American Dairy Science Association (ADSA). This year's Richard M. Hoyt Award winner is Megan Abeyta. Graduate students Ursula Abou-Rjeileh of Michigan State University and Jean Franco Fiallo Diez of Texas Tech University received first place as part of the NMPF-sponsored ADSA Graduate Student Paper Presentation Contest in Dairy Production in the Ph.D. and M.S. divisions, respectively.

For information, visit www.nmpf.org.

The NextGen program "is designed to cultivate the next generation of leadership one cohort at a time," said IDFA chief of staff Colin Newman.

"The caliber of candidates selected for Cohort 5 is exceptional, and we're confident they will all make valuable and positive contributions to this year's program," Newman continued.

The 2023-24 cohort includes: Panna Agrawal, Saputo USA; Brianne Alair, Idaho Milk Products, Inc.; Joshua Bryant, Sargento Foods; Jeff Carney, Hilmar Cheese Company; Nicole Davies, Grande Cheese Company; Ryan Dykstra, Tetra Pak, Inc.; Brian Fiscalini, Fis-

calini Farmstead; Ernesto Franco, Shehadey Family Foods; Rick Gessler, Delkor Systems; Stephanie Gigante, Shamrock Farms; Calvin Gregorich, Grassland Dairy Products, Inc.; Laura Hill, The Kroger Co.; Dino Holmquist, Eurofins DQCI; Sudeep Jain, Michigan Milk Producers Association; Duncan Jochimsen, Milk Specialties Global; Justin Laabs, Tillamook County Creamery Association; Michael Lehmann, Winona Foods; Casey Liddicoat, Masters Gallery Foods, Inc.; Kimberlee Malin, Wells Enterprises, Inc.; Doug Martin, Blue Bell Creameries; Ryan McDonnell, Foremost Farms USA; Becky Pearson, Glanbia Nutritionals, Inc.; Cody Renard, Agropur; Leroy Schneider, Crystal Creamery, Inc.; Cheslie Stehouwer,

Continental Dairy Facilities, LLC; Steve Turner, Turner Dairy Farms, Inc.; Matt Vanic, MWC; Annie Waring, Americold Logistics; Beth Wells, CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley; and Renee Yahnke, Schreiber Foods, Inc.

"IDFA and dairy business leaders have made it a priority to develop future leaders for our industry who can effectively inspire the workforce of the future, advocate for sound policy, and lead with integrity," said IDFA president and CEO Michael Dykes.

"That's why I'm so proud to welcome this NextGen Leadership Program cohort – some of the best and brightest men and women rising through the ranks of our industry," Dykes continued.



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US Dairy Industry Market Dynamics Putting Pressure On Canadian Prices

Regina, Saskatchewan—Market dynamics in the US dairy industry are beginning to pressure the income of Canadian dairy producers, according to a recent report from Farm Credit Canada (FCC).

US milk production is at a record high, and dairy processors can't keep up. This is putting downward pressure on US milk prices and consequently, Canadian milk prices, the report noted.

Approximately 12 percent of Canadian butterfat production (by weight) goes into Class 5 milk, and Class 5 milk prices are exposed to changes in US prices.

Special milk class component prices for Classes 5(a) and 5(b)

are calculated each month based on US milk and dairy component prices (for Classes III and IV) announced by the USDA, the report explained. Special Milk Class component prices are announced by the Canadian Dairy Commission (CDC) on or before the 15th day of each month for the following month and are based on US milk and dairy component prices announcements for the previous month which translates into a two-month lag in time between the USDA pricing and the effective date of the CDC's Special Class component prices.

Canadian producers rode the wave of strong US milk prices last

year but are now beginning to see downward pressure on domestic prices as the US dairy situation worsens, the report continued. In May 2023, the average blended price in the Western Milk Pool was \$92 per hectoliter, unchanged from May 2022 despite two CDC increases in the butterfat support price. The biggest reason: US Class III milk prices declined 30 percent during that time.

The report identified several influential factors in the Canadian dairy market to monitor in 2023, including, among others, butter stock levels. Total butterfat production has been strong so far this year with production in each month of 2023 higher than in any comparable month for the last five years. Increased butterfat production to date has resulted from more efficiency, not an increase in quota or incentive days.

Another factor to monitor is dairy product imports. A new dairy year starts this month and, with it, a new window for dairy imports under the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA, known in the US as the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement).

As per the agreed-upon CUSMA schedule, tariff-rate quotas (TRQs) will increase in this new dairy year. Canada "could see a surge of butter imports this fall" if these TRQs are front-loaded (that is, filled at the beginning of the dairy year), which is "certainly possible given lower butter stocks and stable demand."

Milk, cream and butter are the main dairy products with TRQs on a dairy-year basis, the report noted. The US has been taking advantage of incrementally increased access for butter and cream, with fill rates above 80 percent in each of the last three years.

Lactalis Canada Acquires Premium Dessert Company

Toronto, Ontario—Lactalis Canada Inc., a subsidiary of France-based Lactalis Group, on Tuesday announced that it has reached an agreement with Marie Morin Canada to acquire its business based in Canada.

The acquisition is specific to Marie Morin Canada and has no relation to the activities of Marie Morin France, the announcement noted.

The acquisition will see Lactalis Canada entering the dessert category, in both the Canadian and US markets, and joins Lactalis Canada's extensive dairy portfolio of cheese, table spreads, yogurt, and fluid milk brands.

Lactalis Canada will acquire Marie Morin Canada's product line of premium desserts featuring traditional recipes including its signature crème brûlée, chocolate mousse and cheesecakes.

The transaction will also include Marie Morin Canada's production facility in Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville, Québec and the addition of 52 employees who will join Lactalis Canada's existing 4,000-plus employees and 30 operating sites, including 19 manufacturing facilities in Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia.

With fresh and frozen desserts in glass jars, Marie Morin Canada was established in Québec in 2004 by David Morin and Sophie Le Vexier. The company's products can be found in large retailers across Canada, the US, and other international locations, and are available for purchase in a frozen or fresh format.

Further, Marie Morin Canada offers a private labeling service and today many brands trust Marie Morin to prepare desserts for their customers, according to Marie Morin Canada's website.

"We are delighted to add Marie Morin Canada and its product line of signature desserts to the Lactalis Canada family," said Mark Taylor, president and CEO, Lactalis Canada. "As part of our broad-based dairy portfolio that continues to evolve and expand to meet consumer trends and demands, this acquisition will enable Lactalis Canada to pursue its strategy in developing desserts for the North American market and will further expand our product offering for our valued retail and foodservice customers."

Lactalis Canada's iconic brands include Cracker Barrel, Black Diamond, P'tit Québec, Balderson, Cheestrings Ficello, aMOOza!, Astro, Khaas, siggi's, IÖGO, IÖGO nanö, Olympic, Lactantia, Beatrice, Galbani, and Président.

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House Bill Aims To Boost Plant-Based Food Industry

Washington—US Rep. James P. McGovern (D-MA) last Friday introduced a bill that aims to help the US maintain a leadership role in plant-based food production by supporting farmers, food manufacturing workers, and rural communities.

Specifically, the Peas, Legumes, and Nuts Today (PLANT) Act would provide support for US farmers who grow the ingredients used in plant-based foods; ensure that food companies who turn those ingredients into plant-based foods are eligible for USDA producer programs; and make targeted research and development investments at USDA to foster US innovation.

The PLANT Act is supported by numerous stakeholders, including, among others: Plant Based Foods Association, Plant Based Foods Institute, Environmental Working Group, Natural Resources Defense Council, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, American Heart Association, Center for Biological Diversity, Coalition for Healthy School Food, Farm Forward, Friends of the Earth, Danone North America, Ben & Jerry's Homemade, and Califia Farms.

"The PLANT Act will help us win the future of food," McGovern said. "Plant-based foods are already creating new opportunities for farmers across the country and exciting new options for consumers, and this legislation will be a game-changer."

"By putting farmers and their communities front and center as we grow the greatest plant-based sector in the world, we can create countless good jobs while showing the world what makes American agriculture so strong," McGovern continued. "Now is the time to embrace the enormous potential that plant-based foods have to strengthen our economy and our food system."

"We are thrilled to endorse the PLANT Act as a critical step in ensuring strong federal support for plant-based foods," said Nicole Negowetti, the Plant Based Foods Association's vice president of food systems and policy. The bill "will create more opportunities for farmers, provide essential support to food manufacturers—like many of our PBFA members—and bolster efforts to promote the growth and export of plant-based foods. By empowering a diverse range of stakeholders, from farmers to manufacturers and brands, we can accelerate the advancement of plant-based foods and contribute to a healthier, sustainable, and inclusive food future."

NCCIA Contest Adds New Flavored Category; Entries Due Sept. 15

Bloomington, MN—The North Central Cheese Industries Association (NCCIA) has kicked off registration for its annual cheese-making contest.

This year's competition will introduce a new category for Miscellaneous Flavored Cheese.

Contest forms and fees must be received no later than Sept. 15. To participate, the individual or plant must be a current member of NCCIA. Contestants may submit one cheese per category.

Judges will select one Grand Champion along with first, second and third place winners in each category. The contest will feature four categories: Cheddar

Block, Barrel, Miscellaneous and Flavored Miscellaneous.

Each block entry must be a minimum of 40 pounds and must include the manufacture date.

Barrel entries must consist of three plugs taken at random with a barrel trier. Plugs must be individually wrapped with aluminum foil and placed in a plastic bag.

Miscellaneous entries must be a minimum of five pounds, and any type of cheese (other than Cheddar) without additional condiments can be entered in this classification.

For the new Flavored Miscellaneous category, entries must be at least five pounds. Any type of

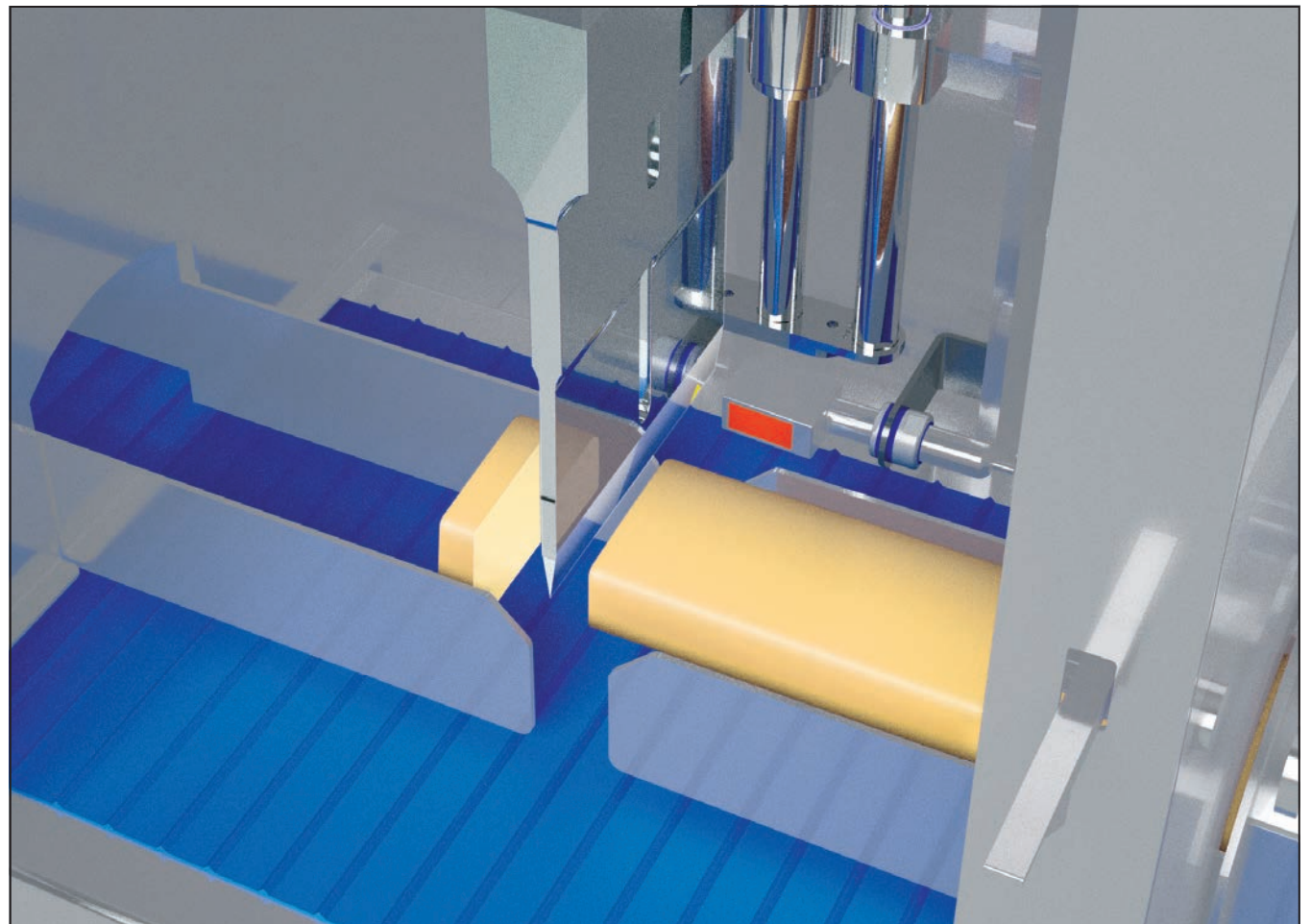
cheese that contains condiments blended internally or externally for additional flavors may be entered in this classification.

Judging will take place at Bongards Creameries. Entries contain the manufacture date, name and address of the contestant.

Packages should be marked "Refrigerate: Do Not Freeze." Entries can be mailed to: Bongards Creameries, Attn: Terry Simon, 13200 County Rd. 51, Bongards, MN 55368.

Contest winners will be recognized during the NCCIA conference and auction, Oct. 10-12 at the Best Western/Ramkota in Sioux Falls, SD.

For questions, contact NCCIA's Susan Eschbach at (612) 968-1080 or via email: seschbach.nccia@gmail.com.



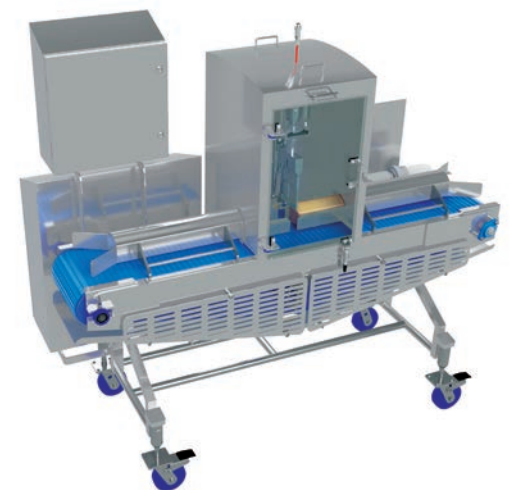
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EU, Philippines To Explore Relaunch Of Trade Talks; Market Access, GIs

Brussels, Belgium—The European Union (EU) and the Philippines on Monday announced their intention to explore the relaunch of negotiations for an ambitious free trade agreement (FTA).

The EU and the Philippines will soon kick off a bilateral “scoping process” to assess to what extent they share a mutual understanding of the future FTA. If this process concludes successfully, and after consultations with EU member countries, the EU and the Philippines would be in a position to resume FTA negotiations.

The EU is aiming for a comprehensive FTA with the Philippines that includes ambitious market access commitments, swift and effective sanitary and phyto-

sanitary procedures, as well as the protection of intellectual property rights, including geographical indications (GIs), the European Commission noted.

“The Philippines is a key partner for us in the Indo-Pacific region, and with the launch of this scoping process we are paving the way to taking our partnership to the next level,” said Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission. “Together, we will realize the full potential of our relationship, creating new opportunities for our companies and consumers while also supporting the green transition and fostering a just economy.”

The Philippines currently enjoys trade preferences under the

EU’s Generalized Scheme of Preferences Plus, a special incentive arrangement for sustainable development and good governance which grants duty-free access to the EU market for two-thirds of tariff lines.

The Philippines is among the fastest-growing emerging economies in the world, recording the second-highest economic growth in ASEAN with 7.6 percent GDT growth in 2022, the European Commission noted. This high economic growth exemplifies a promising growth trajectory and increased economic potential for the Philippines as an important trading partner.

The EU and the Philippines first launched negotiations for an FTA in 2015.

The last negotiating round took place in 2017 and talks have since been on hold.

Saudi Arabia’s Public Investment Fund Establishes Firm To Boost Saudi Camel Dairy Industry

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia—Saudi Arabia’s Public Investment Fund (PIF) recently announced the establishment of Sawani Company to enable the growth of the Saudi camel farming industry and actively contribute to its sustainable development.

The new company aims to be a leading producer of camel dairy products, supporting Saudi Arabia’s wider food and agriculture sector and helping to diversify the Saudi economy.

Sawani Company will work in partnership with the private sector to boost the production capacity of the camel dairy industry and seek to elevate the standards of the domestic production ecosystem by modernizing operations, improving the localization of knowledge and investing in the sector’s latest technologies.

Sawani will place sustainability at the center of all stages of production, distribution, and marketing, and raise awareness of the health benefits of camel dairy products among consumers. It will also showcase the unique history and cultural heritage of camel husbandry within Saudi Arabia.

Camel milk is well-known for its nutritional benefits, including high amounts of minerals and vitamins such as A, B, E and C. It is also rich in calcium, protein and antioxidants, and is also considered easy to digest.

“Saudi Arabia has extensive experience and knowledge of the camel dairy industry and enormous potential to expand its operational capabilities and wider ecosystem,” said Majed Al-Assaf, head of consumer goods and retail in the MENA Investments Division at PIF.

“These factors represent a competitive advantage across the entire supply chain which, alongside investment, will enable significant growth of the industry, and eventually lead to the export of camel dairy products, which have many nutritional benefits, to regional and global markets,” Al-Assaf added.

A key part of Sawani’s strategy is to increase awareness and knowledge of the industry in order to preserve it, as well as driving sustainable growth through the introduction of the best scientific practices in modern manufacturing technologies at the local level, PIF noted. The establishment of Sawani will support the growth of Saudi Arabia’s food and agriculture sector.

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Congressional Health Panel Leaders Seek Input On FDA Regulation Of CBD

Many Questions Concern Use Of CBD In Food, Beverage Products

Washington—Leaders and ranking members on the House Energy and Commerce Committee and the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee recently announced a bicameral Request for Information (RFI) to stakeholders and subject matter experts regarding US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulation of cannabidiol (CBD).

CBD is a compound derived from the Cannabis Sativa plant, the RFI explained. It is a non-psychoactive cannabinoid that has been promoted for its use relative to a number of health conditions.

The 2018 farm bill expanded the definition of hemp to include “all derivatives, extracts, cannabinoids, isomers, acids, salts, and salts of isomers,” containing no more than 0.3 percent concentration of delta-9 THC. It also removed hemp from the definition of marijuana under the Controlled Substances Act (CSA), descheduling hemp-derived CBD.

However, the 2018 farm bill preserved FDA’s authority to oversee CBD in FDA-regulated products, the RFI pointed out.

Since the farm bill was enacted, FDA has maintained that hemp-derived CBD may not be marketed as a food additive or dietary supplement. Citing a provision included in the 1994 Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) that prohibits articles from being marketed as a food or dietary supplement if they are studied or approved as a drug (the “exclusionary clause”), FDA asserts that it cannot permit hemp-derived CBD food and dietary supplement products for public consumption because there is currently an approved drug with CBD as an active ingredient on the market.

However, even if the exclusionary clause did not apply, FDA has indicated that CBD would not meet the relevant statutory requirements for food or dietary supplement due to safety concerns, the RFI noted.

Since hemp was descheduled five years ago, consumers, manufacturers, and policymakers have sought clarity regarding the legal status of CBD. Farmers, food and beverage groups, and state regulators have shared their policy priorities with Congress. However, questions remain about the best way to provide a legal pathway to market for CBD products.

In January, FDA said that it would like to work with Congress to craft a legislative approach to the regulation of CBD products. The committee leaders are assessing the potential for a regulatory pathway for hemp-derived CBD products that prioritizes consumer safety and provides certainty to the US market.

The committee leaders are asking for written responses on a number of questions submitted to CBD@mail.house.gov and CBD@help.senate.gov by Aug. 18. Questions fall into these categories:

Current Market Dynamics: What does the current market for CBD products look like? How is the lack of national standards for

CBD products affecting the market?

Pathway: Comments are sought on the concerns FDA has raised with regard to regulating most CBD products through existing pathways (i.e., conventional foods), and FDA’s view that there is a need for a new regulatory pathway for CBD products.

Scope: How should CBD and/or cannabinoid-containing hemp products be defined?

Federal-State Interaction: In the absence of federal regulation or enforcement over CBD products, many states have established state regulatory programs to safeguard public health and create market certainty for industry participants. Which standards have states adopted, and which such standards, if any, should Congress look at as models?

Safety: What is known about the safety and risk-benefit profile of CBD and other hemp derived cannabinoids? Should there be limits on the amount of CBD in foods or dietary supplements?

Quality: How should Congress create an FDA-implemented framework to ensure that manufacturers provide appropriate protections and quality controls?

Form, Packaging, Accessibility and Labeling: What types of claims should product manufacturers be permitted to make? What is the evidence regarding the potential benefits of including a symbol on product labeling to provide clarity for consumers who would purchase products? What are the potential benefits or drawbacks of an additional or substitute standardized label panel for CBD products?

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CDR's Cheesemaking Short Course For Spanish-Speakers Draws Praise

Madison—The University of Wisconsin-Madison's Center for Dairy Research (CDR) hosts numerous cheesemaking short courses, almost 20 per year. But most participants don't get to hear their instructors say: "Tres vueltas, sin romperlo" ("Three times, without breaking it.")

After helping to make vats of Cheddar, Colby, Gouda and Ricotta cheeses, participants in CDR's new "Fundamentos de Elaboracion de Queso" ("Fundamentals of Cheese Making") short course, spread out in a big circle around the CDR's pilot plant space and started stretching a long rope of freshly extruded Moz-

zarella cheese. The goal was to stretch the cheesy rope three times around the plant, and try to break the cheese-stretching record.

They almost made it. Once the near-100-foot rope started to break, the cheese got rolled up like a ball of yarn, which the instructors noted is a process similar to making Queso Oaxaca, a Mozzarella-like cheese.

The hands that held the Mozzarella rope this past spring belonged to participants in the CDR's first in-person Spanish-language short course to be taught in the pilot plant.

"We're excited because we're closing a huge gap in learning and

teaching for Hispanic people here in Wisconsin, where the dairy industry is a big part of our economy," said Rodrigo A. Ibáñez, scientist at CDR and one of the course instructors. "There are a lot of native Spanish-speakers who work in our state's dairy processing plants, so we're really glad that we can offer this."

Ibáñez hails from Chile, and the three other Spanish-speaking CDR instructors for the course come from Mexico and Chile. Instruction is given exclusively in Spanish, or first given in English and then repeated in Spanish.

The class is a two-day course that covers the fundamentals of cheesemaking, including delving into the science and theory — explaining the "how" and "why" — behind things.

Short course participants learn about the process that turns milk into cheese, including microbiology, moisture, and pH, plus common government safety regulations for dairy processing in the US. The course also covers a comprehensive overview of dairy processing equipment and includes a hands-on cheesemaking lab.

"We know the basics," said short course participant Levi García Sánchez, who works at Blakesville Creamery in Port Washington, WI. "The basics are good, but it's nice to know more in-depth about [what's going on]. We've never had a class like this."

The process of cheesemaking is complex, and it can be especially challenging for people to understand advanced techniques when they're being taught in a second or third language.

"I have the ability to speak in English, but I find it is always better [to learn things] in your native

language because [it's easier to follow along and] you can understand 100 percent," said Noel Espejo, who works at Eau Galle Cheese in Durand, WI. "Apart from that, [in a course in your first language], you also feel more confident and comfortable asking questions."

Steven Martinez, an employee at V&V Supremo in Arena, WI, was grateful that the CDR offered the course in Spanish.

"The community is very rooted in Wisconsin and a lot of the Latino community works in the cheese plants, not just where I work," Martinez said. "The needs of the community are important. I think that this course can help not only me, but all cheese companies, and the more knowledge we have, the better for the industry."

"I find it is always better [to learn things] in your native language because [it's easier to follow along and] you can understand 100 percent. Apart from that...you also feel more confident and comfortable asking questions."

Noel Espejo, Eau Galle Cheese

For the spring 2023 course, nearly all the participants had their course fees covered by their employers. And it was well worth it, according to Bob Wills, owner of Clock Shadow Creamery in Milwaukee, WI, and Cedar Grove Cheese in Plain, WI.

"Two of our employees at Cedar Grove Cheese participated in this program and since they got back, they've been sharing their new knowledge with our other Spanish-speaking employees," Wills said. "It's been beneficial to our workforce. I would absolutely send more employees to future Spanish-language courses at CDR."

When the training is over, participants receive a printed certificate of completion. The document marks their successful completion of the course, and the training qualifies as a prerequisite for the advanced cheesemaking courses that are offered by CDR and as a first step to taking the Wisconsin Cheesemakers License exam.

After the lab session they were able to sample many of the cheeses they produced, including cheese curds seasoned with some unusual flavorings.

CDR is offering "Fundamentos de Elaboración de Queso" again Sept. 26-27, 2023. Registration for the class is now open and closes on Sept. 12, 2023. Information on the course and registration can be found on the CDR website at <https://go.wisc.edu/CDRSpanishShortCourse>.



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New York State Dairy Plant Building Projects Receive State Grants

Albany, NY—New York Gov. Kathy Hochul on Monday announced that more than \$27 million has been awarded to support 40 projects, including several dairy-related projects, across New York state through the Regional Economic Development Council Initiative.

Round XII included core capital grant and tax credit funding from Empire State Development (ESD), which was made available on a continuous and competitive basis to support the immediate needs of communities. Funding will support impactful projects that align with each region’s strategic goals.

This fourth batch of projects was recommended by each Regional Council because of their project readiness and alignment with each region’s strategic plan.

Lowville Producers Dairy Cooperative (Central New York region) will receive a \$1.3 million ESD grant and \$500,000 Excelsior Jobs Tax Credit. Lowville Producers Dairy Cooperative will purchase, renovate, and operate the Queensboro dairy processing plant in Canastota, Madison county, NY. The plant serves as a balancing plant for the collection and processing of raw milk from various dairy farms.

The project includes the acquisition of the operation, building improvements, and the purchase of new equipment, and will create 16 new jobs. Total project cost is \$6.6 million.

Natural Foods, Inc. (Long Island region) will receive a \$500,000 ESD grant to expand its distribution presence in New York. By purchasing a new building and investing in machinery and equipment, Natural Foods will be able to expand its presence on Long Island and increase its footprint while enabling the company to expand into new dairy product lines, hire new employees, and reach outside of the region for additional growth in market share.

Clark Farmstead Creamery, LLC (Southern Tier region) is a small batch operation located in Delhi, NY. The company will receive a \$260,000 ESD grant to complete an expansion that will increase the production capacity of its milk processing plant and creamery.

This modified facility will enable the company to keep up with growing demand, as well as to develop new cultured dairy product lines to increase diversification and pursue new market opportunities, including interstate sales of dairy products.

Feldmeier Equipment, Inc. (Central New York region), a

manufacturer of tanks, vessels, agitators and specialty equipment, will receive a \$500,000 ESD grant to help expand its manufacturing processes, including its automated equipment lines to enable the development of new products.

The company will add additional production space, and purchase and install machinery and equipment. The new product lines will focus on aseptic techniques and products, a new focus for many dairy companies. The new facility will also be equipped to manufacture larger vessels than Feldmeier is currently able to produce, thereby increasing its product offerings.

The Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) initiative is a key component of New York’s approach to state investment and economic development. In 2011, 10 Regional Councils were established to develop long-term strategic plans for economic growth for their regions.

The Councils are public-private partnerships made up of local experts and stakeholders from business, academia, local government, and non-governmental organizations. To date, through the REDC Initiative, more than \$7.8 billion has been awarded to more than 9,600 job creation and economic and community development projects consistent with each region’s strategic plan.

For more information, visit www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov.

“Supporting projects that make strategic sense for the local economy is key to the Regional Economic Development Councils’ success,” said Hope Knight, Empire State Development president, CEO and commissioner. “These awards will move communities throughout the state in a forward direction, by investing in the growth of multiple industries, from offshore wind to innovative manufacturing, and giving New Yorkers the resources they need to grow.”

“We are creating jobs, investing in local businesses, and ensuring that all regions of New York have strong local economies,” commented New York Lt. Gov. Antonio Delgado, chair of the Regional Economic Development Councils.

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Mohawk Technology Celebrates 10 Years; Sees Continued Growth Ahead

Mohawk, MI—Mohawk Technology is a process controls, automation, and mechatronics company, with 40 employees, serving the US from four locations in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota.

The company just this week celebrated its 10th year in business and from humble beginnings, has grown to help engineer and construct some of the largest dairy operations in the world.

Founder Jay Isaacson started Mohawk Technology in 2013 after working for nearly a decade at Advanced Process Technologies (APT) in the company's process control group.

"I had a great experience at APT, working and learning the industry with great people," Isaacson said. "I expanded my knowledge at a time when APT was growing very quickly. It was great fun to be a part of that group."

For Isaacson, starting a new company was simply about wanting to go back to his childhood hometown of Mohawk, MI.

"I was looking to specialize my skills, slow down a little, focus what I really wanted to do, which was automation," he said.

Mohawk's early work specialized on process control systems.

"As a young company, projects that would be considered small by company standards today, were enough to keep us busy" he said.

After successfully completing enough projects, Isaacson's interactions with customers regarding worker needs and other in-plant challenges opened the door to other automation projects.

"Having good controls is key to having a well-run, efficient process," Isaacson said. "You can say our success is built off that belief. We have expanded our company but that belief is still underneath it all."

Building The Mohawk Team

When Isaacson first laid out his goals, he knew they were going to be built off the back of his controls experience.

The goal from the very beginning was to get to complete process systems, Isaacson said. To do that, the company would need to diversify, adding a Process Engineering and Installation team in 2018 headed by Lars Peterson.

The Process Group has grown to execute start-to-finish process projects, as well as install and integrate equipment, Isaacson said.

"Lars was a key part. The Process Group's current capability improved tremendously after he joined us."

Other hires like Randy Carlson, who handles the installation crew; Keith "Skeeter" White, who produces the fabricated equipment coming out of the manufacturing shop, have streamlined the on-site work, as well as reduced factory downtime for customers.

"I was able to grow the business from a company of one," Isaacson said. "It's been up to everyone else who has chosen to join us that makes it what we are today."

In 2019, led by Randy Keranen, Mohawk expanded again adding a Mechatronics Group and integrating robotics engineering.



The Mohawk Technology team celebrated its 10th year in business this week. Here (from left to right) Jay Isaacson, owner of Mohawk Technology with some of his key partners, Nick Peterson, Randy Keranen, and Lars Peterson.

"Our success in these fields is about how our Mohawk Tech employees can deliver for our customers in the cheese industry," Isaacson said.

The key to the company's success is the way Mohawk employees listen to their customers, he continued.

"We try to find a few key things that the customer is looking for, identifying the four or five things that they really want a system to do and then within that standard system, come up with good engineering ideas and ways to accomplish those things. Our engineers look at those key requirements and then come up with a solution that reduces labor intensity, solves the shortage of workers they may have, reduces cost, automates functions, or controls the process."

Future Of Robotics & Automation In The Industry

Isaacson believes that automation can be placed anywhere there is a payback inside a plant.

Due to employee shortages or

employee safety issues, Isaacson believes the industry must look at implementing automation wherever operations can, and wherever it makes sense, cost-wise.

"It just seems like, things never get less automated. So now what you are seeing is, 'Where can we apply automation'."

It feels like the process side of the industry is being automated pretty well, Isaacson said. But he thinks more can be done on the sanitary side.

"When I think of the projects we are doing, we are solving problems," Isaacson said. "Our Process Group has grown steadily and it is exciting to see our Mechatronics Group with similar growth opportunities."

"The back end of plants is an area where there will be more automation," Isaacson continued. "By taking that automation that traditionally has not been sanitary and putting it into a sanitary environment."

There are many companies out there that can solve the robot part of the equation, he said. But there is a difference between that and a creatively blended process of engineering, which is what is needed to really solve customer problems.

Mohawk's Future

Isaacson said the company has a tremendous track record of working with customers more than once and in different areas of their operations.

"We have worked with large-scale operations and, because of the way we kind of got started, we enjoy working with smaller operations as well. We have been very fortunate and grateful."

Isaacson sees a lot of continued growth ahead.

"We are happy to be growing with the cheese industry. We recently finished a new Mechatronics shop, have started an expansion of our Northern Minnesota facility, and we are working on a new Process shop in Wisconsin. We are constantly upgrading our services to the industry."



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Bipartisan Bill Would Create Manure Management Conservation Program

Washington—Bipartisan, bicameral legislation introduced last week would establish a new manure management conservation program to improve air quality and implement sustainable farming practices.

The Converting Our Waste Sustainably (COWS) Act was introduced in the House by US Reps. Jim Costa (D-CA), Chellie Pingree (D-ME) and David Valadao (R-CA), and in the Senate by US Sens. Alex Padilla (D-CA) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH).

The COWS Act aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air and water quality and improve soil health through sustainable alternative and pasture-based manure management practices. Specifically, the legislation will:

- Establish an alternative manure management program to award dairy or livestock producers grants to install equipment and infrastructure for pasture-based management; alternative treatment and storage practices; solid separation systems; and scrape technologies.

- Make composting eligible under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program.

- Provide technical assistance and training to aid in the implementation of eligible manure management and composting measures.

- Authorize \$1.5 billion from fiscal year 2024 to fiscal 2028, and prioritize grants for beginning farmers and ranchers, and for projects to improve air or water quality near low-income or underserved communities.

This voluntary program will support producers as they shift towards manure handling systems that provide environmental and economic benefits, according to the legislation's sponsors, including: reduced methane emissions and improved air quality through reductions in ammonia and nitrogen oxide emissions; water quality improvements through dry manure handling; water savings due to the elimination or reduction in flushing manure from barns; and production of compost that can substitute for expensive inputs such as bedding and mulch and generate an effective alternative to synthetic fertilizers.

"Sustainable manure management is a critical conservation priority for dairy farmers as the industry works to achieve its voluntary, producer-led goal of becoming greenhouse gas neutral or better by 2050.

However, conservation programs continue to be oversub-

scribed, preventing dairy from making its greatest possible contribution to the nation's greenhouse gas reduction," said Paul Bleiberg, senior vice president of government relations at the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF).

The COWS Act "will elevate the emphasis on a variety of manure management systems important to dairy's stewardship priorities," Bleiberg added.

"The COWS Act will provide crucial nutrient management resources to dairy farmers, who are currently struggling because milk prices fall well below their production costs," said Lynne McBride, executive director of the

California Dairy Campaign. "Passage of the COWS Act will enable dairy farmers to adopt practical climate-smart nutrient management methods that improve air and water quality and achieve their environmental sustainability goals."

"California is leading the nation in the implementation of alternative manure management systems, helping provide a significant reduction of greenhouse emissions. These sustainable farming practices are improving water quality and reducing costs for farmers," Costa said.

"I understand firsthand the needs and challenges of our Central Valley dairy producers," Valadao said. "We have a methane digester on our dairy, and it helps to produce energy while also reducing emissions.

"I'm proud to support this legislation that would make this same kind of manure management technology more accessible for the livestock industry," Valadao continued. "Our farmers are the best stewards of our environment, and equipping them with the best available technology is good for the industry and good for the environment."

"This legislation invests in long-term and low-cost pasture-based management practices that will support our family dairies and protect our environment, improving the quality of the air we breathe," Padilla commented. "As we work to transition to a greener economy, we must equip our producers with the critical resources and tools they need to transition to sustainable practices, and keep California's cows happy."



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USPTO Awards Patents For Numerous Cheese-, Dairy-Related Inventions

Washington—The US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) has in recent weeks awarded patents to several companies for a variety of cheese- and dairy-related inventions.

A patent was awarded for novel deposited *Streptococcus thermophilus* (ST) strains that, e.g., are suitable to be used in an improved method for the manufacture of low browning Mozzarella cheese. Inventors are Thomas Janzen and Ditte Ellegaard Christiansen. The patent was assigned to **CHR. HANSEN A/S**.

Another patent was recently awarded to **CHR. HANSEN** for an improved acidified milk prod-

uct with reduced lactose content. Inventors are Soeren Nj Riis, Vojislav Vojinovic and Christian Gilleladen.

The object of this invention is obtained by an acidified milk product, which has a pH of between 3.0 and 5.0 and a content of lactose of at least 1.5 milligrams per milliliter, wherein the product contains a lactase, which retains its activity at a pH of 5.0 and a temperature of 37 degrees C at a level of at least 5 percent as compared to its activity at the optimum pH of the lactase.

This invention has provided a possibility of modifying a lactose-containing food product with a

pH of between 3.0 and 5.0 in a storage phase at ambient storage temperature, i.e., without the need for refrigeration, after completion of the production at a production site, e.g., during transport and storage at the retailer, so as to reduce the level of lactose, according to a summary of the invention.

The USPTO also recently awarded a patent for an apparatus for heat shrinking a package and method for heat shrinking a package. Inventors are Peter Thuring, Stefan Landolt and Gregory Edward McDonald. The patent was assigned to **CRYOVAC, LLC**.

Another patent awarded to **CRYOVAC, LLC**, is for a package, process and apparatus for making said package. Inventors are Alessandra Ghirardi, Stefano Capitani and Ivo Pascolo.

A first object of this invention is to provide a package having an effective facilitated opening system to allow the user a simple and quick opening of the package; in particular, it is an object of this invention to provide a package that provides the user with a rapid tactile and visual perception of the facilitated opening system.

A further object of this invention is to provide a package having a simple and cost-effective structure which at the same time can ensure a convenient and stable handling of the package at least during the opening of the latter.

A patent was awarded to **LAND O'LAKES, INC.**, which generally relates to food products, such as cheese or cheese base products, and systems and methods for their manufacture. Inventors are Thomas Alexander Glenn, III, Clint Garoutte, Kang Hu, Jason Thompson, and Orlando Maldonado.

In one exemplary implementation of the invention, a method of forming a food product involves separation of whole milk into cream and skim milk followed by microfiltration (MF) of the skim milk to form a MF retentate. Cream may then be added to the MF retentate, and the cream and MF retentate may be subjected to ultrafiltration (UF) to form a UF retentate. Acidification of the UF retentate may result in the food product.

According to this patent, by using MF, a portion of the serum proteins (or whey) are removed in the permeate stream, and with less serum proteins, subsequent UF of the MF retentate and cream results in a UF retentate with a lower whey protein ratio in fat:casein:whey protein, which may improve product texture and flavor. Also, the whey protein may be collected in the MF permeate in a more native state with improved functional properties.

LAND O'LAKES also received a patent for a dairy-based meat substitute and methods of producing that meat substitute. Inventors are Orlando Maldonado, Molly Erickson and Susan Reed.

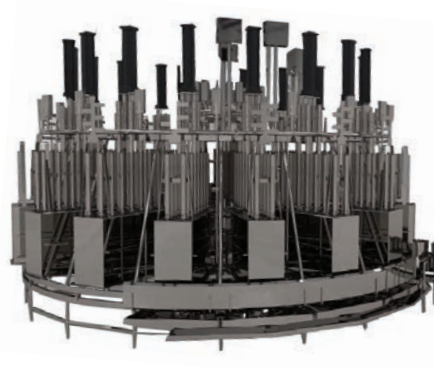
As described in the patent abstract, meat substitutes include at least a dried milk product, a carbohydrate, and a liquid such as water. The dried milk product includes one or both of nonfat dry milk and buttermilk powder, while the carbohydrate includes one or both of syrup solids, such as corn syrup solids, and a starch, such as modified corn starch.

The meat substitutes include amino acids and sugars that undergo a Maillard reaction during preparation of the meat substitutes, yielding flavor compounds in, and non-enzymatic browning of, the meat substitutes.

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Patents

Continued from p. 26

The meat substitutes can be used in the production of food products such as dairy-based jerky.

The USPTO recently awarded a patent for an invention related to strains of *Penicillium camemberti* and to the use thereof for the preparation of food products, for example of dairy and/or vegetable origin, such as the ripening of soft cheeses having a moldy and/or mixed crust, in particularly Camembert.

Inventors are Joelle Reitz-Ausseur, Richard Tallon, Amendine Dhaisne, Anne Goarin-Herve, Jerome Soulie, and Pierre Lacotte. The patent was assigned to SAVENCIA SA.

LEPRINO FOODS COMPANY recently received a patent for processes of making protein-fortified yogurt products, and the

yogurt products made. The inventor is Richard K. Merrill.

The methods of making protein-fortified yogurt products may include mixing a casein-containing ingredient with starting milk to make a yogurt milk, where the casein-containing ingredient has a casein-to-whey protein ratio of 82:18 or greater. The yogurt milk may be fermented after adding yogurt culture to make a yogurt mixture, which may then be formed into the protein-fortified yogurt product.

The total protein concentration in the protein-fortified yogurt product may be 10 percent by weight or more. One variety of the protein-fortified yogurt product is a spreadable yogurt product having the protein concentration of 11 percent by weight or more.

A patent was awarded to HOCHLAND SE for a system and kit for processing a flowable food mass. Inventors are Andreas Biggel, Maria Jacob, Wolfgang Tipolt, Franz Stadelmann and Markus Fuhge.

The gist of this invention is the use of a carrier film arrangement having a plurality of carrier film webs, which are disposed next to one another without separation in the transport direction and, in particular, which partially overlap one another. This carrier film arrangement forms a sealing support onto which the flowable product, such as hot melted cheese, is applied, shaped to form a product band, and cooled. At the end of cooling, it is merely necessary to cut the product band lengthwise into product strips

without the film underlayer and separate the product strips from one another by means of the individual carrier film webs.

The USPTO awarded a patent to NOBELL FOODS, INC., for recombinant fusion proteins for producing milk proteins in transgenic plants. Inventors are Viviane Lanquar and Magi El-Richani.

In some embodiments of this invention, a milk protein is stably expressed in a transgenic plant by fusing it to a stable protein, such as a stable mammalian, avian, plant or fungal protein. The compositions and methods provided in the patent allow for safe, sustainable and humane production of milk proteins for commercial use, according to the patent summary.

Yough! Launches Frozen Pizza And Dough Made With Greek Yogurt

New York—Yough!, which brings comfort food made from Greek yogurt to consumers, recently announced the launch of its frozen pizzas and versatile dough.

According to the company, the launch marks the first time a brand is bringing the viral two-ingredient dough to market, making it more convenient for consumers to enjoy better-for-you versions of some of their favorite comfort foods. Greek yogurt is the first ingredient in Yough's dough, followed by organic wheat flour, leavening, and sea salt.

All of Yough's products utilize a Greek yogurt base, which the company said provides gut-healthy postbiotics and offers lower calories, lower carbs and higher protein alternatives.

Yough said it sources its Greek yogurt from Wisconsin and uses 100 percent organic wheat flour for its base, while each flavor is formulated with ingredients such as Italian tomatoes, whole milk Mozzarella and more.

"We're starting with frozen pizzas and dough, but Yough's ultimate goal is to continue pushing the boundaries of what comfort food can be, while prioritizing health and flavor," said Jason Miller, co-founder and COO of Yough.

The brand also offers a ready-to-go dough for reimagining wholesome varieties of all types of snacks, desserts, and cravings with a healthier twist.

For more information, visit www.eatyough.com.

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COMING EVENTS

www.cheesereporter.com/events.htm

3-A SSI Webinar Series: Cutting Risk Using Hygienic By Design Starts In Fall

McLean, VA—A special three-part webinar series entitled *Hygienic by Design: Reducing Risk in Your Facility* will be available free this fall from 3-A Sanitary Standards, Inc. (3-A SSI).

The no-cost series will cover critical issues in regard to enhancing food safety equipment and systems from the standpoint of regulatory professionals, equipment users and equipment fabricators.

The first webinar on Friday, Sept. 29 will feature Benjamin Warren, senior adviser for food safety with the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA) on verification activities and corrective actions to ensure the effectiveness of controls at preventing

foodborne illness, the organizers stated.

This webinar will run from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. EST.

The second webinar will be Friday, Oct. 27.

Dan Erickson, 3-A Certified conformance evaluator will cover dairy equipment fabrication shortcomings and challenges. Helen Piotter, Dairy Farmers of America (DFA) will also discuss hygienic design's impact on the dairy processing industry.

Just added to the Oct. 27 will be Cari Rasmussen with Commercial Food Sanitation on Hygienic Design for Produce Processing.

The third webinar is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 17, and will feature Ecolab's Rick Stokes on

Registration Open For CheeseExpo 2024; To Be April 16-18 In Milwaukee

Milwaukee, WI—The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) announced Wednesday the opening of online registration for CheeseExpo 2024.

The three-day event is set for April 16-18, 2024 at Milwaukee's Baird Center.

Festivities begin Tuesday, April 16 with a welcome reception, and continue through Thursday, April 18, with full slates of educational seminars and networking events, including the popular Auction of Championship Cheeses, WCMA Recognition Breakfast, and World Champions Awards Banquet.

"Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, together with our partners at the Center for Dairy Research, is proud to offer dairy processors and their supplier partners impactful opportunities to learn, connect, and celebrate at CheeseExpo 2024," said WCMA executive director John Umhoefer.

The 2024 installment of CheeseExpo features an expansive trade show floor, with over 300 exhibitors showcasing their newest technology, equipment, and services.

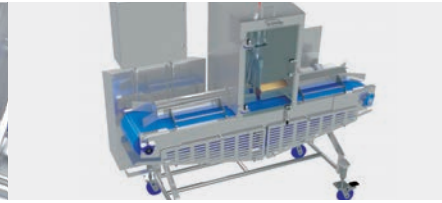
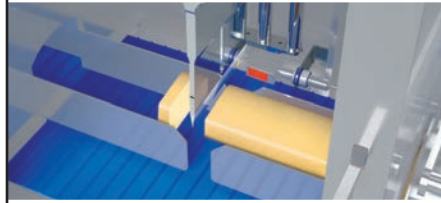
Companies interested in exhibiting will find information at CheeseExpo.org through WCMA's ranked order Priority Points reservation system and sign-up process, which begins Sept. 20. The site also offers lodging details, with hotel bookings at exclusive CheeseExpo prices available now.

"CheeseExpo offers programming of value for everyone in the dairy processing industry – and now, for a limited time, you'll enjoy our best registration rates," said WCMA senior director of events Judy Keller.

Attendees will register in the following categories: dairy processor member, dairy processor non-member, supplier, exhibitor and member of academia/government. Those who register before Jan. 30, 2024 will receive a 20 percent discount. Those who sign up by Feb. 27 will receive a 10 percent discount.

For online registration and more information, visit CheeseExpo.org. Questions about CheeseExpo 2024 can be directed to events@wischeesemakers.org or by contacting WCMA at (608) 286-1001.

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PLANNING GUIDE

IMPA Conference: Aug. 10-11, Sun Valley Resort, Sun Valley, ID. Visit www.impa.us for more information closer to event date.

Pack Expo Las Vegas: Sept. 11-13, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV. Registration open at www.packexpolasvegas.com.

ADPI Dairy Ingredients Seminar: Sept. 25-27, Santa Barbara, CA. Registration now open at www.adpi.org/events.

Inaugural Art of Cheese Festival: Sept. 29-Oct. 1, Madison, WI. Space is limited. Registration is open online at www.wisconsincheese.com.

NCCIA Annual Conference: Oct. 10-12, Best Western/Ramkota, Sioux Falls, SD. Visit www.northcentralcheese.org for more information as well as registration updates.

IDF World Dairy Summit: Oct. 16-19, Chicago, IL. Visit www.idfwds2023.com to register online.

Process Expo: Oct. 23-25, McCormick Place, Chicago. Online registration is available at www.fpsa.org/process-expo.

NDB, NMPF, UDIA Joint Annual Meeting: Oct. 23-26, Orlando, FL. Agenda will soon be available online at www.nmpf.org.

Dairy Forum 2024: Jan. 21-24, J.W. Marriott Phoenix Desert Ridge, Phoenix, AZ. Information will be posted soon at www.idfa.org/dairy-forum.

National Frozen & Refrigerated Foods Convention Is Oct. 7-10 In San Diego

San Diego, CA—The National Frozen & Refrigerated Foods Association (NFRA) has kicked off registration for its convention here Oct. 7-10 at the Marriott Marquis & Marina.

Sunday's lineup also includes the Supply Chain Forum, Ice Cream Forum, Private Brands Forum, and Small Business Manufacturers Forum.

During this event an induction of the two NFRA members into the Refrigerated Food Hall of Fame: retired NFRA president and CEO Skip Shaw, and Joe D'Alberto, Acosta Sales & Marketing.

For information and to register online, visit NFRAConvention.org.

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DAIRY PRODUCT MARKETS

AS REPORTED BY THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WHOLESALE CHEESE MARKETS

NORTHEAST - AUG. 2: Farm level milk outputs continue to decline in the Northeast. Cheese plant managers report that production has slowed as milk volumes are down, but that inventories remain comfortable for the time being. Contacts shared that Cheddar is in higher demand than other American-type cheeses at the moment. Foodservice and retail demands are noted to be steady.

Wholesale prices, delivered, dollars per/lb:

Cheddar 40-lb block:	\$2.3350 - \$2.6225	Process 5-lb sliced:	\$1.8950 - \$2.3750
Muenster:	\$2.3225 - \$2.6725	Swiss Cuts 10-14 lbs:	\$3.5400 - \$5.8625

MIDWEST AREA - AUG. 2: Midwestern cheese makers say cheese continues to move steadily via contract and some spot interests. Some say the increase in recent market pricing may slow some customer involvement, but demand is generally undeterred after the recent, and relatively quick, bullish run. Milk availability has seasonally, although many cheese contacts say later than expected, begun to shift lower. Prices reported this week are still below Class, but \$2- below or thereabouts, a stark contrast from mid-July when prices were still at \$10 and \$11 under Class III. Current prices are beginning to align with last year's range, as during week 31 of 2022, spot milk prices ranged from \$3-under to Class. As was mentioned, cheese market tones have quickly gone from bearish to bullish. Some contacts suggest more competitive global pricing is playing a part, while others say despite the bullishness, they are proceeding with caution regarding near-term expectations.

Wholesale prices delivered, dollars per/lb:

Blue 5# Loaf :	\$2.3775 - \$3.5875	Mozzarella 5-6#:	\$1.9075 - \$2.9950
Brick 5# Loaf:	\$2.1075 - \$2.6750	Muenster 5#:	\$2.1075 - \$2.6750
Cheddar 40# Block:	\$1.8300 - \$2.3725	Process 5# Loaf:	\$1.7725 - \$2.2400
Monterey Jack 10#:	\$2.0825 - \$2.4300	Swiss 6-9# Cuts:	\$3.0550 - \$3.1575

WEST - AUG. 2: Domestic demand for varietal cheeses is reported as strong to steady. The CME barrel cheese price closed at \$1.8700 and block cheese closed at \$1.9600. This represented a 9.00 cent increase for barrel cheese and a 9.75 cent increase for block cheese since last Wednesday. Industry sources indicate a healthier demand for block cheese compared to barrel cheese. Sentiments of decreasing milk production and equipment maintenance time contributing to bullish market price movement are noted by some stakeholders. Cheese manufacturers relay strong Class III milk demand and enough available to run strong to steady production schedules, despite some tightening in milk and cream volumes. Although some cheese makers note tighter availability of inventory for spot load purchasers, supplies are available to meet current spot and contract demand. Export demand is mixed. Some steadier demand from less hesitant Mexican purchasers compared to Asian purchasers is reported. Industry sources indicate Cheddar cheese to be in better demand compared to other varietal cheeses internationally.

Wholesale prices delivered, dollars per/lb:

Cheddar 10# Cuts :	\$2.2100 - \$2.4100	Process 5# Loaf:	\$1.8975 - \$2.0525
Cheddar 40# Block:	\$1.9625 - \$2.4525	Swiss 6-9# Cuts:	\$2.3475 - \$3.7775

EEX Weekly European Cheese Indices (WECI): Price Per/lb (US Converted)

Variety	Date: 8/2	7/26	Variety	Date: 8/2	7/26
Cheddar Curd	\$1.93	\$1.93	Mild Cheddar	\$1.94	\$1.96
Young Gouda	\$1.69	\$1.67	Mozzarella	\$1.65	\$1.64

FOREIGN -TYPE CHEESE - AUG. 2: In Europe, record setting high temperatures continue to have a negative impact on milk production and cow comfort. Cheese makers in Europe are operating busy schedules, though some industry sources say declining milk volumes are having a negative impact on cheese output. Demand for cheese is strong in retail markets, though contacts note mixed foodservice demands. Some vacation destinations in Europe are being negatively impacted by near-record temperatures. Contacts report this is having a negative impact on restaurant demand and foodservice consumption. Export demand for cheese is steady. Cheese inventories are tight, as demand continues to outpace production. Some stakeholders anticipate further declines in cheese production in the coming weeks will further reduce warehouse inventories of cheese.

Selling prices, delivered, dollars per/lb:

	Imported	Domestic
Blue:	\$2.6400 - 5.2300	\$2.1925 - 3.6800
Gorgonzola:	\$3.6900 - 5.7400	\$2.7000 - 3.4175
Parmesan:	0	\$2.5825 - 4.6700
Romano :	0	\$3.3825 - 5.5375
Sardo Romano (Argentine):	\$2.8500 - 4.7800	0
Reggianito (Argentine):	\$3.2900 - 4.7800	0
Jarlsberg:	\$2.9500 - 6.4500	0
Swiss:	\$3.5750 - 3.9000	\$3.5750 - 3.9000
Swiss Cuts Finnish:	\$2.6700 - 2.9300	

DRY PRODUCTS - AUGUST 3

LACTOSE CENTRAL/WEST: Some lactose sellers note a slight uptick in interest from domestic spot purchasers this week. Overall, demand for lactose remains light in domestic and international markets. Contacts report some purchasers have begun to inquire about Q4 contract prices and say quoted prices are higher than current spot market lactose. Lactose spot inventories are plentiful, though some stakeholders say loads of lactose from specific brands are in higher demand and inventories are less ample. Production is steady to light.

WPC CENTRAL/WEST: Demand for WPC 34% is soft from both domestic and international purchasers. Some spot purchasers say they have been offered additional loads at lower prices in recent weeks but relay some hesitance to secure more

WPC 34% than necessary to meet their immediate needs. Inventories of WPC 34% are available for spot purchasing. Some manufacturers say they have ample inventories and are offering these loads at lower prices compared to previous weeks to increase warehouse space. Plant managers report steady to light WPC 34% production.

NORTHEAST DRY WHEY: Cheese production has slowed somewhat as farm level milk outputs and volumes clearing into Class III operations have tapered off. As a result of decreased cheese production, liquid whey volumes are waning. Drying schedules have slowed too. Dry whey inventories are said to be comfortable. Contacts relayed that there have been slight increases in demand, namely for brand-preferred loads on the spot market.

NATIONAL - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY PRODUCTS

Conventional ice cream in 48- to 64- ounce packages was the most advertised dairy item after last week's top item was conventional cheese in 6- to 8-ounce packages. On the organic aisle, half-gallon milk was the most advertised item. For conventional dairy, Cream cheese and yogurt were the only two categories with more ads week over week. Butter ad totals decreased 46 percent on the conventional side, with an average price of \$4.58, compared to \$4.09 last week.

Total conventional cheese ads decreased 38 percent week to week. Conventional sliced cheese in 6- to 8-ounce containers was the most advertised cheese item. The average advertised price of conventional 6- to 8-ounce sliced cheese was \$2.55, eight cents below last week's price. Conventional sour cream in 16-ounce containers had a weighted average price of \$2.24, \$1.75 below organic sour cream in the same package size.

RETAIL PRICES - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY - AUGUST 4

Commodity	US	NE	SE	MID	SC	SW	NW
Butter 8 oz	2.51	3.49	2.00	NA	5.41	4.44	NA
Butter 1#	4.58	4.66	4.37	3.39	4.21	NA	4.59
Cheese 6-8 oz block	2.76	2.62	2.92	2.54	3.23	2.69	NA
Cheese 6-8 oz shred	2.68	2.36	2.61	2.98	NA	NA	2.53
Cheese 6-8 oz sliced	2.55	2.47	2.64	2.57	2.56	2.43	2.49
Cheese 1# block	3.64	3.49	NA	3.79	NA	3.79	NA
Cheese 1# shred	4.33	4.99	NA	3.79	NA	3.79	NA
Cheese 1# sliced	NA	NA	NA	2.57	NA	NA	NA
Cheese 2# block	6.31	NA	6.64	5.75	6.99	NA	6.62
Cheese 2# shred	6.19	8.99	4.99	6.23	6.99	5.99	5.48
Cottage Cheese 16 oz	2.32	2.82	2.10	2.26	2.41	2.20	2.32
Cottage Cheese 24 oz	3.84	4.29	2.99	3.88	4.41	NA	NA
Cream Cheese 8 oz	2.27	2.85	1.76	2.00	2.37	1.99	1.79
Ice Cream 14-16 oz	3.62	3.77	3.58	3.83	3.75	3.16	3.51
Ice Cream 48-64 oz	3.92	3.50	3.91	3.90	5.32	3.77	3.78
Milk 1/2 gallon	1.52	NA	1.29	1.48	1.79	1.27	1.41
Milk gallon	3.37	3.58	NA	3.62	3.39	3.27	2.47
Flavored Milk 1/2 gal	3.19	3.19	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Flavored Milk gallon	4.51	NA	NA	4.51	NA	NA	NA
Sour Cream 16 oz	2.24	2.18	2.28	2.11	2.49	2.24	2.14
Sour Cream 24 oz	3.19	NA	3.05	2.99	NA	2.99	NA
Yogurt (Greek) 4-6 oz	1.02	1.08	1.01	1.00	1.11	0.93	1.00
Yogurt (Greek) 32 oz	5.43	5.19	4.99	NA	6.35	5.99	NA
Yogurt 4-6 oz	0.58	0.63	0.66	0.50	0.53	0.45	0.50
Yogurt 32 oz	5.43	2.70	2.29	3.01	2.61	2.69	3.39

ORGANIC DAIRY - RETAIL OVERVIEW

National Weighted Retail Avg Price:

Sour Cream 16 oz:	\$3.68	Yogurt 4-6 oz:	\$0.70
Butter 1 lb:	\$5.99	Yogurt 32 oz:	NA
Cheese 2 lb block:	\$5.99	Yogurt Greek 4 - 6 oz	\$0.83
Cheese 2 lb shred:	\$5.99	Yogurt Greek 32 oz	\$5.99
Cottage Cheese 16 oz:	\$2.79	Milk 1/2 gallon:	\$3.90
Cheese shreds 6-8 oz:	NA	Milk gallon:	NA
Cheese 6-8 oz block:	NA	Ice Cream 14-16 oz	\$9.99
Cheese 6-8 oz sliced:	\$4.00	Ice Cream 48-64 oz	\$5.99

WHOLESALE BUTTER MARKETS - AUGUST 2

WEST: Cream is more available in northern parts of the western region compared to southern parts. However, northern stakeholders relay cream is tightening. Declines in milk components are more pronounced in the southern parts of the West. Butter production is mostly reported as strong by butter makers. A few note lighter production schedules or staffing shortages. Many are working to build further inventory for the remainder of the year with current cream prices keeping churning economical. Manufacturers focus bulk butter production on unsalted in parts of the region with tighter cream availability. Domestic demand is strong to steady. Some sources note more interest at higher price points compared to other recent weeks. Export demand is light aside from some better interest from Canadian purchasers. Stakeholders note current domestic prices are not competitive with most other international price points.

CENTRAL: Butter has tightened up significantly in the past few weeks. Brokers say their focus has shifted West for any extra butter loads. Butter makers say cream is

tight, churning is expected to continue, but locating spot cream at or below the 1.30 multiple has become a fruitless endeavor. That said, cream accessibility reached further into the summer months than a number of contacts expected, with milder summer temperatures, at least in the evenings and early mornings in the upper Midwest. Southern Central contacts have not had the same mild temperatures, and cream access tightened up with a quickness in states such as Texas. Butter market tones remain firm.

NORTHEAST: Cream supplies continue to trend downwards. Butter plant contacts share that they are relying on contracted loads of cream to keep churns active. Some contacts have also relayed they are micro fixing some of the bulk butter inventory that was frozen earlier in the season. Butter inventories are declining, but demand is noted to be steady from both retail and food service customers. Trading activity is strong, evidenced by butter prices on industry cash exchanges reaching a year to date weekly average high of \$2.6540 last Friday.

WEEKLY COLD STORAGE HOLDINGS

SELECTED STORAGE CENTERS IN 1,000 POUNDS - INCLUDING GOVERNMENT

DATE	BUTTER	CHEESE
07/31/23	66,256	86,076
07/01/23	76,287	81,088
Change	-10,031	4,988
Percent Change	-13	6

CME CASH PRICES - JULY 31 - AUGUST 4, 2023

Visit www.cheesereporter.com for daily prices

	500-LB CHEDDAR	40-LB CHEDDAR	AA BUTTER	GRADE A NDFM	DRY WHEY
MONDAY July 31	\$1.8700 (+10%)	\$1.9600 (+5%)	\$2.6800 (NC)	\$1.1475 (-1/4)	\$0.2500 (NC)
TUESDAY August 1	\$1.8700 (NC)	\$1.9600 (NC)	\$2.6700 (-1)	\$1.1425 (-1/2)	\$0.2600 (+1)
WEDNESDAY August 2	\$1.8700 (NC)	\$1.9600 (NC)	\$2.6300 (-4)	\$1.1225 (-2)	\$0.2600 (NC)
THURSDAY August 3	\$1.8250 (-4 1/2)	\$1.9600 (NC)	\$2.6150 (-1 1/2)	\$1.1200 (-1/4)	\$0.2625 (+1/4)
FRIDAY August 4	\$1.7750 (-5)	\$1.9075 (+1/2)	\$2.6200 (+1/2)	\$1.1250 (+1/2)	\$0.2725 (+1)
Week's AVG \$ Change	\$1.8420 (+0.0495)	\$1.9610 (+0.0890)	\$2.6430 (-0.0110)	\$1.1315 (-0.0205)	\$0.2610 (+0.0040)
Last Week's AVG	\$1.7925	\$1.8720	\$2.6540	\$1.1520	\$0.2570
2022 AVG Same Week	\$1.8190	\$1.8270	\$3.0280	\$1.5845	\$0.4320

MARKET OPINION - CHEESE REPORTER

Cheese Comment: One car of blocks was sold Monday at \$1.9600, which set the price. There was no block market activity at all on Tuesday or Wednesday. Thursday's block market activity was limited to an unfilled bid for 1 car at \$1.8900, which left the price unchanged at \$1.9600. One car of blocks was sold Friday at \$1.9650, which set the price. The barrel price jumped Monday on an unfilled bid at \$1.8700, dropped Thursday on an uncovered offer at \$1.8250, and fell Friday on a sale at \$1.7750. Two carloads of blocks were traded this week on the CME, while 7 carloads of barrels were traded.

Butter Comment: The price declined Tuesday on a sale at \$2.6700 (25 cars of butter were sold Tuesday), fell Wednesday on a sale at \$2.6300, dropped Thursday on an uncovered offer at \$2.6150, then increased Friday on a sale at \$2.6200. 33 carloads of butter were traded this on the Exchange

Nonfat Dry Milk Comment: The price declined Monday on a sale at \$1.1475, fell Tuesday on a sale at \$1.1425, dropped Wednesday on an uncovered offer at \$1.1225, declined Thursday on a sale at \$1.1200, then increased Friday on a sale at \$1.1250.

Dry Whey Comment: The price increased Tuesday on a sale at 26.0 cents, rose Thursday on a sale at 26.25 cents, and increased Friday on a sale at 27.25 cents.

WHEY MARKETS - JULY 31 - AUGUST 4, 2023

RELEASE DATE - AUGUST 3, 2023

Animal Feed Whey—Central: Milk Replacer:	.1850 (NC) – .2000 (-2)
Buttermilk Powder:	
Central & East:	.8500 (-7) – .9950 (+1/2) West: .7500 (-1) – .9100 (NC)
Mostly:	.8300 (-1) – .9000 (NC)
Casein: Rennet:	4.2500 (NC) – 4.7500 (NC) Acid: 4.2000 (-15) – 4.7000 (-20)
Dry Whey—Central (Edible):	
Nonhygroscopic:	.1900 (NC) – .2800 (NC) Mostly: .2400 (+1) – .2600 (-1)
Dry Whey—West (Edible):	
Nonhygroscopic:	.2300 (NC) – .3200 (-1/4) Mostly: .2600 (+1) – .3100 (NC)
Dry Whey—NE:	.2250 (+3/4) – .3100 (NC)
Lactose—Central and West:	
Edible:	.1300 (+1) – .3600 (NC) Mostly: .1400 (NC) – .2500 (NC)
Nonfat Dry Milk—Central & East:	
Low/Medium Heat:	1.0600 (-3) – 1.1500 (-1) Mostly: 1.0900 (-1 1/2) – 1.1350 (NC)
High Heat:	1.1500 (NC) – 1.2750 (-1 1/2)
Nonfat Dry Milk—Western:	
Low/Med Heat:	1.0300 (-1) – 1.1600 (-1) Mostly: 1.0600 (-1) – 1.1400 (-1)
High Heat:	1.2000 (+1/4) – 1.3500 (NC)
Whey Protein Concentrate—34% Protein:	
Central & West:	.6500 (NC) – 1.0500 (-4) Mostly: .6600 (-2) – 1.0000 (-4)
Whole Milk:	1.7600 (NC) – 1.9000 (NC)

HISTORICAL CME AVG BLOCK CHEESE PRICES

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
'09	1.0883	1.2171	1.2455	1.2045	1.1394	1.1353	1.1516	1.3471	1.3294	1.4709	1.5788	1.6503
'10	1.4536	1.4526	1.2976	1.4182	1.4420	1.3961	1.5549	1.6367	1.7374	1.7246	1.4619	1.3807
'11	1.5140	1.9064	1.8125	1.6036	1.6858	2.0995	2.1150	1.9725	1.7561	1.7231	1.8716	1.6170
'12	1.5546	1.4793	1.5193	1.5039	1.5234	1.6313	1.6855	1.8262	1.9245	2.0757	1.9073	1.6619
'13	1.6965	1.6420	1.6240	1.8225	1.8052	1.7140	1.7074	1.7492	1.7956	1.8236	1.8478	1.9431
'14	2.2227	2.1945	2.3554	2.2439	2.0155	2.0237	1.9870	2.1820	2.3499	2.1932	1.9513	1.5938
'15	1.5218	1.5382	\$1.5549	1.5890	1.6308	1.7052	1.6659	1.7111	1.6605	1.6674	1.6175	1.4616
'16	1.4757	1.4744	1.4877	1.4194	1.3174	1.5005	1.6613	1.7826	1.6224	1.6035	1.8775	1.7335
'17	1.6866	1.6199	1.4342	1.4970	1.6264	1.6022	1.6586	1.6852	1.6370	1.7305	1.6590	1.4900
'18	1.4928	1.5157	1.5614	1.6062	1.6397	1.5617	1.5364	1.6341	1.6438	1.5874	1.3951	1.3764
'19	1.4087	1.5589	1.5908	1.6619	1.6799	1.7906	1.8180	1.8791	2.0395	2.0703	1.9664	1.8764
'20	1.9142	1.8343	1.7550	1.1019	1.6704	2.5620	2.6466	1.7730	2.3277	2.7103	2.0521	1.6249
'21	1.7470	1.5821	1.7362	1.7945	1.6778	1.4978	1.6370	1.7217	1.7601	1.7798	1.7408	1.8930
'22	1.9065	1.9379	2.1699	2.3399	2.3293	2.1902	2.0143	1.8104	1.9548	2.0260	2.1186	2.0860
'23	2.0024	1.8895	1.9372	1.7574	1.5719	1.4039	1.6209					

Restaurant Performance Index Rose 0.6% In June; Sales Outlook Improves

Washington—The National Restaurant Association's Restaurant Performance Index (RPI), a monthly composite index that tracks the health of the US restaurant industry, stood at 100.2 in June, up 0.6 percent from May, the association reported Monday.

The RPI consists of two components: the Current Situation Index and the Expectations Index. The Current Situation Index, which measures current trends in four industry indicators (same-store sales, traffic, labor and capital expenditures), stood at 99.7 in June, unchanged from May.

Restaurant operators reported a net increase in same-store sales in June. Some 50 percent of operators said their same-store sales rose between June 2022 and June 2023, while 40 percent said their sales were lower in June.

Customer traffic readings were even more dampened in June. Some 29 percent of operators said their customer traffic rose between June 2022 and June 2023, while 57 percent reported a traffic decline. June represented the third straight month in which a majority of operators reported a decline

in customer traffic.

The Expectations Index, which measures restaurant operators' six-month outlook for four industry indicators (same-store sales, employees, capital expenditures and business conditions), stood at 100.7 in June, up 1.2 percent from May.

Restaurant operators' outlook for sales growth improved somewhat during the July survey period. Some 39 percent of operators expect their sales volume in six months to be higher than it was during the same period in the previous year. That was up from 29 percent who reported similarly during the June survey period. Twenty-two percent of operators think their sales in six months will be lower than they were during the same period in the previous year, down from 32 percent a month earlier.

Restaurant operators remain generally pessimistic about the direction of the overall economy. Only 10 percent of operators said they expect economic conditions to improve in six months, compared to 6 percent a month earlier.

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